The Change in Record Changers *by Ralph Freas*

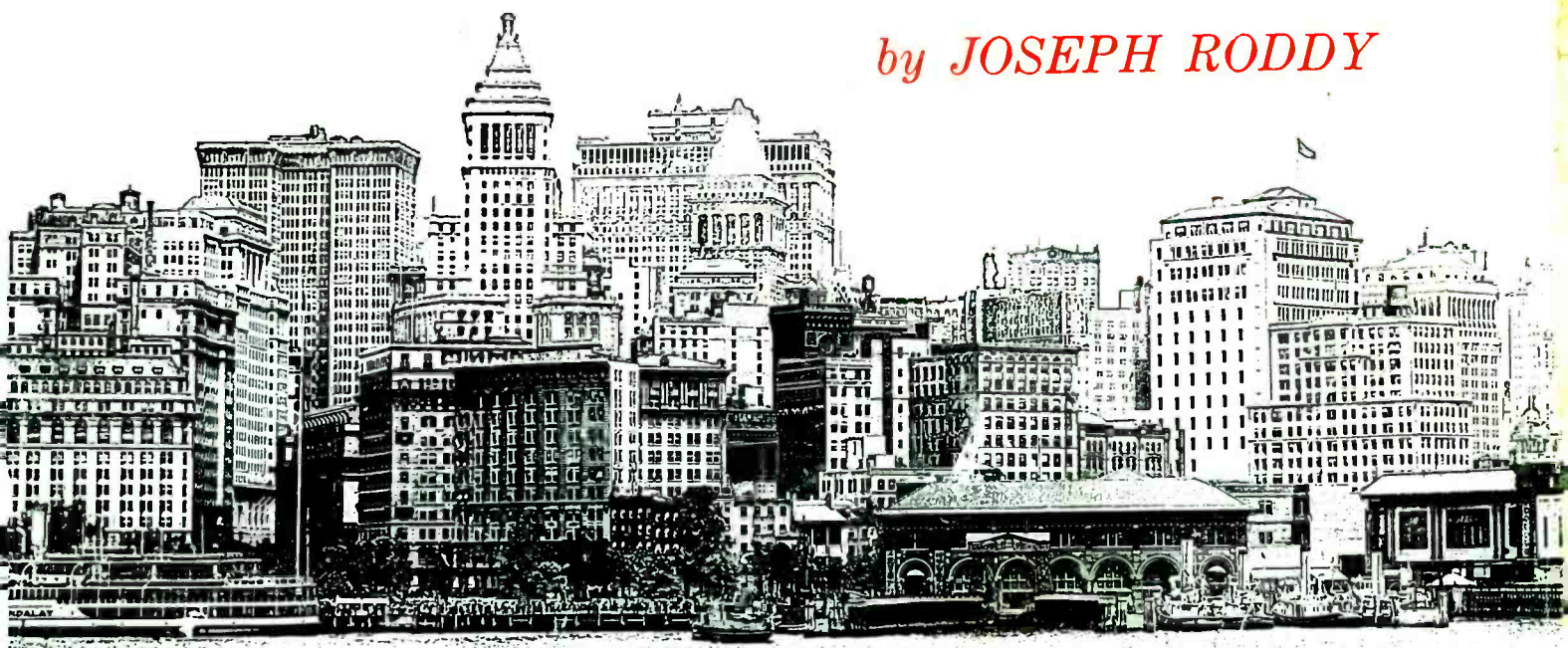
high fidelity

JULY
1960

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS 60 CENTS

MR. MAHLER IN MANHATTAN

by JOSEPH RODDY



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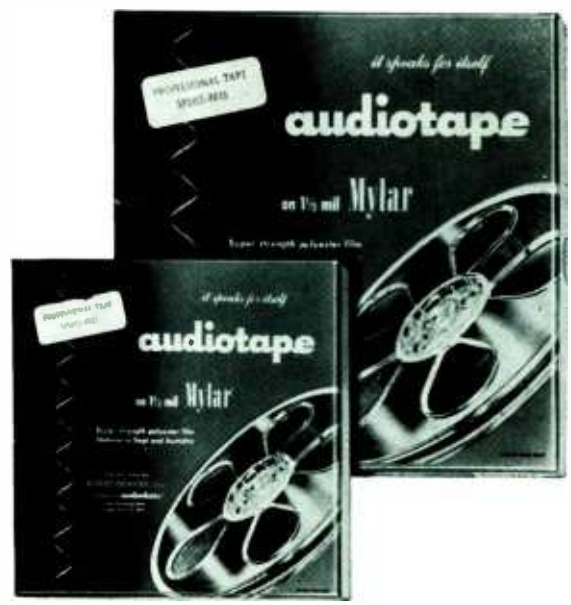

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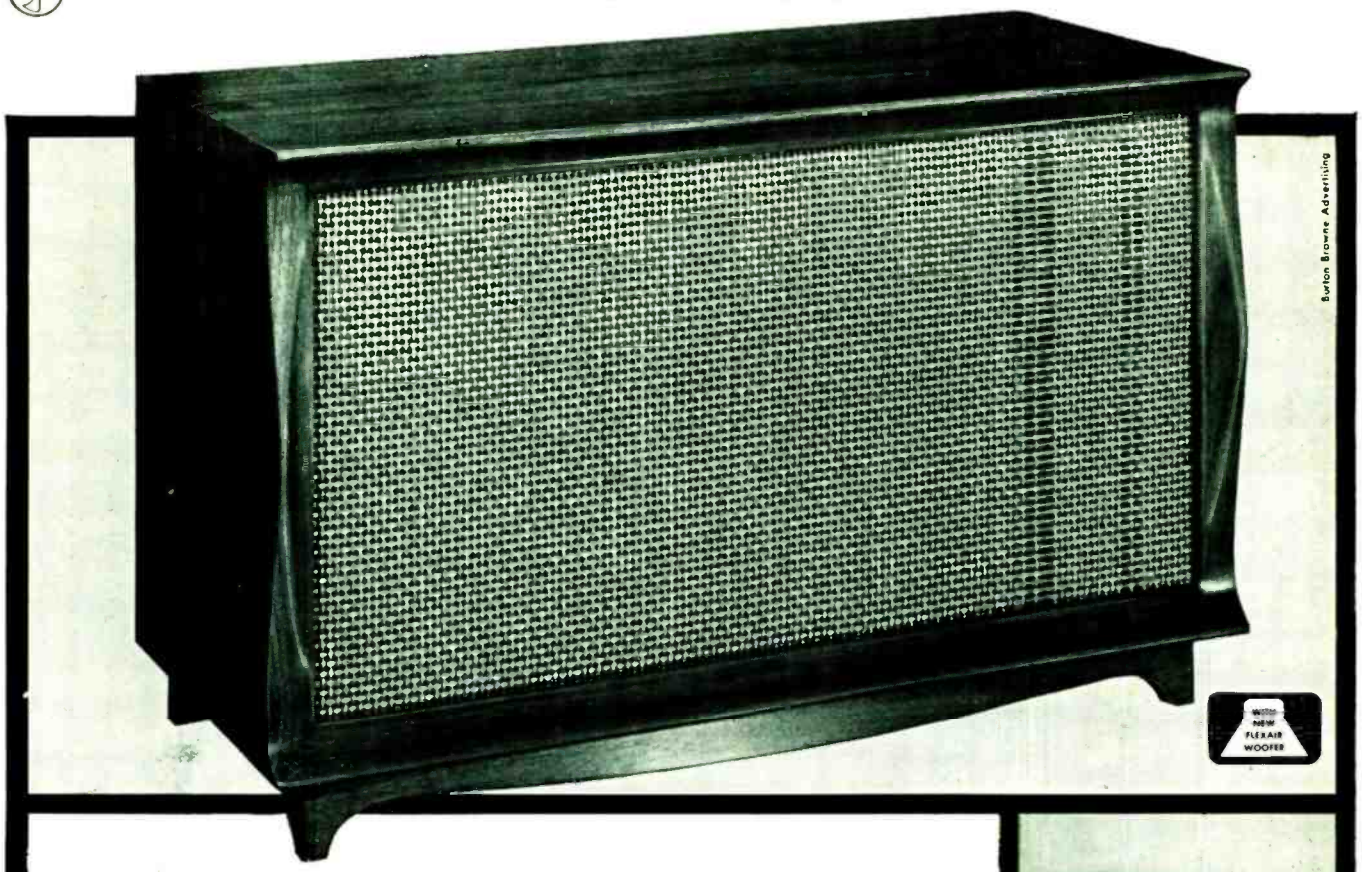

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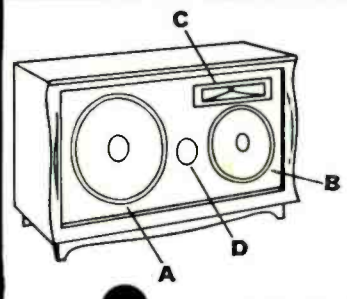

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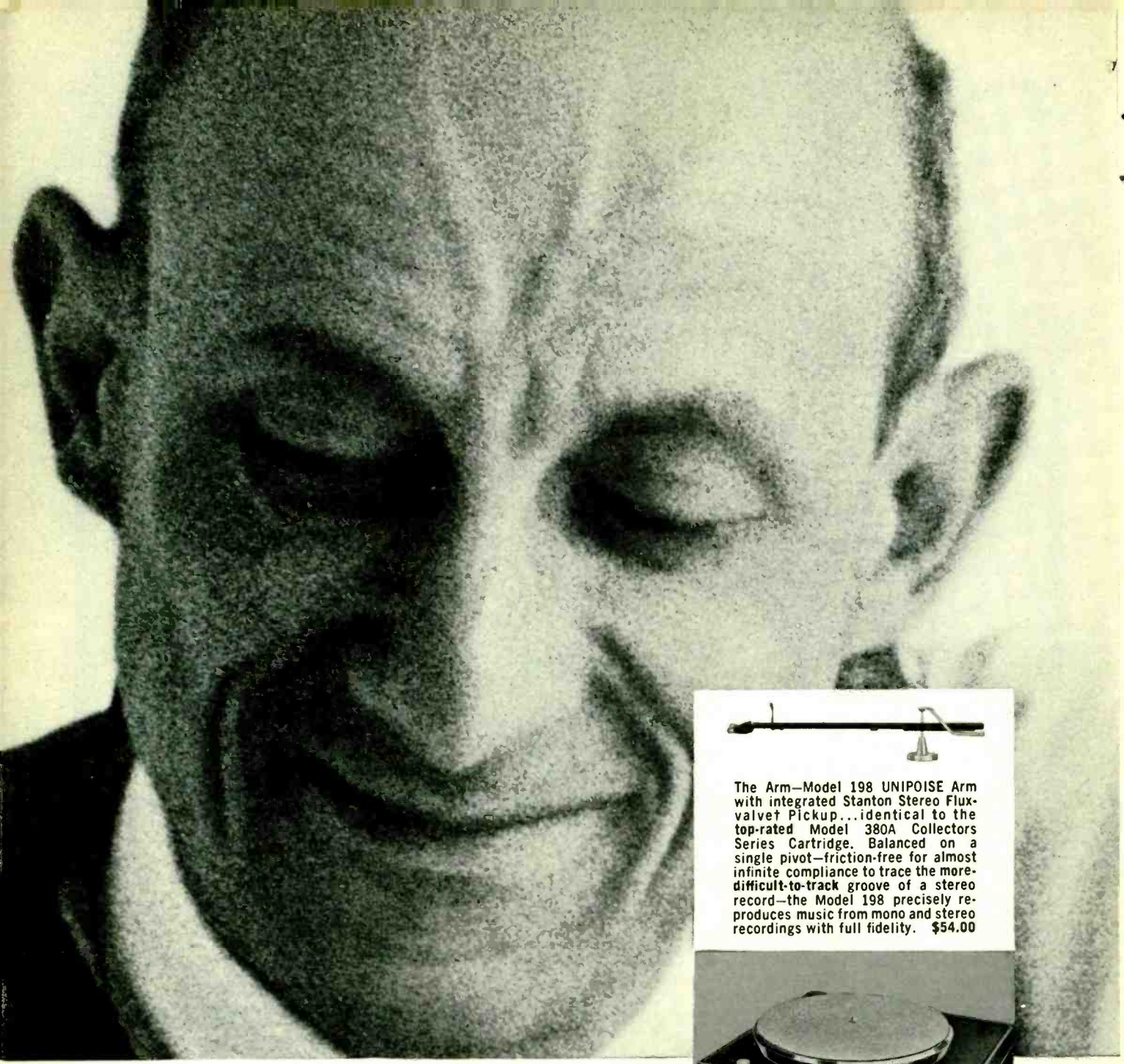

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CIRCLE 64 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

high fidelity

JULY 1960
volume 10 *number 7*

including **AUDIOCRAFT** *and* **HI-FI MUSIC AT HOME**

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AUTHORitatively Speaking

Joseph Roddy, who recently resigned from *Life* Magazine to enjoy the varied satisfactions of a free-lance career, is extremely reluctant to indulge our request for what he refers to as "biographical revelations." We do know, of course, that he is a dedicated Mahlerite: *ipso facto* evidence p. 30, "Mr. Mahler in Manhattan." In fact, no one *but* the dedicated would have pursued the arduous course which Mr. Roddy took in preparing this paper. Not only was scholarly research involved in the examination of old newspaper accounts of Mahler's New York career and in the study of his correspondence (in German, naturally); Mr. Roddy also assumed the role of private investigator, talking with surviving members of the New York Philharmonic who had played under Mahler and visiting the composer's widow. We did manage to extract from our author the confession that at the end of this task he felt rather like the narrator in Henry James's *Aspern Papers*.

In "Mahler on Microgroove" (p. 34), **Robert C. Marsh**, member of our Editorial Board, compiles for us a critical discography of Mahler's vocal and orchestral music in its more recent monophonic recordings and in stereo. Mr. Marsh attributes much of the current heightened interest in Mahler's music to stereo. We feel, with some conviction, that music criticism of the perceptiveness which Mr. Marsh displays here will also have a good deal to do with bringing converts into the Mahler fold.

Last spring when Audio Editor **Ralph Freas** was moving from a Greenwich Village walk-up to a brand-new duplex, he discovered among his goods and chattels an almost forgotten record changer. This set him to thinking, a bit nostalgically, about things past. Which in turn led to reflections on things present. And the result of all this you will find in Mr. Freas's dissertation on "The Change in Record Changers," p. 36.

Patrick Cairns Hughes, being a British broadcast commentator, often has occasion to correct popular misapprehensions about famous composers. The circumstance that Mr. Hughes is himself a composer — and of jazz, at that — may make him less susceptible to myths than our unknowledgeable selves. In any case, we have on p. 38 ("The Swan Who Could Laugh") a new and very likable version of Gioacchino Antonio Rossini.

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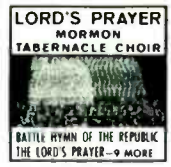
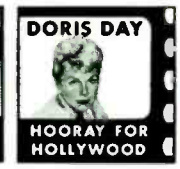


18. Also: Blessed Are They That Mourn, Come Ye Saints, etc.

20. Bess, You Is My Woman Now; It Ain't Necessarily So; etc.



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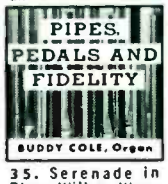

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Praise for Pirie

SIR:

Congratulations to Peter J. Pirie for his exemplary article on Toscanini and Furtwängler [April]. At last we seem to have found a man who is not blinded by the mass adoration accorded the late Maestro. In some music Toscanini was unbeatable, but I have always felt that many other conductors, notably Sir Thomas Beecham, were much better in interpreting *all* types of music.

T. M. Burkhart
Azusa, Calif.

SIR:

Peter Pirie's "Toscanini and Furtwängler—An Empire Divided" [April] was a searching article on the differences between two great masters of the orchestra. Though quite in accord with the author on all he says, I should like to point out, however, one important thing which he does *not* say.

In several places, he mentions Toscanini's performances as having a certain brassiness. Indeed they did, but due not so much to Toscanini's handling of his brass choirs as to the very nature of the instruments employed in American vs. Central European orchestras which the two conductors led.

In the Furtwängler discs, one hears the trumpets for which Beethoven actually wrote—the valve B trumpet, with a different bell and a somewhat different mouthpiece than we use in this country, where symphony orchestras make use of the more brilliant B flat trumpet (which the Germans, incidentally, describe rather disparagingly as a jazz trumpet).

The B trumpet, with its mellower and richer sound, is quite useless in works which postdate the earliest Romantic period. It is impossible with this trumpet to get through a long solo properly. But this same B trumpet, however unsatisfactory for much of the standard repertory (from Tchaikovsky to the present), blends superbly into the fabric of the Beethoven and Brahms symphonies, in fact into almost any work by a Teutonic composer. By comparison, the B flat trumpet sounds unbearably harsh in the same works.

This point should be made clear to your readers, for Mr. Pirie, in an otherwise superlatively fine article, does suggest that the tonal differences in the orchestras used by Toscanini and Furtwängler were the results of the conductors' own efforts. As a matter

Continued on page 10

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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

of fact, in addition to the trumpets, one must also consider differences in tuning pitch, and the fact that some of the other instruments used in Europe—flutes and clarinets, for instance—differ in construction from those in our orchestras.

Jerome J. Pastene
Needham, Mass.

Articles Commended

SIR:
Messrs. Conly, Pirie, Landon, and Marsh are to be commended for their fine articles on Beethoven and his music in the April issue. In this age, when most writers take pleasure in denigrating the great, sensitive appraisals are a pleasure indeed.

Walter P. Bruning
Goldens Bridge, N. Y.

Record Jacket Notes

SIR:
Nathan Broder, in his review of RCA Victor LSC 2365 (page 65 April HIGH FIDELITY), states "I was unable to find the Vivaldi Concerto in D in Pincherle's catalogue, and suspect from its sound that it too was metamorphosed somewhat by its arranger. . . ." I would like to point out, if I may, that this concerto was "metamorphosed" from the Violin Concerto in D, Op. 3, No. 9 from *L'Estro Armonico*.

It seems to me that record companies should make a greater effort to identify the contents of a record for the jacket notes. In many cases I have found it necessary, particularly in the case of Vivaldi, to spend a great deal of time auditioning recordings to avoid excessive duplication.

Frederick M. Hodge, Jr.
Hyannis, Mass.

Credit Where Credit Due

SIR:
I believe it about time that Alan Wagner be given due credit for a sincerely outstanding article. "The New Golden Age of Opera" [January] was, in its own way, a unique critique in that it represents, to my knowledge, one of the few true analyses of recorded opera which have made it evident that the past does not, per se, surpass the present.

Gerald M. Brody
Brooklyn, N. Y.

A Matter of Manners

SIR:
In general, I enjoy HIGH FIDELITY. However, I was annoyed with Mr. Landon's seeming to vent personal pique on one Herr Professor in his article "It All Began in Bonn" [April]. This sort of thing destroys the dignity of a magazine, a quality which I had rather associated with your publication.

Richard Hoyt
Red Bank, N. J.

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CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Maureen Forrester

A Contralto Without Compulsions.

IT WOULD BE HARD to imagine an artist who could carry the weight of sudden and substantial fame more lightheartedly than Maureen Forrester. The fact that within the past couple of years she has come to be considered one of the finest Mahler singers anywhere has not blunted her spontaneity one whit, nor cast the slightest gravity over her naturally exuberant manner. When she was last in New York, for four springtime appearances with the Philharmonic, she made it clear just where she stands in relation to this eminence. "I sing because I love it, not as a means to a career. A singing career isn't a compulsion with me at all. If I never got another contract, I'd be a happy housewife." And when you hear her say this, you know that she means it.

It takes less than half a minute, on meeting Miss Forrester and her husband Eugene Kash, to sense their strong ties with home and family. They have three children—ages four, two, and one—and on the day I talked with them they were planning to fly back to Montreal between two Philharmonic performances in order to be with the young Kashes. Being away on tour is something both Mr. and Mrs. Kash have to contend with, since he is a violinist and a conductor, but they have solved the problem with "a wonderful French nurse." Miss Forrester had just returned from six weeks in Europe, which she enjoyed. "But it was a long time away from home," she said.

Whatever the difficulties of combining family and career, you feel immediately that this statuesque blond contralto is more than a match for them. She has an enthusiasm which seems to spring from a genuine capacity for enjoying life, and she radiates a very untemperamental healthiness. In fact, she doesn't know what it is to be nervous. On one occasion she gave a concert before an audience which included half a dozen well-known contraltos, all come to judge the newcomer for themselves. "I went backstage at intermission to see how she was getting along," said Mr. Kash, "and what's she doing? She's sitting there eating a tangerine and studying a Bach cantata for her next performance."

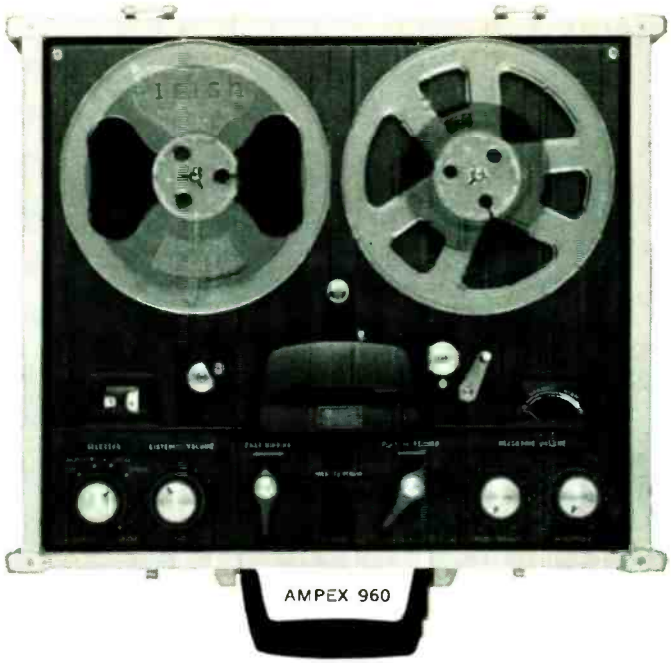
The same natural aplomb holds good for recording dates as well. Miss Forrester had her early professional experience in radio, and the microphone is an old friend. "I can just look at a mike and tell when it's alive. They say I'm crazy." The major hardship in recording, she finds, is that by the time the record is released she is convinced that she could sing the work much better. But she confesses that, at the moment, she is pleased with RCA Victor's *Das Lied von der Erde*, and she has not yet developed qualms about some Schubert songs to be released in the fall.

The mechanics of her art have never been a problem. "This girl has terrific concentration," said her husband with enthusiasm. "She can learn in an hour what it takes some people a week to learn." She studies the words first, then the rhythm and accompaniment; the melody comes last. With modern music, particularly twelve-tone works, her final test is to turn on the radio to the loudest jazz she can find and sing her part against it. Her voice is remarkably rich and full, though she is not yet thirty. "God helped me to mature early," she explains, "because He knows I want to retire young."

One of the major question marks which hovers over Maureen Forrester's career, as far as her public is concerned, is the matter of opera. Most singers get their first public acclaim in opera, and the fact that her reputation is flourishing outside the walls of any opera house is not only irregular but tantalizing. Her admirers are convinced that a voice like hers belongs on the opera stage, but its owner feels otherwise. "I wouldn't like opera," she insists (and she's already turned down some invitations). "It's really pure selfishness. I want to *sing*. Have you ever heard of any contralto role except nurses, mothers, and witches? And besides, I couldn't live up to the pressures of publicity. I mean this Callas kind of thing, for instance. I just couldn't do it. And that's one reason why I wouldn't like living in New York—the pressure is terrible."

Whether opera or no, however, as long as Miss Forrester continues to sing Mahler, most of her public will count itself lucky. The combination of Mahler and Forrester, which has made news since 1957, was fortuitous—and entirely due to one man, Bruno Walter. After a mutual friend recommended the Canadian contralto to the conductor, a meeting was, with some difficulty, finally arranged. ("You are obviously busier than I am," Walter commented over long-distance, "*You* set the date.") She sang, with the Maestro accompanying, and he was

Continued on page 14



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MAUREEN FORRESTER

Continued from page 12

reluctant to stop. "Let us have some more music; I am still thirsty," he announced, after she had gone through some Schubert and Brahms. Afterwards, as she was telling him happily about a planned trip to Morocco, he remarked casually that he was sorry she was going, because he would like her to sing Mahler's Second with him in New York. The only immediate response she could articulate, she remembers, was "Oh, Dr. *Walter!*" Morocco was postponed forthwith, and she set about learning Mahler, whom she had never sung before.

"I love singing Mahler," she said. "It is so

different from being a prominent soloist. Mahler treats the voice almost like an instrument, and you're part of the whole. You have to feel the whole concept. And, of course, he is sentimental, and so am I. But when you're singing, you can't let sentiment get in your way. You have to remain analytical, because if you become involved emotionally it affects your breathing. When I sing with the Philharmonic this week, I will be singing to please Walter. He is a wonderful man. He makes you feel as if you're the only one who can give him just what he wants. And in rehearsals he is so kind and encouraging—he always smiles and says, 'That's very good!' "

The fact that she has become a Mahler specialist has not narrowed Miss Forrester's interests in other directions. She has recently commissioned works from Marvin David Levy and Benjamin Lees, and she has some other pet projects in mind. "I'd love to do a Verdi Requiem with Leontyne Price. She'd sing me off the stage, but I'd like to do it anyway. Leontyne's marvelous. We've done so many Beethoven Ninths together she calls us the Be-nign Girls."

Some of the critical praise bestowed on Maureen Forrester has been nothing short of awesome, but she especially treasures compliments from unofficial sources, among them the comment of a burly Midwesterner who came backstage during one of her U.S. tours. "Honey," he announced, slapping her across the shoulders with a resounding whack, "I paid for the whole series, and if I never hear another note I've got my money's worth!"

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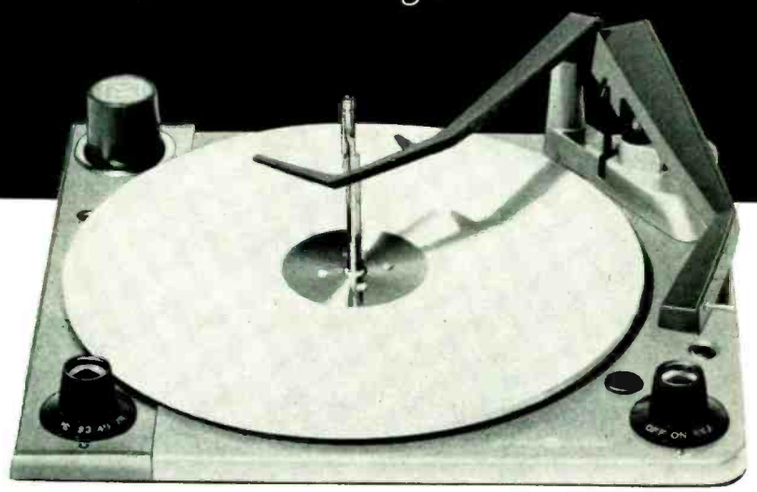

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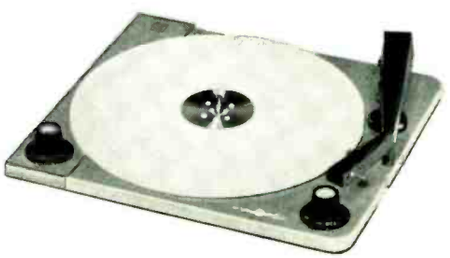

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Notes from Abroad

COLOGNE—Back in 1941 the unknown young conductor of the Aachen Municipal Opera urgently needed a flower maiden for a production of *Parsifal*. Remembering that an actress friend was studying voice, he asked her to help him out. The lady's unheralded operatic debut was a local success and later in the season, after intensive cramming, she sang Oktavian in the same conductor's *Der Rosenkavalier*. Today this pair has reached the top rung of the German musical ladder: Herbert von Karajan has the choicest posts in Europe; Elisabeth Grümmer is now climaxing a career that has led her through opera, oratorio, and Lieder across the starriest stages of the Continent—Berlin, La Scala, Covent Garden, Rome, Florence, Paris, Glyndebourne, Edinburgh, Salzburg, and Bayreuth.

Cheerful Soprano. We recently spent a comfortable hour talking with Frau Grümmer, a radiantly healthy and cheerful Wagnerian soprano, at her hotel here in Cologne, where she was resting up between appearances in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. "Last night during the performance an electrical storm hit Cologne and the lights went off. We could have continued with the auxiliary spotlights, but the organ wouldn't play. So we sat in silence for one half hour. But that's the musician's life and I love it, fair or foul weather. Music is for me an inner necessity."

Frau Grümmer's home is in West Berlin, where she has been a member of the Municipal Opera since 1946. Her favorite role is the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, which she undertook just last year and will repeat during the Berlin Festival Week in September, along with Strauss's *Capriccio* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. This month begins her fourth triumphal season at the Bayreuth Festival, where she sings Eva in *Die Meistersinger* and Elsa in *Lohengrin*. The summers of 1953–1956 she spent at the Salzburg Festival, playing among other roles Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, and Agathe in Weber's *Der Freischütz*. The latter role, incidentally, brought Frau Grümmer, who has never appeared in the States, to the renewed attention of the American record public. Of her performance in Electrola's complete *Freischütz*, the *New York Times*, for example, said, "If Grümmer sounds as good on the operatic stage as she does on these discs, we have been missing an important singer."

Grümmer

Too Busy for Visiting. Asked why she has never come to America, Frau Grümmer sighed: "I've nearly come several times, but chance and tight schedules have always intervened. Two summers ago I was invited to sing at the Hollywood Bowl. The performance was to come during an eight-day break in my Bayreuth schedule. I could have flown to California and back and taken a chance on change of climate and other uncertainties. But perhaps, after all, I'm not the glamorous type for America. I'm a very simple person. I have no instincts for publicity. I don't force my way. If people want to hear me, they ask for me and I'm happy to sing for them. Is this a strange attitude? I don't know. The highest peaks for a singer are Bayreuth and Salzburg and these I have reached. I'm very happy."

For the present, at least, stay-at-home Americans will have to find solace in Elisabeth Grümmer's recordings. She is under exclusive contract to Electrola and can be heard on a variety of recent operatic and Lieder discs: the aforementioned *Der Freischütz*, plus Mozart, Strauss, and Wagner offerings. Speaking of a brand-new Berlin-made recording of Haydn's *Creation*, Frau Grümmer beamed: "One of those rare sessions where everything seemed to go right."

And Now Gloria. Electrola is intensifying its export schedule to the U.S.A. Those German-produced recordings not released by Capitol or Angel have been appearing on American counters with the Odéon label, which is superimposed to hide the Electrola dog (RCA has rights to "Nipper" in the United States). Now a new label has been registered in the U. S. and Canada: Gloria. (If these facts leave you confused, consider this one: two of Electrola's sopranos are Hildegard Hillebrecht and Helga Hildebrand.)

RANDALL WORTHINGTON

LONDON—Seventy-four exhibitors, Britons all except two from the U.S. and five from the Continent, demonstrated their newest wares at the London Audio Fair held at the Russell Hotel late last spring. As on previous occasions, aural demonstrations were in full cry in a honeycomb of rooms on three floors. Beds and bureaus had been carted out, equipment and publicity materials carted in. In most rooms there was a smartly tailored individual who in free moments poured gin and tonic for influential visitors in the adjacent bathroom. This was the salesman in chief, and he rarely got to bed before three in the morning. The social side of this as of all trade fairs is exacting.

Continued on page 22

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 20

Many of the bedroom doors were left open for any passer-by to drift or shoehorn himself in. At favorable points in the corridors one could hear four or five demonstrations going at once. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in operetta cut across the *Emperor* Concerto, which contradicted Louis Armstrong's demonic trumpet, which tore a Vivaldi suite to shreds or got into a tangle with the triumphal music from *Aida*. I have never heard such genial polytony since as a boy I stood equidistant from a blare of carrousel organs on my hometown fairground.

A magnetic tape recorder built in the Rhineland dispensed, among other curiosities, the roar of a football Cup Final crowd, the jubilance that greeted Lindbergh after his transatlantic flight, and the voice of Emperor Franz Josef recorded around 1900. This last demonstration was, I must admit, given with the door shut. While one audience listened, at the same time looking at an explanatory film, a second audience queued in the corridor for the next "house."

Stereo Marches On. I myself joined one of the many such queues as just another potential customer and ultimately came into the presence of a young woman demonstrator. After playing some *Kleine Nachtmusik* through her firm's amplifier and speakers, she startled her audience by remarking flatly: "In sound quality, truth of pitch, and various other subtle ways, monophonic reproduction is recognized to have an advantage still over stereo." Other demonstrators to whom I quoted this assertion repudiated it, some forcefully, some hesitantly—in the manner of recent and not wholly willing converts.

Stereo was first generally marketed here in 1958. In discussing its "take-up," three dealers made comparisons with the American market. All agreed that the American buyer is keener on technical-cum-artistic innovations than the average Briton, who tends to ponder more before replacing his equipment. Undoubtedly there is in this country a lingering minority prejudice against stereo. This may derive in part from cheap stereo sets and inferior stereo recordings which between them have in some cases caricatured the real thing. A trader-member of the Fair's board of management whom I asked what, in his opinion, was the proportion of stereo systems to monophonic setups in British homes answered, "Not more than 10%." He added, however, that the picture was rapidly changing and that as soon as the BBC concludes its current experiments and offers regular stereophonic programs the stereo battle will be won.

Local Feuding. With the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan put in an intensive recording spell for Walter

Continued on page 24

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CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 22

Legge, EMI's chief of operations. As a result Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4, the Handel-Harty *Water Music*, and Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and Symphony in A (K. 201) will be coming forth on the Angel label. Later, at London's Festival Hall, Von Karajan conducted Mr. Legge's Philharmonia Orchestra under the auspices of Mr. Legge's Philharmonic Concert Society in Handel (Suite No. 2), Strauss (*Tod und Verklärung*), and Schumann (Symphony No. 4). The concert got unfavorable notices from six leading newspaper critics out of nine.

Ten days afterward, again under Philharmonia auspices, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (in private life Mrs. Walter Legge) gave a Hugo Wolf centenary recital to which none of the critics was invited. Some people jumped to the conclusion that the Press had been barred in retaliation for the tepid or reproving notices that followed Miss Schwarzkopf's last appearance as the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*) at Covent Garden. In a letter to the Press, Mr. Legge strove to correct this inference. He had barred the critics from his wife's recital, he explained, because he did "not wish the audience which had enjoyed the concert on Sunday to read on Monday that they were wrong to do so." Mr. Legge added that it was becoming increasingly difficult to induce artists to expose themselves to "the often ill-mannered and ill-informed abuse and tasteless levity which pass for musical criticism in the London Press."

The program for the next Philharmonia concert, conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini, included a 1,500-word essay by Mr. Legge entitled *The Critics Criticised*, in which he replied seriatim or collectively to the critics who had written hostilely of Karajan's conducting and (in the case of the Schumann symphony) his rescoring policy. As one of the critics embroiled, it would not be fitting for me to enter into the merits of the case here. What may be said, however, is this. To judge by public rejoinders which several of them have made to Mr. Legge, the critics consider that in trying to shelter his artists from adverse notices he is doing a disservice to the performers and to music itself.

CHARLES REID

COPENHAGEN—Although in Denmark, in sharp contrast to Sweden and Norway, there is a preference for German popular music on records (due, no doubt, to Denmark's geographical position and the fact that German TV programs can be seen nearly all over the country), American musicals are usually smash hits whenever they are staged —*My Fair Lady* is currently playing in Copenhagen to capacity houses—and one of the most outstanding successes since the war has been *H.M.S. Pinafore*, produced at the Royal Theatre. Here King Frederick some-

Continued on page 26

It is an axiom in high fidelity that no single speaker is capable of ideally reproducing the entire musical range of a symphony orchestra. At least two speakers, each specifically designed to reproduce a part of the sound spectrum, are needed to do a really adequate job.

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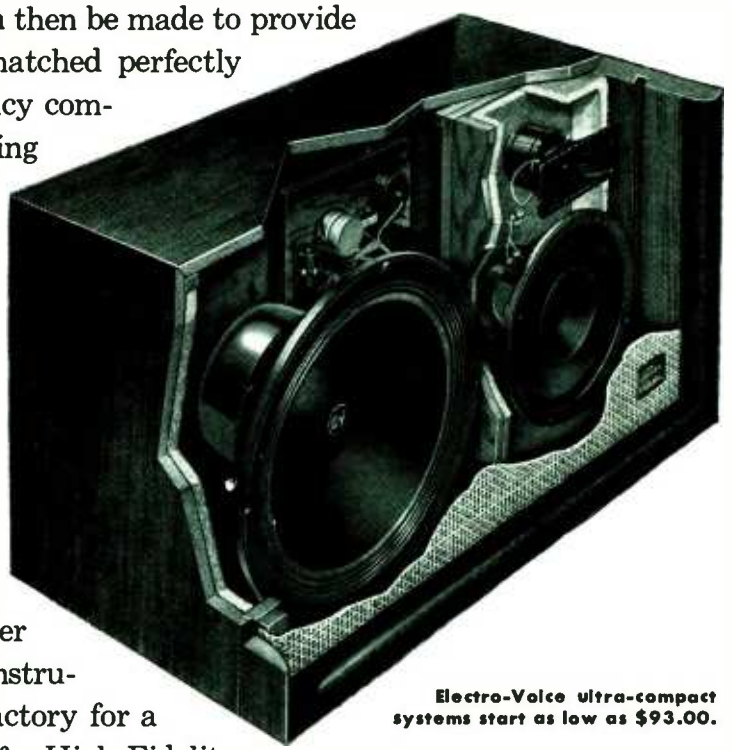

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CIRCLE 36 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 24

times conducts the excellent orchestra for his royal pleasure at private concerts. British Saga has lately recorded this body of musicians (billing it the Royal Danish Orchestra) with various conductors and soloists; the discs are being released in the United States on the Forum label.

Records are comparatively expensive in Denmark, hence a large proportion are singles and EPs. Most LPs are the 10-inch size. The stereo era has only just begun.

Nielsen on Discs. Carl Nielsen (1865–1931), Denmark's great symphonist, is, of course, the first name in Danish classical music and has fared relatively well by the Danish recording companies. HMV, for instance, offers Nielsen's violin concerto with Yehudi Menuhin and the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Mogens Wøldike, and has also issued eleven of his songs sung by Aksel Schiøtz. From Tono come several important chamber music works and the Sixth Symphony (*Sinfonia semplice*), conducted by Thomas Jensen, a pupil of Nielsen. Metronome, an independent label with a good catalogue of serious music, has the violin sonata, Op. 35, and two preludes for solo violin played by Kai Laursen. Mention should also be made of the brilliant piano suite, Op. 45, recorded for Decca by the young Swedish pianist Inger Wikstrom.

A recent release, and the most interesting of them all, is Nielsen's Second Symphony coupled with the charming *Little* Suite for string orchestra, performed by the Tivoli Concerthall Symphony Orchestra with Carl Garaguly conducting and issued on the Fona label. Hungarian-born Garaguly has previously been permanent conductor of the Stockholm and Bergen Philharmonic orchestras. He shows an exceptionally fine understanding of Nielsen's music, and there is every reason to believe that this disc, soon to be brought out in stereo, will be considered the standard version of these two works.

Records from Elsinore. Near Elsinore (where Hamlet saw his father's ghost) is the two-year-old Louisiana Museum, with its exciting collection of modern art and handicrafts. Chamber music concerts are regularly given in one of the large exhibition rooms, and the director, Mr. Knud W. Jensen, music lover and discophile, has had the happy idea of recording some of the music played. The first release was of two wind octets by Beethoven and Haydn performed by the Prager Musici. This proved so successful that another disc was soon issued, this time of modern Danish music: Vagn Holmboe's String Quartet No. 4 and Herman Koppel's sonata for cello and piano with the celebrated cellist Erling Bløndal Bengtsson, at one time teacher at the Curtis Institute. Further recordings are in preparation; the Louisiana discs are now distributed in Denmark by Fona.

FRANK HEDMAN

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MODEL TT3 Single speed (33⅓ rpm)—belt-driven by hysteresis-synchronous motor—same turntable material and shaft-bearing design as TT4 and TT5. *Less arm,* $59.95.

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CIRCLE 19 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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2518 HOURS AGO, THERE WERE 27 TURNTABLES-NOW THERE IS ONLY ONE

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Garrard
world's finest

CIRCLE 22 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A Bandwagon at 7.5 ips

THESE DAYS, the recorded-tape industry is hardly bothering to protest that reports of its death have been grossly exaggerated. It's too intent on producing evidence of its vitality. It has survived the seemingly fell blow it suffered two summers ago when the stereo disc became a commercial reality; its faithful have remained faithful. And now there is a new tape bandwagon —running at 7.5 ips and using four tracks—whose momentum seems to be rapidly increasing.

Item: The Ampex-sponsored United Stereo Tapes processing and merchandising coöperative has reached a yearly sales rate claimed to be in the million-dollar bracket, and the MRIA (Magnetic Recording Industry Association) hopefully looks forward to a ten-million-dollar total for all recorded-tape sales by late 1960. There are even predictions (which one may perhaps feel are on the optimistic side) that within five years a 150-million rate may be feasible.

Item: Just recently, Capitol/Angel and RCA Victor (two of the three majors who have been waiting to make sure what tape collectors want most) independently inaugurated regular releases in the 4-track 7.5-ips form. With these companies' repertory potentials added to those of Decca, Everest, London, Mercury, Westminster, and some twenty-one smaller firms whose output makes up the United Stereo Tapes catalogue, the tape medium's handicap of insufficiently wide manufacturer and artist representation should be substantially lessened.

Item: Although owners of tape equipment have had to put up with the early scantiness of tape repertory and sluggish distribution systems, statistics indicate that over a quarter-million recorder/players with 4-track facilities are already in use. It is further believed that of the backlog of some half-million existing 2-track models a large percentage has been or is rapidly being converted to the newer mode.

Item: The MRIA is urging all its members to follow the example of Ampex and UST in stamping their products with the following pledge to purchasers: "The producer and distributor of this fine stereophonic music will continue to honor your requirements for music and entertainment recorded at 7.5 ips on open reel for as long as the market exists." This is hardly a firm guarantee binding in perpetuity, but it is at least a welcome expression of the industry's good faith in the currently dominant tape form.

All of this, of course, suggests an industry acceptance of what many audiophiles and engineers have been arguing all along: the practicable ideal in home sound reproduction is best met by the technical-quality standards (in expanded frequency and dynamic ranges, finer stereo channel differentiation, durability, etc.) that only 7.5 tape recordings have as yet consistently achieved.

Naturally, however, not every home listener demands, or can afford, the practicable ideal in technical quality. Long ago the record industry recognized the necessity of catering to all kinds of tastes, budgets, and notions of convenience. It is a sign of tape's growth and versatility that it too now is beginning to diversify its previously rather specialized appeals.

How successful its attempts will be to command a mass—as well as a connoisseur—public remains to be established. The 3.75 tape-cartridge promoted by RCA Victor and a few others has not had an auspicious career. The more radical 1⅞-ips cartridge system recently devised by CBS Laboratories and scheduled to be launched commercially in 1961 by Columbia, Minnesota Mining, and Zenith, has as yet substantiated its claims only in laboratory-model test demonstrations. But it can be safely expected that some such easy-handling cartridge system will come to play an important role in the expanding world of home entertainment.

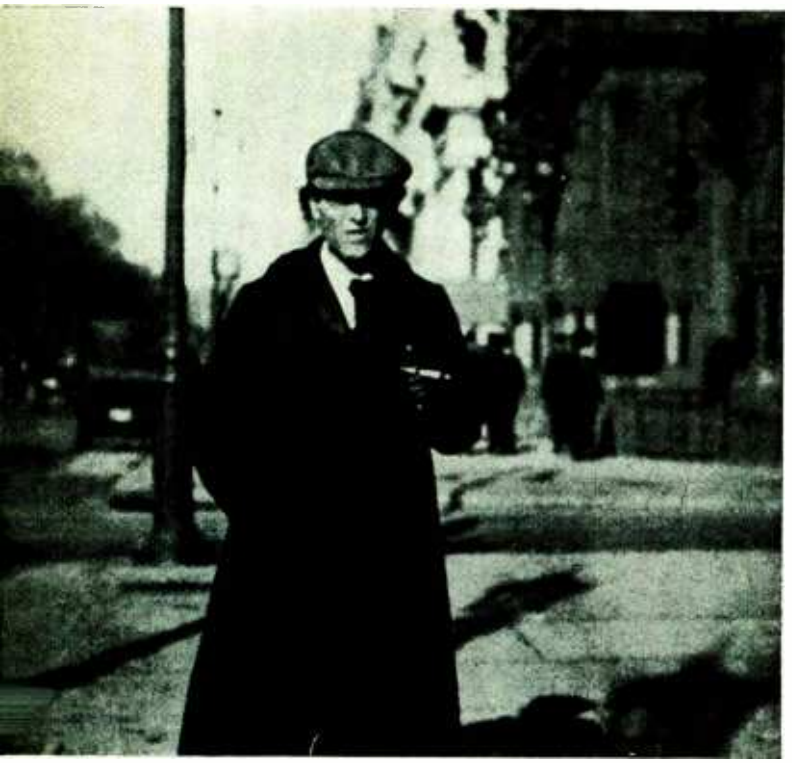
It goes without saying that this journal will continue to watch all new tape developments with the liveliest interest. Meanwhile, however, we are delighted to salute the accelerating growth of a still relatively new medium. The connoisseur's bandwagon is rolling merrily along. It might very well set the pace for what may become an impressively long and genuinely popular procession.

R. D. DARRELL

as HIGH FIDELITY sees it

The macabre story of a poet

Mr. Mahler



An afternoon stroll on Fifth Avenue, near 59th Street.

WHEN HE RESIGNED from his post as director of the Imperial Opera House in Vienna in the spring of 1907, Gustav Mahler had already been engaged by the Metropolitan Opera House to conduct in New York the following season. It was a move to an uncertain situation in New York from an insupportable one in Vienna, made at a time when the afflictions that beset Mahler were not of the sort a sea change would dispel.

He was by nature a black-spirited mystic, savoring mostly the concept of his own homelessness—as a native of Bohemia in Austria, as an Austrian among Germans, and as a Jew throughout the world. The consolations of Judaism he deprived himself of by becoming a Catholic—a conversion much speculated over in the coffee houses as perhaps having less to do with the dark night of Mahler's soul than with the prospects of brightening his position with the Emperor Franz Joseph. Even in the best of court favor, Mahler was out of sorts in the court opera; he regarded himself as a composer, one who could afford the summer months of solitude for his own work only by being a conductor of other men's the rest of the year. Mahler did his composing at Maiernigg am Woerthersee in a tiny cottage that he had come to consider—in that year of 1907—uninhabitable. His five-year-old daughter died there that summer; and on the day she was buried he learned that he was a cardiac who could have little hope of ever being cured.

Mahler, who was forty-eight at the time, and his wife Alma Schindler, who was in her twenties, sailed from Cherbourg on the *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria* to arrive for the first time in New York on the morning of December 21. They moved into a corner suite on the eleventh floor of the Majestic Hotel on West 72nd Street, and on their first day the two made their way down Broadway to the Met's executive offices. There they learned that *Tristan und Isolde* was listed for the night of January 1, 1908, with Heinrich Knote and Olive Fremstad in the lead roles and Mahler as conductor. Mahler took all the rehearsal time he could get to shape Wagner in the U.S. to his Viennese standards, and the preparatory work resulted in a finished performance the New York music critics assessed quite variously. "Nothing short of a revelation" (*Herald*) was one end of the range. The other (*Sun*) was: "A question is raised whether, so far as this one work is concerned, Mr. Mahler has taught us anything we did not already know." In her *Memories and Letters* Alma Mahler wrote "His triumph was immediate," and particularly, she suggested, because of the discernment of the audience that provided it. "Americans are very critical and do not by any means receive every European celebrity with favor. They really know something about music."

Mahler was easily the hardest-working conductor at the Met that season. Along with five *Tristans*, he rehearsed and led performances of *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, a revival of *Don Giovanni* (in which he accompanied the recitatives on a piano altered to sound like a harpsichord), and *Fidelio* (in which he inserted the *Leonore* Overture No. 3 between the first and second scenes of the last act, a custom which continues still at the Met). On February 29,

by JOSEPH RODDY

who got into a whirlpool — and went home to die.

in Manhattan

In a lifeboat, on his last Atlantic crossing.

two months after his debut there, Mahler handed his resignation to Heinrich Conried, the reigning Rudolf Bing, who told the press that the conductor's action was to be taken in a Pickwickian sense, or as a mere formality. "He tendered it," Conried explained, "in order to be able to protect his dignity and to assure himself as to his artistic standing and authority under the new Metropolitan regime."

The new regime involved a sizable jockeying about in the formation of socialite financiers on the Met's board of directors, the attendant resignation of Conried, the enthronement of impresario Giulio Gatti-Casazza, and the engagement of Gatti's favorite prince—the forty-one-year-old Arturo Toscanini from La Scala. In a letter to his friend Emil Gutmann in Vienna, Mahler gave another coloration to the case. "Because of Conried's retirement and my refusal to take over his position, everything here has unfortunately fallen into a state of suspension," he pointed out. "At the moment I don't know whether or for how long I will return here next season. . . ."

After a summer in the Alps, where he worked on orchestrating *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mahler and his wife returned to New York and to conducting at the Met. This time they lived at the old Savoy on Fifth Avenue and 58th Street, where Enrico Caruso and Marcella Sembrich were also tenants. At the opera he gave the first New York performance of Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*; guided Sembrich, Geraldine Farrar, Emma Eames, and Antonio Scotti through a superb *Figaro;* and continued with *Fidelio*, which he dressed up by having the scenery sent over from Vienna. The Beethoven performance particularly impressed the affluent elements in the audience, who became convinced that Mahler should be provided with a symphony orchestra of his own in New York.

Mahler's last performance in the pit at the Met was for the operatic potpourri marking the farewell appearance of Sembrich on that stage. A short time before, he had been invited by Walter Damrosch to lead the New York Symphony in three concerts on November 29, December 8, and December 13, 1908 in Carnegie Hall. Like the New York Philharmonic then, the New York Symphony was a part-time employment for its members, who regarded their guest conductor's seriousness as unsporting. For his first program Mahler prepared the Schumann Symphony No. 1. Reginald de Koven, writing in the *New York Post*, observed that the conductor adorned the piece with rubatos and ritards that "made Schumann sound like Delibes." But no critic who wrote about it was as forthright in assessing the event as Mahler himself was. He asserted that his performance was reduced to the level of farce because the members of the orchestra either did not come to the rehearsals, or left before the rehearsals were completed.

The following week, for the first U.S. performance of the *Resurrection*, his massive Second Symphony for chorus and orchestra, sixty of the 115 instrumentalists attended the first rehearsal. At a dinner party after the performance, Mahler denounced not only the orchestra

but even the program notes written for the event. "Let the public have its own thoughts about the works performed," he shouted. "Let no preconceived ideas be instilled." It was the kind of outburst that embarrassed his hostess and gave Mahler a reputation for antic behavior whenever he found himself in the social swirl he basically abhorred. At Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer's town house, he studied her invaluable El Greco, *The Cardinal*, and left his hostess gasping when he remarked, "This I have seen somewhere." Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson asked Alma, "How can a beautiful woman like you marry an old, ugly, impossible man like Mahler?" In Philadelphia the conductor and his wife were taken through a museum where they decided all the ancient Sumerian art was "fraudulent," at Niagara they gazed at the falls, and at Boston they missed out at a lunch in their honor given by Mrs. Isabella Stewart Gardner because they could not find the entrance to her "gigantic cistern" of a house. They called on the Roosevelts at Oyster Bay, shared a box at the Met with Prince Troubetzkoy, and at Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House attended the U.S. premiere of Richard Strauss's *Elektra* (which Mahler disliked so much that he wanted to leave in the middle). With Otto Kahn they took part in a séance on Broadway, and the conductor also went to the sculptor Karl Bitter's studio at the Palisades for a New Year's Eve party.

It was not the kind of living Mahler had expected to find himself caught up in. "I am in such agitation," he wrote to Bruno Walter. "How absurd it is to allow oneself to be submerged by the brutal whirlpools of life. To be unfaithful to oneself for only an hour! But I write this only here. When I go out of the room I become positively as absurd as all the others. Remarkable! When I hear music —also while conducting—I hear quite positively answers to all my questions, utterly clear and sure. Or, really, I find quite clearly that there are no questions."

Bettmann Archive

The question of death was becoming more obsessive than ever, but the question of work was settled for him by two substantial New York socialites, Mrs. Samuel Untermeyer and Mrs. George R. Sheldon, who had heard his *Fidelio* together and who were determined to put a fully professional orchestra at Mahler's disposal. In April of 1909 he led the New York Philharmonic in two trial concerts at Carnegie Hall, playing Beethoven's Seventh at the first of them. When he had finished the second, Mahler said he would take over the direction of the orchestra in the fall only if he could have complete hiring and firing control over its membership. Mrs. Untermeyer and Mrs. Sheldon arranged matters as he wished.

After a summer spent partly in Paris (where he posed for the sculptor Rodin) and partly in Toblach (where he finished the Ninth Symphony), Mahler was back in New York for the fall season in Carnegie Hall. He brought with him the violinist Theodore Spiering from Vienna, who became the Philharmonic's concertmaster, replacing Richard Arnold. Two thirds of the orchestra he had first led in the spring was now replaced by new members. The former musicians' coöperative had been reorganized into a musical corporation with a permanent, full-time membership. Forty-five concerts were scheduled for the year and included among them was a Historical Series—a survey of orchestral music from Bach to Mahler. For his first program of the regular series Mahler started off with Beethoven's *Consecration of the House* and *Eroica*. After the intermission, he played Liszt's *Mazeppa* and Strauss's *Til Eulenspiegel*. Rome-was-not-built-in-a-day reviews were mixed with rapturous accounts of his accomplishments. "I am very pleased with my appointment here," he wrote to a friend in Vienna on November 19, 1909, two weeks after his first season with the Philharmonic began. "I made special jokes recently at a Bach concert for which I set the basso continuo for organ, and on a Steinway prepared-spinet of very great tone I conducted and improvised—entirely after the art of old. Startling things came forth."

His own music came forth that season on the program of December 16. The audience in Carnegie Hall that night found an unusual announcement in the program. In deference to the composer's wishes, it read, there would be no notes or explanatory comment on the First Symphony of Gustav Mahler. The Philharmonic's program annotator that season was H. E. Krehbiel, who was also music critic for the *New York Tribune*. In a discussion beforehand, Mahler gave Krehbiel the reason for his edict, and the annotator promptly passed it along to the audience. "At a concert, Mahler says, one should listen, not look—use the ears, not the eyes. All writings about music, even those of musicians themselves, he holds to be injurious to musical enjoyment." No writer on music has been known to endorse this view.

After the performance, when Krehbiel got out of his annotator's uniform and into his critic's clothes, he wrote of the Mahler First in the *Tribune*: ". . . the audience received it with what might be described as courteous applause, much dubious shaking of the heads, and no small amount of grumblings." A few days later Mahler set down his own thoughts about that premiere: "I ploughed here my First," he wrote to Bruno Walter. "How it shines without exceptional understanding. On the other hand, I was very pleased with this youthful product. When I conduct it, a burning painful perception crystallizes: What sort of world is it that throws out such sounds and shapes as counter-

images? The Funeral March and the outbreaking storm shine like a burning accusation at the Creator." But the Mahler touch was on other music too. When he played the Berlioz *Fantastique* on January 7, 1910, the *Post*'s critic wrote: "Mr. Mahler has worked a miracle—no other word seems strong enough to describe what he has done in two months in making his new organization the equivalent of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, if not its superior. No wonder the Mahlerites are growing so fast in numbers. . . ."

As they grew, so did the detractors. The case against Mahler at the Philharmonic was his editing, reorchestrating, and general tampering with pieces the critics knew so well they could spot his changes. Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* was touched up instrumentally and cut down in duration—to eleven minutes from the usual twenty-four. His shortening of Bruckner's Fourth was uncontested, but his doubling of woodwind parts in the Beethoven *Pastoral* troubled the *Times*. "Would it not have been better," that paper's critic asked, "to let Beethoven paint his picture with his own colors, in his own mixtures and proportions, even though they are not so vivid, so brilliant, or so deeply shadowed . . . ?" The *Tribune*'s critic came down hard on Mahler for his adornments to Beethoven's Fifth: "The first evidence of erraticism occurred in the famous cadenza in the first movement," Krehbiel wrote. "This, Mr. Mahler phlebotomized by giving it to two oboes and beating time for each note—not in the expressive adagio called for by Beethoven, but in a rigid andante. . . . Into the cadence of the second subject of the third movement, Mr. Mahler injected a bit of un-Beethoven color by changing the horn part so that listeners familiar with their Wagner were startled by hearing something very like Hagen's call from *Götterdämmerung*." To triangulate the fuss, the *Musical Courier* took out after Mahler's critics, and particularly Krehbiel, whose two jobs it found irreconcilable. "No one with an iota of ordinary sense will value the criticisms of the *Tribune* on the Philharmonic concerts or on Mr. Mahler's conducting, knowing that the person who writes these also writes for that society its Notes on the Programs," the *Courier*'s editorialist wrote. "It has all the color of a bribe." The imputation here was that the Philharmonic had engaged an annotator with the understanding that he would, in return, harass its conductor. It cannot be believed, but the fact that it could be alleged is indicative of the atmosphere of intrigue Mahler moved in.

Bettmann Archive

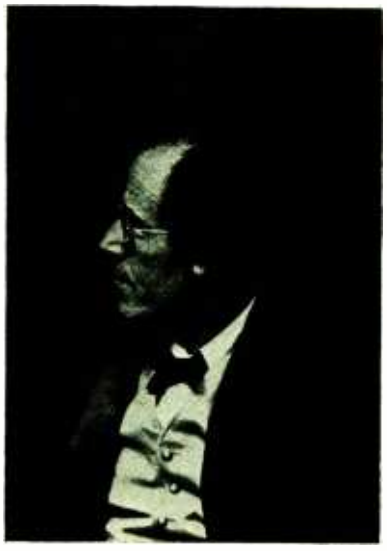
While the sniping and countersniping at Mahler kept the New York press lively, the conductor was having his own troubles with the Philharmonic's musicians. "My orchestra here is the true American orchestra," he wrote, "without talent and phlegmatic." Mahler's method of putting his musicians on the rack was to single out men in the back rows to play passages alone while the rest of the orchestra listened. When a bass player who had held up under his share of humiliations protested to the conductor that he never asked first-desk men to play alone, Mahler answered: "I'm afraid to take a chance on what I might hear." For a percussion man who had the bells tinkling instead of clanging in the *1812* Overture, Mahler left the podium, walked to the victim and extended his hand to congratulate him. "You are a wonder," Mahler said. "You are the most remarkable man I have ever seen in my life. I wish that you would give me a photograph of yourself so that I can take it to Germany to show it to my friends." At a *Pathétique* rehearsal for a performance he did not want to give but which the ladies' committee of the orchestra requested, he suggested the orchestra might do it best alone. "My directing of this piece is of no assistance to you whatever," he said, "and may only serve to interfere with your conception." Before rehearsing the *Lohengrin* Prelude, he rapped for silence, stood with baton raised, and without the orchestra having sounded a note, shouted: "Too loud!"

Three members of Mahler's Philharmonic are still living—George Braun, a sixty-nine-year-old percussionist in Abington, Pa.; Alfred Friese, an eighty-two-year-old timpanist in Bronx, N. Y.; and Herman Reinshagen, an eighty-year-old bass player living in Los Angeles. "He spoke very little if any English, as I remember," Reinshagen says, "but of course at that time the orchestra was very largely German. He was a frail little man, about five foot seven I would guess. We used to say he was Mahler from the neck up because the rest of him was not very prepossessing. He would drag one leg a little and we liked to say he had a five/four walk. I must say this though, his wife was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen."

Though the Philharmonic's microfilmed old programs do not list the performance, Friese best remembers rehearsals of Mahler's Seventh Symphony because of an altercation over the timpani solo starting the last movement. He was asked to play it *piano* the first day the orchestra worked at the piece, and Mahler shouted at him to play it *forte* the next day. "And if you'll decide tomorrow before the performance," Friese shouted back, "I'll do it whichever way you want it then too. The men got a good laugh at him over that, I tell you," Friese says, "and right away Mahler told me I was through. He called me back a few minutes later because he knew he had to have me play that part. And, you know, he was awfully nice to me after that." Friese still has the

Continued on page 85

by ROBERT C. MARSH



Mahler on Microgroove

A Selective Discography.

FEW MUSICIANS would claim neutrality on the subject of Gustav Mahler. Unlike the majority of his contemporaries, who, like Richard Strauss, have taken on the durable mien of classics or, like Hans Pfitzner, the more modest air of an acknowledged "minor composer," Mahler still provokes the most vigorous and even violent partisan exchanges.

This is not at all strange when we consider that Mahler is one of the few authentic Janus-faced figures in the history of his art, a musician of undisputed genius whose work represents a bridge between two different approaches to the technique of composition and the communicative potential of music itself. On one hand Mahler can be taken as the final representative of the nineteenth century in Austro-German music. We can trace his melodic gifts back to Schubert, his love of folklore and nature to Weber, and his strivings for the grandiose, the mystical-religious to Wagner. Yet the other side of Mahler is just as important, if not as plain. Anton von Webern, Alban Berg, and Arnold Schoenberg were all, in Schoenberg's testimony to their times, enthusiastic champions of Mahler. In his recent *Conversations*, Igor Stravinsky speaks of his high opinion of Mahler's conducting and concludes that Mahler the composer is "more significant in our music" than the incorrigibly popular Strauss of Garmisch.

Mahler has not suffered for champions beyond his own personal circle. Bruno Walter, his dedicated younger colleague, has done immeasurable good for Mahler's cause. Yet other conductors, among whom Dimitri Mitropoulos is a conspicuous figure, have provided another, and equally important, type of support by playing Mahler's music purely out of their regard for its merit, with their approach unaffected by any contact with Mahler the man.

The weight of anti-Mahler sentiment, both among critics and conductors, is not, however, to be underestimated. On the one occasion when Mitropoulos visited Toscanini, he asked the Maestro to consider the possibility of presenting a Mahler score to his nation-wide NBC Symphony audience, only to receive as his reply Toscanini's blunt judgment that Mahler's works were fit to be used only as toilet paper. Even today, the Vienna Philharmonic prefers to play Bruckner (a significant, but terminal, figure in the development of music) to Mahler; and German audiences, who heard no Mahler at all under the Nazis, include a smaller Mahler public than even those of nearby Holland—which became a Mahler stronghold during the composer's lifetime. Even such distinguished German conductors as Furtwängler played little Mahler, and, so far as I know, the current General Musical Director of Europe, Herr Dr. Prof. von Karajan, ignores Mahler completely.

That Mahler's music has its faults is undeniable, but a great deal of music that seems no less imperfect is played annually without eliciting the reaction that the presentation of a Mahler symphony draws from certain quarters. Without hearing Mahler we cannot appreciate the degree to which Shostakovich (and, indeed, almost every contemporary symphonist) is in debt to his influence in our century's changing concept of symphonic form. And without hearing Mahler we suffer a gap in the chronology of German music from Wagner to Schoenberg and his school.

In the anti-Mahler camp it is becoming fashionable to ignore these historical considerations and base one's judgment on claims to superior taste, suggesting that Mahler's admirers are rather vulgar faddists, whose opinions cannot possibly amount to much. But there is a musical answer to this. In a bitter reply to Olin Downes, who had called the Seventh Symphony, when revived by Mitropoulos in 1948, "detestably bad music," Schoenberg protested that one needed only to read the score to find "strokes of genius, which are never found in

lesser masters, on every page . . . in every measure, in every succession of tones and harmonies." This is not a matter of taste. One is within his rights in having limited interest in what Mahler has to say, just as one is within his rights in having limited interest in what Sibelius, Ravel, or Rachmaninoff has to say, but Mahler's achievement in creating a personal idiom and using it to express musical ideas which are distinctively his own demands recognition.

The role of the general music public in these exchanges has altered over the years, particularly since the beginnings of the long-play era, when, for the first time, all of Mahler's important works became available on records. It is a tragedy that the *avant-garde*, which adopted Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and other figures who respected Mahler, did not also take over these men's opinion of his value. Instead, as we know, they generated their own: that Mahler was neo-Wagnerian and beneath their superior sensibilities. Unfortunately, this attitude has carried weight with record makers, with the result that Mahler (as, for that matter, Wagner) has never received his due. Happily, there are indications that a change is taking place—perhaps particularly owing to stereo. The large orchestral forces for which Mahler wrote and the ensemble clarity which his music demands can be captured stereophonically with a consistency impossible in monophonic engineering. In this "Mahler year" more and more of his works are appearing in stereo, and we may hope for the day when we will have a completely new set of Mahler recordings which, for the first time, will permit us to sense in every case the effect of the score in a concert presentation.

As I write, three of the song cycles and six of the ten symphonies are already available in two-channel editions, providing the listener with some of the finest Mahler recordings ever available. Since it has been my experience that all that is needed to secure a favorable reception for Mahler is a truly effective presentation of his music, I am inclined to predict that the future will bring an increased number of Mahler recordings and, with them, a Mahler public so large that any charge of cultism can easily be refuted.

Meanwhile, let us survey the best of what is presently in the catalogue.

MAHLER'S First Symphony has been available in effective recordings since the 78 era, a fact that surely accounts in part for its now secure place in the American symphonic repertory. Sir Adrian Boult's stereo version for Everest (SDBR 3005) includes a repeat of the exposition in the opening movement which even Bruno Walter omits from his monophonic edition (Columbia ML 4958). (Walter told me that Mahler came to regard that repeat as debatable, although he permitted it to stand in the printed score.)

A large part of the effect of the score depends on subtle variations in dynamics and broad dynamic changes (*ppp* to *fff*), both of which Boult achieves with more success than most who have recorded this music. With the exception of the Walter disc, which retains documentary interest despite aging sonics, none of the monophonic sets really holds up against the Boult.

Although well established as a concert piece, Mahler's Second, the *Resurrection* Symphony, waited for a long time before it received an acceptable recording in the Bruno Walter edition available stereophonically as Columbia M2S 601. A studio production with greater compression than is desirable for the huge sound masses of the final pages, the Walter set is nonetheless a performance of exceptional authority. Its principal rival, the Scherchen version on Westminster stereo, WST 206, remains a dramatic performance, however, and the flaw in the original set of masters has been corrected in later pressings.

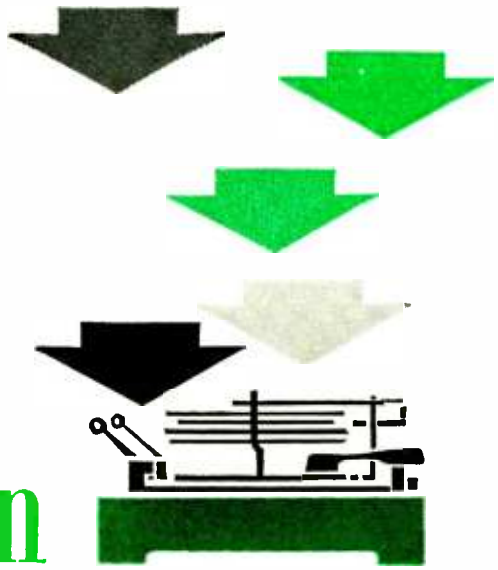
The Symphony No. 3, in D minor, opens, in the words of Ernst Křenek with "a marching song which all Austrian school children used to sing . . . produced by eight French horns playing full blast in unison, . . ." The score marks Mahler's most extensive use of folklore in his symphonic writing. An immense, formally loose-jointed, but consistently miraculous work, it is the most unjustly neglected of all Mahler's creations. Its first and only recording, SPA 70/71, is a monophonic set made in Vienna some years ago by the late F. Charles Adler, a musician long associated with Mahler and his music. A stereo edition by a Mahler conductor of equal authority would be welcome; meanwhile the Adler album provides a satisfactory introduction to this remarkable composition.

The Fourth Symphony, sketched out almost at the same time as the Third, carries as its final movement what was originally intended as the seventh and concluding section of the Third. More tightly written and direct than that work, the Mahler Fourth has for the average listener an accessibility roughly comparable to that of the First, and shares with it the advantage of fitting into the conventional time spans of records and concert programs. Unlike its two immediate predecessors, the Fourth requires no more extra forces for its production than a soprano soloist.

The first recording of this music was made by Bruno Walter some fifteen years ago, and since then we have never lacked for at least one fine account of the score. Rehearing that Walter set, transferred to LP as Columbia ML 4031, one is aware of the excellence of the performance—but also of the advances in recording technique since the close of the war. Apart from its documentary interest, the Walter must yield to several later versions, particularly the effective stereo recording given Reiner on RCA Victor LSC 2364. In stereo, Kletzki's warm and glowing reading on Angel S35570 is restricted in dynamic range and clarity when compared with the Reiner as heard over two speakers capable of handling large sound masses comfortably. Interpretatively, the Reiner set may seem at first a trifle cool, but it is a persuasive account of the music that grows in stature with repeated listening.

With the Fifth, Mahler shifted his emphasis from folk materials to purely instrumental *Continued on page 75*

A report on recent progress.



The CHANGE in RECORD CHANGERS

by RALPH FREAS

RESEARCH would probably reveal that the idea for a record changer struck its inventor the instant before he raised himself—with a sigh and some effort—from his favorite easy chair to turn over a disc that had begun playing only two and a half minutes before. In the early days of 78-rpm, physical exercise was companion to the joy of music in the home.

While the emergence of microgroove mitigated this problem more than a little, the changer held its attractions for many listeners. Laziness—let's call it "comfort"—is only a partial reason for its appeal. Anyone who has ever heard the well-amplified, nerve-bending screech made by a carelessly handled tone arm as the stylus scrapes across the grooves of a favorite record knows one of the basic advantages of an efficient changer mechanism. Quite simply, it is able to put a disc on a turntable and place a needle in the lead groove more accurately than a person can do so by hand. The recent appearance of special cuing devices to aid the less nimble-fingered turntable owner bears this out.

Still, the advantage of uninterrupted play is probably the most important reason for the continuing popularity of changers. People who require background music at dinner or music-to-putter-around-the-house-by find a changer essential to such special listening situations. The more serious among them have their cake and eat it by acquiring both a turntable and a changer for their high-fidelity systems.

Let's consider today's record changer. Has it improved substantially over earlier models? What features in current models are necessary or desirable? How valid, in the light of improvements, are hi-fi purists' arguments against incorporating a changer into a system?

According to changer manufacturers themselves, progress has been singularly undramatic. This is another way of saying that, while today's changer is quieter and more efficient than its predecessors, it has climbed to its present level of quality by degrees. It didn't make the trip in one bound. A helping hand—perhaps it was a push from behind—was given by the new and stringent demands of stereo.

Rumble, the noise due to mechanical vibration, had in some changers been brought within acceptable limits for monophonic reproduction. With the coming of stereo, however, the stylus no longer had to move in one plane only—laterally; it had also to move vertically. In converting their units to stereo (i.e., adding a stereo cartridge and an extra pair of leads), manufacturers soon found that the more free-moving stylus brought rumble from another direction and, with it, specific design problems. They had to insulate against vibration with more care. Bearings with less friction were needed. More efficient motors and heavier turntables solved the problems of some. The problem, it must be added, was shared by some turntable manufacturers.

How much rumble is an acceptable amount? Generally speaking, the only acceptable amount is that which cannot be heard over a given system. In all probability, the

person who buys an inexpensive changer with a relatively high rumble level will be using it with a low cost system incapable of reproducing those frequencies at which the rumble can be heard. On the other hand, the high fidelitarian who considers a changer an attractive adjunct to a wide-range system has two choices: he may buy an expensive changer with quite respectable specifications in this regard (rumble figures of some changers go as low as -45 db), or he may use the rumble filter on his preamplifier and accept the loss of some bass as part of the cost of convenience.

The lighter tone-arm tracking pressure required by stereo forced one improvement peculiar to changers. Some theorists pointed out that distortion and added groove wear resulted from the drag on the tone arm occurring as it pressed against the tripping mechanism that in turn started the change cycle. Pre-stereo units had tracking pressures on the order of twenty grams. Arm and cartridge had heft and acted in slam-bang fashion against the sturdy trip. But stereo reproduction demands tracking pressures of not more than seven grams and, for changers, this meant more sensitive trip mechanisms. Accordingly, tracking pressures on some units now go below five grams and tripping mechanisms can be activated by even lighter pressures.

The most valuable quality in any player (manual, changer, or turntable) is the ability to spin the record at unvarying speed. In the matter of reducing speed fluctuations (responsible for wow and flutter), changer manufacturers have made important progress. A few years ago speed variations of one per cent and more were not uncommon. Today many have been reduced to 0.25 per cent and less, and better changers compare favorably with some turntables in this respect.

An interesting sidelight to the problem of minimizing wow and flutter concerns the weight of the turntable itself. In general, the platters on most changers are comparatively light. Designers of the separate turntables preferred by hi-fi purists have, on the other hand, used very heavy well-balanced turntables whose large mass and flywheel action swamp out speed fluctuations. Size and weight of the turntable, while offering obvious advantages, cannot be considered alone, however, and neither can the motor that drives it. The interrelationship between the two is the important thing. Stated another way, weight alone is no criterion for fine performance; it's how the design engineer uses it.

One desirable improvement in changers is a provision for manual play. Time was when many units had to be operated automatically or not at all. Most changers today incorporate disabling or clutch mechanisms that free the tone arm from the changer mechanism proper either when the arm is in the PLAY position or even from the REST position. In the latter case, the unit can be used exactly as a turntable and separate tone arm. In the former, the user can move the tone arm manually to any band on the record but the arm automatically returns to REST at the end of play.

Like separate tone arms, the tone arms of changers are angled and pivoted in such a way as to reduce tracking error to a minimum. Theoretically, the longer the arm, the lower the tracking error (all other things being equal). Purists tend to look askance, therefore, at the shorter changer arm. Actual measurements, as reported in HIGH FIDELITY's Equipment Reports, indicate a maximum tracking error of three degrees even on some very low cost units. Better units have less, and in these cases the difference in tracking error between the changer arm and a separate 10-inch tone arm is fractional. As important as length is positioning of the arm. The positioning of the lateral pivot point is perhaps more critical in reducing tracking error than most people think. A variance of an eighth of an inch from the template can be very important. When one considers that tolerances in changer manufacture can easily be held to a thousandth of an inch, it is not surprising that tracking error is held to a respectable minimum.

There are a number of things that the buyer of a changer should take into consideration:

1) Quiet operation. No hum and rumble? Of course. But aside from these important factors, the changer mechanism itself should not intrude with annoying clicks and buzzes. Listen to a unit before buying.

2) Accessibility for adjustments. The tone arm of a changer should permit three adjustments: for stylus pressure; for height of arm as it swings over the edge of the platter; for setting down accurately on the lead-in groove. It is not important whether the adjustments involve knurled nuts or screws. The important thing is to be able to get at them without difficulty.

3) Ease of changing stylus and cartridge. A cartridge shell that slips off the tone arm is certainly more desirable in this respect. If the shell doesn't come off (most do), be sure that the arm swings up sufficiently so that the cartridge is easy to get at.

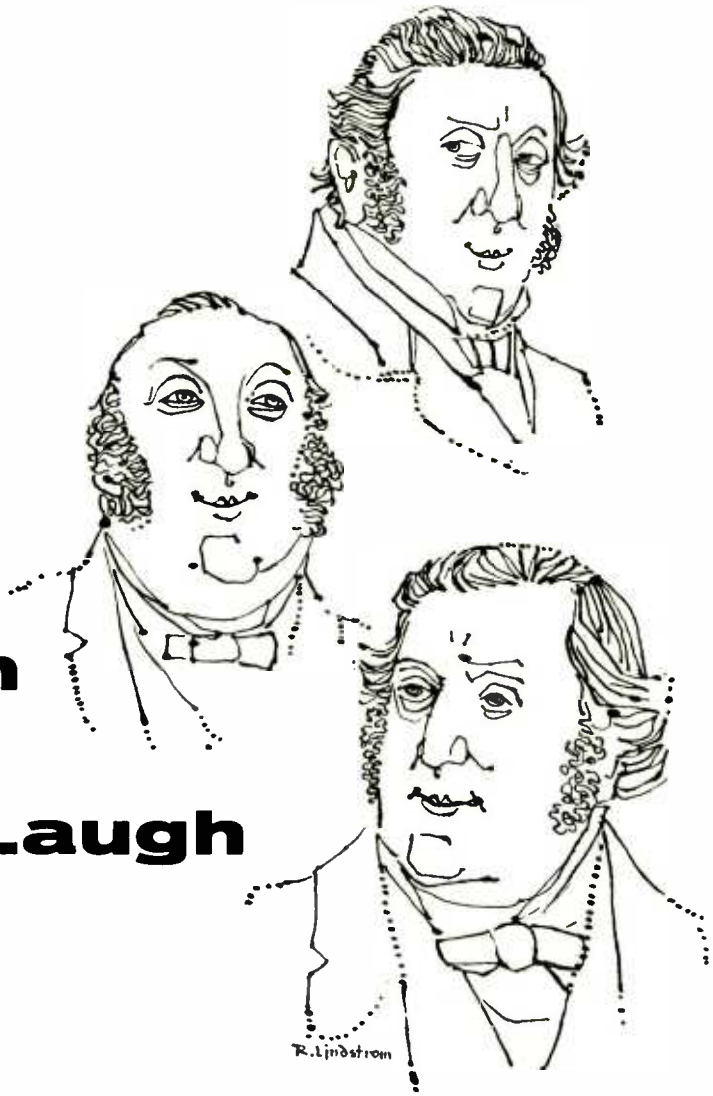
4) Shock-mounting. Insulation of the turntable from vibrations (such as those that can be set up merely by walking across the floor) prevents annoying groove skipping. Make certain the unit you are considering is well equipped in this respect.

5) Gentle changing. While all changers are designed to handle a record with as much care as possible, some will be gentler than others. This is a case in point for doing some comparison shopping.

6) Gentleness of arm operation. The ease with which the arm places the needle in *Continued on page 83*

by Patrick Cairns Hughes

The Swan Who Could Laugh



People who like to stand in reverence of their favorite composers often should get to know them better. Gioacchino Rossini, for instance, found life largely a huge joke.

Nobody has yet made a collection of the *bons mots* of Gioacchino Rossini—largely, one suspects, because to sift the authentic from the spurious would be a major, perhaps impossible, undertaking. Rossini has been made the subject of countless anecdotes that involve episodes in which he never took part, and he has been credited with a good many epigrams and cynical witticisms that he never uttered. All this misattribution is quite unnecessary. In Rossini's case, truth is funnier than fiction. From contemporary accounts of the "Swan of Pesaro" (surely one of the least appropriate nicknames to be attached to a mercurial personality) and from his letters, it is possible to construct a really faithful portrait of this man who good-humoredly laughed at life.

As a young man, Rossini had a boisterous side which found expression in the performance of practical and otherwise undignified jokes. There was the occasion, for instance, when to pass the time on a coach journey from Ancona to Reggio d'Emilia, he disguised himself as a professor of music and announced to his fellow passengers that he was a mortal enemy of Rossini. He spent the journey singing the words of his own operas to execrable tunes in a cracked voice (in fact, Rossini had an extremely good voice) to show his superiority to "that donkey, Rossini." An unknown admirer in the coach grew so angry that he had to be restrained from physical assault on the "professor" for "slandering Italy's favorite." And there was his appearance with Paganini during a Roman carnival, when they dressed up as old women and, playing the part of blind street singers to their own

guitar accompaniment, made a neat profit begging through the streets of the city.

There is even in the early Ancona-Reggio coach-ride incident a demonstration of the element above all others which predominated in Rossini's wit—namely, a strange and recurrent expression of self-disparagement. It is a quality particularly apparent in the years of his retirement—or perhaps we notice its incidence more often during the long years of his "great renunciation" when, in the absence of any operatic activity, his comments and observations are all that posterity has inherited. His remarkable collection of some 180 miscellaneous pieces which he called his "Sins of Old Age," or *Péchés de vieillesse* (and on which Respighi drew for the music of *La Boutique fantasque*) is a typically self-disparaging title comparable to his frequent description of himself in later life as "pianist, fourth class." A nineteenth-century English biographer attributed this ranking in "the pianistic hierarchy" to Rossini's having been taught to play scales only with the thumb and first finger—a nice idea, if a little uncharacteristic of one who did not relish doing things the hard way. If we did not know from Liszt that Rossini was a superbly accomplished accompanist, however, the mere fact that he called himself "pianist, fourth class" would make one at once suspicious that he was nothing of the sort. It was, in fact, a joke he was greatly attached to; Verdi was to cherish a letter from "Rossini, ex-composer and pianist of the fourth class, to the illustrious composer Verdi, pianist of the fifth class."

Rossini's depreciatory references to his own music are found in every period of his life. "I thought after hearing my opera, the Venetians would think me mad. Not at all: I found they were much madder than I." It was in these words that Rossini spoke of the prodigious success of *Tancredi* in 1813, while fifty years later, in 1863, the title of his *Petite Messe solennelle* was deliberately and characteristically misleading. So far from being "little," this work is, in fact, considerably longer than most Masses with which we are familiar.

It was when he was writing the *Petite Messe solennelle* that somebody commiserated with Rossini about the unpleasant sound of train whistles in the neighborhood of his house at Passy and was answered by the protest: "I like them. The sound reminds me of the happy days of my youth when I heard it so often, particularly from the gallery at the first performance of *La Cenerentola*." The notorious premiere of *La Cenerentola* took place in Rome in January 1817. Four months later came the first performance of *La Gazza ladra* at La Scala, as spectacular a success as *Cenerentola* had been a failure. The impact of *La Gazza ladra* on the public was tremendous and caused Marshal Massena, the commander of the occupying forces in Milan, to exempt Rossini from military service —"a decision," the composer commented, "worth a whole division to Napoleon."

The wit of the satirist who in his music caricatured the newly developing romantic obsession with program music—he divided one of his *Péchés de vieillesse*, the piano piece called *A Little Pleasure Trip in the Train*, into sections with titles like "The Devilish Whistle," "The Sweet Melody of the Brake," "The Terrible Derailment," "Funeral Ode," and "Amen"—was naturally spiced with a strongly noticeable dash of mockery. There was much truth in his verdict that "Monsieur Wagner has beautiful moments but he also has some bad quarters of an hour" ("*M. Wagner a des beaux moments mais des mauvais quarts d'heure aussi*"), and even more in the story which used to delight Verdi so much. This concerned Meyerbeer's nephew who, on the death of his uncle, composed a funeral march which he took to Rossini for criticism and comment. Rossini looked at it and replied, "Charming, charming, my dear fellow. But, frankly, wouldn't it have been much better if you had died and your uncle had written the funeral march?"

Rossini's humor was also based on a well-developed sense of the ridiculous, as in his description of the singers in an operatic ensemble looking "like porters lining up for a tip," and his composition of an aria on one note, with the tune in the orchestra, for a woman singer whose entire compass contained only this one tolerable note. "Lovers of that note will be delighted," explained Rossini. Occasionally there was a touch of good-natured malice in his wit. He announced that he would be delighted to receive the tenor Enrico Tamberlik, "but only on condition he hangs up his C sharp with the hats and coats outside—he can take it away when he goes." More rarely there was genuine bitterness, as in his remark, on hearing many years after the opera's first performance that the Paris Opéra was going to put on the second act of *William Tell:* "What! The whole of it?"

The taste in food of Rossini, the gourmet, finds an eloquent memorial, of course, in the composer's invention of the *tournedos Rossini* (filet mignon garnished with *foie gras* and mushrooms); and it was a side of his character which was known far and wide in his lifetime and which was clearly of a very cosmopolitan nature. There is a charming letter from Rossini to his compatriot in London, Michael Costa, to whom he wrote from Paris in 1866: "The cheese sent me would be worthy of a Bach, a Handel, a Cimarosa, imagine if it is not worthy of the old man of Pesaro!! For three consecutive days I tasted it and moistened it with the best wines in my cellar, and I swear I never ate better food than your Chedor Chiese (cursed be the Britannic spelling). . . ."

One of the most typical of all Rossini letters, however, was one in reply to a gift of *pâté de foie gras* sent by a correspondent (unnamed in the copy of the 1848 Neapolitan periodical where I first encountered this document a few years ago) who, having heard Rossini "frequently spoken of," secretly wrote to the *illustre maestro* in the following terms:

"My dear sir,

"You have the general reputation of being a maestro who is great, obliging, and an epicure. To the epicure I send herewith a terrine of *pâté de foie gras de Strasbourg;* to the great and obliging maestro I address the hope that he will be gracious enough to grant my request to help one of his future rivals. I have a grandson who is a musician and does not know how to write the overture to the opera he has written. Would you, who have composed so much, please be so kind as to let me know your recipe? If you were still concerned with the joys of applause my request might perhaps be indiscreet, but now that you have renounced all claims to glory, you should no longer be jealous of anybody.

"I am, dear Signor Rossini, yours, etc."

Rossini, living at that time in retirement in Bologna, was clearly touched by the present of a terrine of the all-important constituent of *tournedos Rossini* and replied by return of post and in terms of almost equally florid formality. It is a letter in which almost every aspect of Rossini's wit is so clearly revealed that I feel it deserves to be quoted in full:

"I consider myself greatly flattered, *o signore*, by the preference you show for my recipes over those of my colleagues in your concern for the embarrassing position in which your grandson finds himself. But first of all I must tell you that I have never written anything unless there was no possible means of avoiding it. I do not understand what pleasure can be derived from giving oneself a headache, getting cramp in one's hand, and developing a fever merely to amuse a public whose greatest delight is to be bored stiff by every effort to entertain it. I am not and never have been in any way a champion of the right to work, and I find that the most beautiful and precious of all human rights is that of doing nothing. I am able to indulge in this since acquiring—not thanks to my operas but to one or two happy financial speculations to which (without my knowledge) I was made a party—the incomparable privilege, the right *par excellence*, the right above all rights: that of doing nothing. If, then, I have any really practical advice to offer your grandson, it is to emulate me in this rather than in anything else.

"If, however, he still persists in his bizarre and inconceivable idea of wanting to work, then I will tell you the principal recipes which I had to use during the miserable period when I too was obliged to do something. Your grandson will be able to choose the one that suits him best.

"First general and invariable rule: Wait for the eve of the first performance before composing the overture. Nothing is better for inspiration than necessity, the presence of a copyist waiting for your work sheet, and the sinister spectacle of the impresario tearing his hair in desperation. All true masterpieces in this form have always been written in this way. In Italy, in my time, all impresarios were as bald as the palm of your hand at thirty.

"Second recipe: I wrote the overture to *Otello* in a small room in Barbaja's palace in Naples, where the fiercest and baldest of all impresarios locked me in by force, with a plate of boiled macaroni swimming in water and with no seasoning, threatening that I should not leave the room alive until I had finished the last note of the overture. You can try this recipe on your grandson, but, whatever happens, don't let him smell the delicious smell of the *pâté de foie gras de Strasbourg*—this kind of delicacy is suitable only for composers who do nothing, and I thank you very much for honoring me with the present you have sent me.

"Third recipe: I wrote the overture to *La Gazza ladra* not on the eve but on the very day of the first performance, up under the roof of La Scala in Milan, where I was sent by an impresario just as bad and almost as bald as Barbaja, and watched over by four stagehands. This quartet of executioners had been ordered to throw my overture, phrase by phrase, out of the window to the copyists in the courtyard below, who then delivered the parts to the first violin to rehearse. In the event of there being no pages of music to throw into the courtyard, the barbarians had orders to throw *me* to the copyists. The loft of your house, dear sir, could be used for the same purpose in the case of your grandson. God forbid that he should ever suffer any bigger falls. [Rossini was making play with the word "*caduta*," which in Italian means "fall," but also—in the theatrical sense—a "flop."]

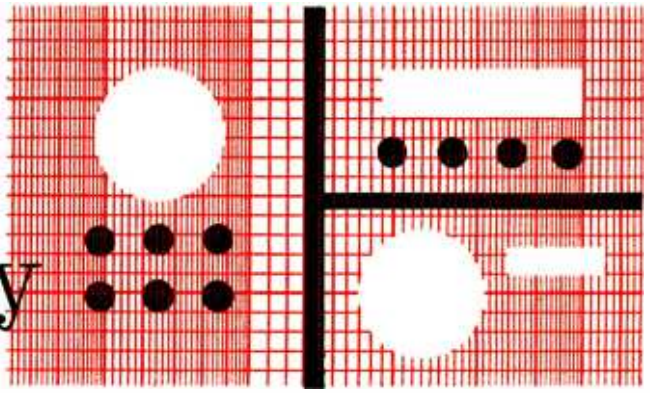
"Fourth recipe: I did better with the overture to *The Barber of Seville*. I did not write it specially to take the place of the one originally written for this extremely *buffa* opera; instead, I used another, composed for *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*, an opera excessively *seria*. The public was enchanted by this solution. Your grandson, who has so far written no overture for his new opera, might well try this and use an overture he has already composed." [It has long been known that Rossini did write an overture especially for *The Barber of Seville*, but there has always been a suspicion that, though it was played at the *first* performance of *The Barber*, what we now call the overture replaced it almost immediately after the premiere. It is now clear from Rossini's letter—and, I believe, clear for the first time—that the original was never played at all.]

"Fifth recipe: I composed the overture, or rather the instrumental introduction, to *Le Comte Ory* fishing with a rod, with my feet in the water at Petit-Bourg in the company of M. Aguado, who never ceased, the entire time I was fishing, to talk to me about Spanish finance, which I found indescribably tedious. I do not imagine for a moment, Sir, that in similar circumstances your conversation would have anything like the same unnerving effect on the imagination of your grandson.

"Sixth recipe: I found myself in the same sort of nerve-shattering situation when I wrote the overture to *William Tell* in an apartment *Continued on page 84*

The consumer's guide to new and important high-fidelity equipment

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS

Viking 85ESQ Stereo Tape Deck and RP-62C Amplifier

AT A GLANCE: The Viking 85 Series tape decks offer a high degree of flexibility and good performance at a reasonable price. They are honestly rated, and are capable of recording and playback with quality compatible with all but the most elaborate high-fidelity systems.

The Viking RP-62C is a very compact, self-powered amplifier providing complete recording and playback functions for one channel. Its playback equalization is fairly close to the NARTB standard, with a slight rise in the upper middle frequencies and a loss of response below 100 cps. When playing back recordings made on the same machine, it is desirable to use a control amplifier which does not affect the higher frequencies but is capable of a few db of bass boost below 100 cps. A tone control on the RP-62C allows adequate compensation for the high frequency response.

A pair of RP-62C amplifiers with the 85ESQ deck forms a complete tape system capable of stereo or mono half-track recording and playback (including erase functions), and quarter-track stereo playback. Tape deck sells for $172 and the amplifier for $77.50.

IN DETAIL: The Series 85 Viking decks have two motors: a 4-pole induction motor for capstan drive, and a 4-pole variable torque take-up reel drive motor. Resulting reduction in the number of belts and slip clutches makes tape handling functions more reliable and reduces the likelihood of wow and flutter from an improperly adjusted drive system (a common weakness of many inexpensive single motor tape decks).

The capstan is belt driven from the induction motor, and has a 1½ lb. balanced flywheel on its shaft. A knob on the panel selects either 7½ ips or 3¾ ips tape speeds. The tape is passed over a feeler arm which shuts off the motor automatically when the end of the tape passes through the heads.

All control of tape motion is by means of two concentric knobs. A small button in the center of these knobs is pushed in to turn on power to the motors. The bar-shaped inner knob is turned clockwise to operate the tape in the forward direction at normal speed. In its counterclockwise position, the tape remains in contact with the heads, and the brakes on both reels are released. The tape may be moved manually for cuing and editing purposes. In the center position the tape deck is in neutral, with brake tension on both reels and tape resting clear of the heads.

The outer control knob is in the form of a ring. Turned clockwise, the tape is in the fast forward mode; counterclockwise, it is in rewind. Neither knob can be operated unless the other one is in neutral position.

A digital counter, reading up to 999, indicates tape footage, and is very convenient for indexing purposes.

The 85 Series decks can accommodate up to four heads. In its most basic form, the 85P has a single half-track head for monophonic playback. The unit tested, Model

85ESQ, is the most elaborate form of this recorder. It has three sets of heads: half-track stereo erase, half-track stereo record/playback, and in-line quarter-track playback. Each head is brought out to its own jack on the back of the tape deck chassis. To prevent ground loops, the record/playback heads are insulated from the chassis, and the grounds are carried through the erase head circuits.

The entire head assembly is shifted 0.034 inches across the tape surface when playing quarter-track tapes. This is done by a knob on the head cover, operating through a cam. When playing the second half of a four-track stereo tape, the head position must be shifted in this manner to bring the head gaps into alignment with the recorded tracks.

The response of the heads was measured by playing a standard NCB 7½ ips alignment tape, using a commercial preamplifier known to have good NARTB playback equalization. The response was quite flat over most of the audio range, being down 3 db at 50 cps (probably due to the preamplifier) and 5 db at 10 kc. There was no significant difference between the response of the half-track and quarter-track heads.

Wow and flutter were approximately 0.1% and 0.2% respectively. These are somewhat variable, depending on the mechanical adjustment of the deck, but the values measured were typical of what this particular unit would do, exactly as received from a dealer.

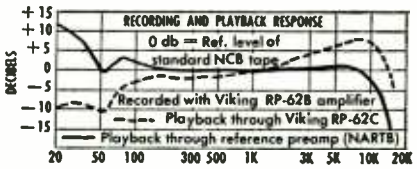
Although in most respects the tape handling was satisfactory, there was a tendency for tape spillage on rewind, when the machine was shut off. On fast forward, the tape did not come to a swift halt when the switch was turned off, but coasted somewhat.

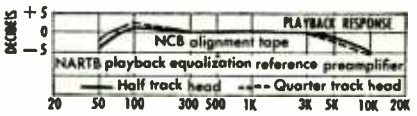
The RP-62C record/playback amplifier contains recording and playback equalization circuitry, a bias/erase oscillator, and an eye tube for indicating recording level. Separate level controls are used for recording and playback. A tone control, effective on playback only, is supposed to provide a plus or minus 5 db variation about the NARTB equalization curve at 10 kc.

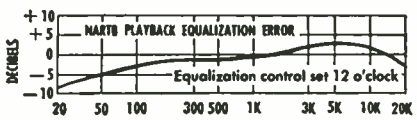
The bias oscillator frequency is in the 60 to 70 kc range, permitting recording up to 12 or 14 kc. A synchronizing connection is provided so that when two RP-62 units are used for stereo recording, they may be interconnected to lock both bias oscillators to the same frequency (necessary to prevent beating between the oscillators).

The gain is high enough so that a 0.15-volt signal at 1,000 cps is sufficient to close the eye when recording (0 db recording level). A microphone input is also provided. considerably more sensitive than the high-level input.

The playback equalization is approximately the NARTB characteristic, with a reduction of lows and slight boost of highs. This was measured with the so-called "Equalization" control (actually a treble tone control) set at its midposition. A slight improvement in high frequency equalization could be obtained by use of this control.







These equalization errors were somewhat accentuated when a test recording was made and played back with the RP-62C. When a tape was recorded with the RP-62C and played back with the commercial preamplifier used in the test of the tape deck, the response was very flat to about 10 kc, and usable to slightly above that frequency, but the lows were considerably boosted below 100 cps. The notch in the response at 50 cps was observed with all recordings made through the RP-62C. It was not checked with a tape recorded on another machine.

The rated signal/noise ratio of the RP-62C is 50 db or better. Our measurements were not quite that good, with hum being 43 to 45 db below 0 db recording level. It is not generally audible in playback, however. A 0-db recorded signal at 1,000 cps produced up to 3.6 volts output from the playback amplifier. The gain of the RP-62C is more than adequate.

The intermodulation distortion (using 60 and 5,000 cps, mixed for a 4:1 ratio in the preamplifier output) was about 2.5% at both 1 volt and 3 volts output. When the IM test tones were recorded on tape and played back, the IM measured about 4% for levels 20 db below maximum, rising to 6% at −5 db and 16% at 0 db.

Channel isolation, either between quarter tracks or half tracks, was very good. In fact, any crosstalk was below the hum and noise level and was not measurable.

The Viking system suffers from something common to most, if not all, systems where the electronic portions are not in the same unit with the deck. There is no positive interlock to prevent accidental erasure, if one should forget to switch from record to playback immediately after finishing a recording. Fortunately, the eye tube glows brightly when recording, and serves as a reasonably effective warning light.

In listening and use tests, the Viking components proved to be very satisfactory for all but the most critical home recording applications. Dubbing records or off-the-air programs from FM stations onto tape and playing them back showed little or no degradation of the original quality. The mechanical operation of the system was

smooth and trouble free, except for the tendency to spill over on rewind, noted previously. A mechanical adjustment may cure this trouble (the instruction manual is very complete and gives a procedure for all mechanical adjustments on the heads and drive system), but we did not try this.

In conclusion, the Viking 85 Series tape deck, in one of its forms, can serve as part of a good quality music system at a relatively low price. With one or two RP-62C amplifiers, it becomes a complete stereo tape record and playback system. The design of the deck is such that it can be purchased with a minimum complement of heads and the other heads and amplifiers added on later as funds allow, without any obsolescence of the original equipment. H. H. LABS.

Sherwood S-2200 FM-AM-MX Stereo Tuner

AT A GLANCE: The Sherwood S-2200 has separately tunable AM and FM tuners, with built-in provision for a multiplex adapter. The FM tuner section is essentially the same as the S-3000 II tuner (reported on in HIGH FIDELITY, October 1959). The AM section is quite similar to that of the well-known S-2000, a nonstereo AM-FM tuner.

The FM performance of the S-2200 places it among the finest in respect to sensitivity and stability. The AM tuner, in its wide-bandwidth mode of operation, is capable of sound quality approaching that of the FM tuner, and is fully suitable for AM-FM stereo broadcast reception. The price of the S-2200 is $179.50.

IN DETAIL: The FM and AM tuners are completely separate (except for power supply), and have separate tuning-eye tubes. The switching functions of the S-2200 are performed by a group of five push buttons under the tuning dials.

Three of the buttons are marked AM, FM, and MX. Pushing any one of these turns on power to the tuner and connects the selected output to both of the output jacks on the rear of the chassis, marked Channel 1 and Channel 2. The first two choices are obvious but the MX refers to the multiplexed program of an FM station using this method of transmission and usable only when a Sherwood Series AMX multiplex adapter is installed in the tuner. A cutout portion of the chassis, normally covered by a metal plate, will accommodate the multiplex adapter. Its own level and subcarrier tuning adjustments protrude through holes provided in the S-2200 chassis, and it obtains its power from a socket on the S-2200. When the MX button is pressed on a receiver equipped with the adapter, the multiplexed program (assuming one is available) is fed to both output jacks.

Various stereo options are selected by depressing appropriate buttons. The AM and FM buttons, when both are engaged, connect the FM program to Channel 1 output and the AM program to Channel 2 output. When FM and MX are used simultaneously the main carrier program goes to Channel 1 and the subcarrier program goes to Channel 2.

The button marked OFF shuts off power to the tuner. HUSH ADJ, not really a push button, though it looks like one, is a rotating control for setting the FM interstation quieting level. When it is fully counterclockwise, the squelch circuit is disabled. As it is rotated clockwise, a point is reached where the background hiss disappears. When a station is tuned in, its program appears with no sound between stations. The adjustable control sets the minimum signal level which will override the squelch circuit. This is one of the best squelch circuits we have used, since it does not introduce any plop or thump when tuning on or off a station.

Although one can tell in what mode the tuner is being operated by observing the positions of the push buttons, there are light signals on the dial face which leave no doubt whatever in the mind of the user. The horizontal-bar type tuning eyes used for the AM and FM tuners are lit only when their associated tuners are in use. In addition, when any two buttons are depressed, a red indicator marked STEREO lights

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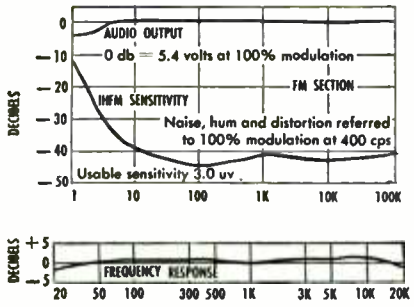
REPORT POLICY

Equipment tested by HIGH FIDELITY is taken directly from dealers' shelves. We report only on regular production-line models. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with HIGH FIDELITY'S editorial department. Most equipment reports appearing here are prepared for us by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, a completely independent organization whose staff was responsible for the original Audio League Reports. A few reports are prepared by members of the HIGH FIDELITY staff or by other independent testing organizations working under the general supervision of Hirsch-Houck Laboratories. All reports are signed.

up. When the MX button is depressed, a second red indicator marked MULTIPLEX goes on.

Two slide switches complete the control complement. One chooses either the wide band (15 kc) or narrow band (5 kc) AM selectivity. The other disables the AFC on FM. The AM tuner in the narrow-band position is useless for high-fidelity reception, but in the wide-band position it delivers excellent sound quality. Direct comparison between AM and FM broadcasts of the same program shows that only a very slight loss of extreme highs on the AM side marks any audible distinction between them. This observation assumes the use of a reasonably good AM antenna to keep the background noise level low. A ferrite antenna is built in, but this does not provide sufficient signal strength (even in our metropolitan New York location) to reduce background hiss to levels comparable to that of the FM tuner. Another note of caution on the AM tuner: keep the ferrite antenna rod away from AC power lines or transformers, as it can introduce a noticeable amount of hum modulation on AM programs.

The AFC reduces drift some twenty-five times. This is one set which certainly could get along without AFC, since its drift from a cold start is only 35 kc in fifteen minutes without AFC. Line voltage variations have virtually no effect on the tuner. The AFC, however, does not degrade the performance in any way, and may be of some assistance to the user who doesn't care to look at the eye too closely while tuning the set.



The IHFM sensitivity of the S-2200 (FM section) is 3.0 microvolts for a noise and distortion level 30 db below 100% modulation level at 400 cps. According to Sherwood specifications, it should be 1.8 microvolts. No tuner in our experience has met that figure, but, on the other hand, very few have even approached the 3 microvolt figure we measured. The S-2200 is undoubtedly one of the two or three most sensitive FM tuners currently available.

The distortion of the S-2200 FM tuner was below 1% for any signal level greater than 15 microvolts, with 100% modulation. It did not at any time reach the ¼% figure listed in the Sherwood specifications, but was typically about 0.8%. The hum level of the FM tuner was at least 55 db below 100% modulation, which is very good.

A comparison between this test data and the results of our earlier test of the S-3000 II shows them to be very similar, with the S-2200 having slightly better sensitivity.

No description of the Sherwood S-2200 would be complete without mention of the silky, effortless flywheel tuning mechanism. It is one of the smoothest we have used, and makes tuning a real pleasure. H. H. LABS

Audiogersh Stereotwin 210-D Stereo Cartridge

AT A GLANCE: The Stereotwin 210-D is basically similar to the Stereotwin 200, reported on in HIGH FIDELITY, February 1959. Both the frequency response and channel separation have been improved in the current version of this excellent cartridge. Price: $34.50.

IN DETAIL: The Stereotwin 210-D is manufactured by ELAC in West Germany and imported by Audiogersh Corporation. It is a moving-magnet type of cartridge, with a stylus assembly easily replaced without tools.

The cartridge is supplied with a separate mounting clip installed in the arm. The cartridge proper clips into the holder, making the installation a very simple matter. Two slots in the holder permit a choice of cartridge angle with respect to the record surface, so that an optimum angle may be selected for tone arm or record changer installation.

The older Model 200 cartridge had a three-wire output system, with small soldering lugs for terminals. The 210-D has a four-wire output, in accordance with current practice, and uses slim terminals with separate clips which slide over them.

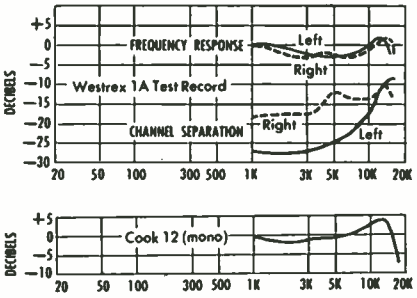
The output of the 210-D is rather high, about 11 millivolts per channel at a stylus velocity of 5 cm/sec at 1,000 cps. This compares with a 7- to 9-millivolt output from the Model 200 under the same conditions.

The outputs of the two channels are matched very closely, being within 1.5 db of each other at all frequencies up to 15 kc (the upper limit of the test record). Channel separation is adequate up to 15 kc also, and is distinctly better than the channel separation of the 200. Frequency response is smooth and free from sharp peaks. It rises about 3 db at 12 kc, and does not fall appreciably until well above 15 kc.

The Stereotwin 210-D specifications stress freedom from induced hum. This was verified in our tests, which showed no trace of induced hum in usual installations, and in measurements the hum shielding of the Stereotwin was superior to all but one of the magnetic cartridges we have tested so far.

The listening quality of the Stereotwin 210-D is excellent. It is free from strain or harshness, and altogether pleasant to listen to. Needle talk is quite low, and is not audible more than a foot or so from the cartridge. The compliance is as high as that of most current stereo cartridges, as evidenced by the low frequency resonance of 15 cps in our test arm.

As an indication of the progress of the art, the improved Stereotwin 210-D cartridge is priced substantially lower than its predecessor H. H. Labs.



Tandberg Stereo 5 Tape Recorder

AT A GLANCE: The Tandberg Model 5 is a compact, relatively light portable tape recorder capable of playing monophonic half-track tapes and half-track or quarter-track stereo tapes through self-contained amplifiers. With an additional recording amplifier it can also make stereo recordings in either half-track or quarter-track versions.

Its mechanical performance is fully professional, giving excellent results when playing prerecorded tapes. Tandberg's Model 5 is priced at $419.50.

IN DETAIL: The Tandberg Model 5 is the latest in a series of tape recorders based on the same mechanism, but with increasing flexibility.

The tape mechanism has achieved an enviable reputation for low wow and flutter, particularly at low speeds. The Model 5 has three speeds: 7½ ips, 3¾ ips, and 1⅞ ips. The rated wow and flutter at these speeds are 0.15%, 0.2%, and 0.3% respectively. These figures proved to be most conservative, with our measurements showing wow and flutter of 0.10% and 0.01% at 7½ ips, 0.11% and 0.02% at 3¾ ips, and 0.19% and 0.08% at 1⅞ ips. These are completely professional performance figures and well beyond the usual requirements of home tape recorders.

The signal-to-noise ratio is specified as 55 db below maximum recording level and is considerably better than we have ever encountered in a machine intended for home use. Skepticism vanished on finding that the Model 5 had a 55-db signal-to-noise ratio at its lowest tape speed, 57 db at 3¾ ips, and 59 db at 7½ ips. These figures are even more noteworthy when one considers that this is primarily a quarter-track machine. Incidentally, no hum can be heard or measured at full gain.

Harmonic distortion at maximum recording level (which causes the eye tube to close completely) is rated at 4% at 400 cps, dropping to 1% at −10 db. Measurements made at 1,000 cps did not differ greatly from the published figures, although intermodulation distortion appears high at almost any usable recording level, at least when compared to the distortion levels of other components of a high-fidelity system.

Frequency response in playing back a standard 7½-ips alignment tape such as the Ampex 5563A5 or the NCB "Signature" is very good, being within 2.5 db from below 50 cps to over 13 kc, and actually rising at 15 kc. These measurements were made at the 4-ohm loudspeaker output of the lower channel amplifier. This is the recommended place to take off an output for driving a subsequent control amplifier, or to drive an external speaker directly. Since the output is only 3 watts per channel, this is not likely to be a popular method of operation.

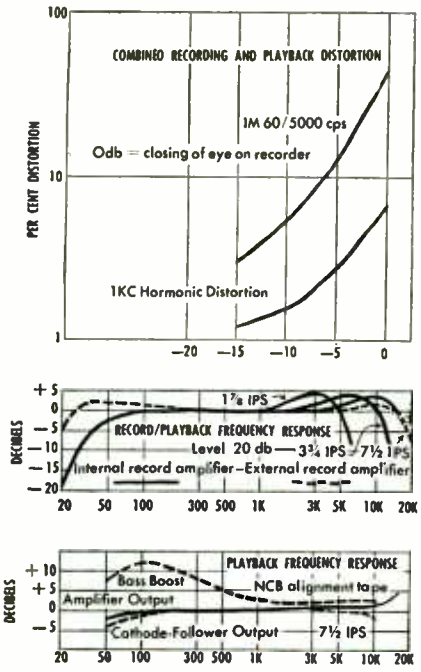
A switch at the rear of the recorder connects the output terminals to cathode follower outputs instead of to the voice coil output. Output is greatly reduced in this mode, and frequency response suffers at both ends of the range.

A bass boost switch may be used for loudness compensation, on playback only. As the response curve shows, this is not a good characteristic, being a bit on the boomy side. This function is best handled by the usual preamplifier instead of in the recorder.

The record/playback frequency response at 7½ ips tape speed is within plus or minus 4 db from 40 to 15,000 cps, using the built-in recording amplifier, and within plus or minus 2 db from 23 to 17,000 cps using the external recording amplifier which is provided for stereo recording. These responses, of course, are excellent and more than adequate for any ordinary applications of the Tandberg Model 5.

Even at 3¾ ips tape speed, the response is good to beyond 11 kc, which is adequate for many uses formerly reserved for the higher tape speed. At 1⅞ ips, the highs disappear rapidly above 5 kc, making this suitable for dictation or casual voice recording.

To a considerable extent the Tandberg Model 5 shows signs of a series of minor



modifications of the original monophonic recorder. This manifests itself in a rather complex control setup, particularly when used in a stereo system. The need for a separate recording amplifier for making stereo recordings is unfortunate, both due to the interconnections with the main recorder and to the fact that the extra amplifier cannot be carried in the handsome leather carrying case which houses the recorder. [Tandberg's Model 5-2 (priced at $514.50) includes separate preamp for stereo recording with carrying case to accommodate both units (see illustration on preceding page).] On the other hand, the tape transport control couldn't be simpler, with its T-slot arrangement for fast forward or reverse, and normal speed operation. A second lever must be operated for recording, preventing accidental erasure of a tape. A footage counter, with a clock-face calibration, works to perfection.

In general, the tape handling is good, though we found a tendency to overrun when switching from fast forward or reverse to stop. Tape speed can be changed while the recorder is in operation without damage, though no reason for doing so occurs.

A three-position switch concentric with the volume controls selects either stereo, or two-track monophonic recording. Since the machine is basically a four-track recorder, there are two choices of tracks for mono operation: tracks 1 and 4, or tracks 3 and 2. By playing a reel of tape through four times, with a turnover at the end of each pass through the machine, up to two hours can be recorded in full fidelity on a 1,200-foot reel at 7½ ips. At the other extreme, with a 2,400-foot reel of 0.5-mil tape, sixteen hours of moderately good quality material can be put on one reel at 1⅞ ips. An appealing prospect is that of recording two unrelated programs of up to one hour each on a 1,200-foot reel at 7½ ips, with only a switch operation to select either one.

The volume control is a concentric type so that the stereo outputs can be balanced. They move as a unit, but one can be slipped relative to the other. A switch connects the built-in monitor speaker to either upper or lower track, or cuts it off

If a metal foil is spliced into the tape near the ends of the reel, internal contacts will shut off the recorder on normal or fast speeds before the tape runs off the feed reel. The fast forward or rewind speed is supposed to handle 1,200 feet of tape in less than two minutes. It actually measured less than one and one-half minutes to rewind 1,200 feet.

Describing a recorder with the flexibility of the Tandberg Model 5 is difficult in this short space. Although at first we found it a little awkward to use, this feeling disappeared with familiarity. If this recorder were to be built into a system, it could be operated with a minimum of practice; but if it is operated as a portable unit and connected to various external amplifiers and/or speakers, it would take some experience to get the full performance of the recorder.

Certainly as a playback machine one could not get better performance in any recorder selling under $1,000 and weighing less than twice the modest twenty-seven pounds of the Tandberg.

H. H. Labs.

NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

ESL C99 Stereo Cartridge

Pickering 800 Gyropoise Turntable

Audax CA 60 Speaker System

. . . and others

Music Makers

by ROLAND GELATT

WASHINGTON RECORDS is a young and small company which recently sponsored a press conference that any of its larger rivals might have envied. The occasion was the announcement of a six-record album called "F.D.R. Speaks," a compilation of thirty-three Roosevelt speeches from the First Inaugural Address ("The only thing we have to fear is fear itself") of March 1933 to the Address to Congress on the Yalta Conference of March 1945. The affair took place at Eleanor Roosevelt's apartment, on a side street in New York's East Seventies, and the interviewee was Mrs. Roosevelt herself.

The press representation at record company functions is usually pretty standard—editors of record and high-fidelity publications, reporters from the music trade journals, and perhaps two or three music specialists from the New York dailies. The assemblage at Mrs. Roosevelt's apartment was quite different. Instead of the familiar turnout there were political reporters, news photographers, and TV interviewers and cameramen. Fortunately, Mrs. Roosevelt's living room is large. The chief interest of these journalists was not, it must be added, the set of records but rather the former First Lady's opinions on domestic politics (a large photo of Adlai Stevenson was conspicuously in view) and on international affairs.

Eventually, Mrs. Roosevelt did get a chance to talk about the records of her husband. "As I listened to a number of the speeches," she observed, "I could not help thinking there is still a great deal in these speeches that is pertinent to the world today with very little change. Also, strange to say, they seemed more alive and strong than the speeches one hears today on radio and television. Perhaps this is because my husband had the very remarkable ability to project his personality through his speeches, and he certainly had the ability to put into understandable English even quite difficult thoughts."

"F.D.R. Speaks" is the brain child of Robert Bialek, president of Washington Records and owner of a large record shop in Washington, D. C. The project dates back to January 1959, when Bialek first secured Mrs. Roosevelt's blessing and persuaded the historian Henry Steele Commager to select the material and write the annotations. Most of the recordings come from the archives of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Library in Hyde Park, N. Y.

The six-record album is now on sale, in time to capitalize on the rising political temperature of an election year. Bob Bialek hopes it will help to establish the Washington Records label more securely and to pave the way for wider acceptance of the important musical material he is issuing—Haydn piano sonatas, Buxtehude organ music, and the like.

WESTMINSTER RECORDS, the first of the microgroove independents, had its tenth birthday a few months ago. Ordinarily, the anniversary would have been cause for celebration. Towards the end of 1959, however, Westminster ran into dire financial trouble. The company was forced to declare itself bankrupt, and the three men who had founded and directed it—James Grayson, Michael Naida, and Henry Gage—lost control of the enterprise. Under the circumstances, tenth-birthday celebrations seemed hardly in order.

Now, after several months of indecision and thwarted progress, Westminster seems to be getting back on its feet. Its affairs are now in the hands of two old Westminster employees. Kurt List, musical director of the company almost from its inception, is in charge of all operations having to do with the creation of the product. Edgar Talmus, Westminster's national sales director since 1957, has responsibility for the business and merchandising side.

Mrs. Roosevelt chats with Mr. Bialek.

"Our aim," says List, "is to make fewer and better records. We shall release no more than fifty discs a year. Cutting down the number of releases also means eliminating some of the musicians on our roster. But many Westminster artists—and of course this includes the conductor Hermann Scherchen—will continue to record for us. As a matter of fact, Scherchen is already scheduled to record two large choral works for us this fall, as well as several orchestral pieces."

ANGEL'S "Great Recordings of the Century" series, it's good to learn, is prospering and will continue to grow. "Considering that we live in a sound-conscious era," comments John Coveney, merchandising manager for Angel-Capitol classics, "sales to date have been most gratifying." Best seller among the twenty-three albums released thus far has been Feodor Chaliapin's "Scenes from Russian Opera," closely followed by Claudia Muzio's "Arias from Italian Operas."

New additions to the GROC series promised for this fall include: a Lotte Lehmann aria recital (with such superb and rare items as "*Ich ging zu ihm*" from Korngold's *Wunder der Heliane* and "*Nun eilt herbei!*" from Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*), the Furtwängler version of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*, the Pro Arte recordings of Mozart's G minor Quintet and Piano Quartet (with Schnabel), a collection of arias by the British soprano Eva Turner, and a miscellany of Spanish songs (*Clavelitos* and the like) by Conchita Supervia.

!NEW! NEW! NEW!

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AFLP 1923/AFSD 5923

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FCS 50,003 SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE
FCS 50,005 BOLERO, Ravel: CARMEN SUITE
FCS 50,006 ROMEO & JULIET: NUTCRACKER SUITE
FCS 50,007 MARCHES FOR CHILDREN
FCS 50,008 MARCHES FROM OPERAS
FCS 50,009 RUSSIAN MASTERPIECES
FCS 50,010 SWAN LAKE: SLEEPING BEAUTY
FCS 50,011 POPULAR OVERTURES
FCS 50,012 OVERTURE!
FCS 50,013 STRAUSS WALTZES

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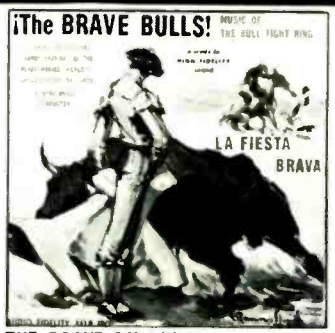

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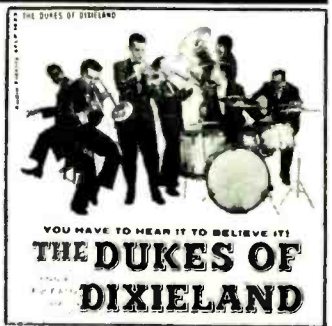

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CIRCLE 13 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

reviewed by

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RAY ERICSON
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN
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Records in Review

by Conrad L. Osborne

Hugo Wolf

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

In Belated Commemoration, Three Albums of Hugo Wolf Songs

THIS HANDFUL of records calls to our attention the fact that the centenary of Hugo Wolf's birth has come and gone—on March 13, 1960, to be exact. The realization is a bit of a shock, for there has been almost no attempt in this country to commemorate the memory of the composer who, after Schubert, was the world's greatest song writer. The Little Orchestra Society made a stab at Wolf's only completed opera, *Der Corregidor* (which was pronounced a monstrosity by the New York press), and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf sang an all-Wolf recital at Town Hall. There were a few columns here and there in the Sunday editions of the newspapers. Otherwise, nothing.

Wolf has never been a commercial giant in America, for perfectly understandable reasons. The fairly extensive catalogue of Wolf's piano pieces, choral and orchestral compositions, and chamber music is simply nonexistent in terms of public performance, and so his reputation rests solely on his songs. These songs are, in a word, difficult. Relatively few of them can be listened to as mere lyrics. Their outstanding quality is compactness—*every* note and *every* word contributes to a unique relationship between text and music; if you miss a note or a word, you have virtually missed the song. The strophic form is a rarity with Wolf, and his songs employ not so much a continuous melodic line for the voice as a constant shifting and give-and-take between voice and piano. Singer and pianist must be precision experts as well as intuitive interpreters. The listener must be acquainted with the text, and must have sufficient perception to recognize the not-too-obvious musical points when he hears them. It's a rare audience that fills the bill on either score, and a rare performer who will spend the time mastering one Wolf song when he might be learning three or four sure-fire Schubert numbers.

Wolf has not, to be sure, suffered the near total eclipse that has overtaken such once-popular Lieder composers as Loewe and Franz. There is no denying, however, that

attention given him by performers and listeners is not commensurate with his stature; a typical New York season is apt to find more of Strauss's songs programed than of Wolf's. With the advent of LP, the recording industry lost interest in Wolf almost completely. In the Thirties, a long series of significant Wolf releases, with meticulous and illuminating annotations by Ernest Newman, was contributed by Walter Legge's Hugo Wolf Society, and a number of Wolf's songs were recorded more than once by leading artists of the day—Schumann, Lehmann, Schlusnus, Hüsch, *et al.* Many of these items have never had an LP performance, even a transferral from 78s; a case that comes to mind is the orchestrated *Prometheus*, which was given an epic reading by Friedrich Schorr for HMV. Although Schwarzkopf championed Wolf on discs as well as in the concert hall, it is only with a very recent group of releases that he becomes at all decently represented in the current catalogue.

Among the records issued within the past months are two collections taken from the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, the anthology of Spanish poems rendered into German by Geibel and Heyse, and set by Wolf in 1889–90. The Spanish songs fall into two categories: spiritual and worldly. Taken together, the spiritual songs form a kind of Passion. Several of the most powerful (*Wunden trägst du, mein Geliebter; Herr, was trägt der Boden hier*) deal directly with Christ's suffering; others (*Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen; Ach, des Knaben Augen*) with the mildness of the infant Jesus; others with the personal search for faith and peace (such as *Ach, wie lang die Seele schlummert; Nun bin ich dein; Führ mich, Kind, nach Bethlehem*). Some represent a dialogue between Christ and a questioning mortal, while *Nun wandre, Maria* is a setting of Joseph's words of comfort to Mary. These songs stand at the peak of Wolf's creative output—for passionate intensity they are second to none, and they possess a unique flavor that combines the sensual and the ascetic. The worldly songs are mostly reproaches, entreaties, pledges, or complaints after lost love. They are harder songs to grasp and perform, but they are splendid settings of their kind, and repay repeated listenings.

Of the two new albums devoted to the *Spanish Songs*, Angel's collection with Fischer-Dieskau and Moore is the more satisfying. Both artists are in top form, which means that there is hardly any room for improvement, and my only regret is that one or two of the missing spiritual songs, such as *Wunden trägst du* and *Mühvoll komm' ich und beladen*, were not recorded in place of a couple of the weaker worldly songs. The Seefried/Wächter/Werber collaboration for DGG is not of the happiest nature. Wächter has a rich, warm baritone, but he tends to muddy the melodic line, and frequently overpowers the music with too generous volume and vibrato. These shortcomings are particularly grave in the lighter worldly songs, which cannot stand vocal overloading; a comparison of Wächter's renditions of *Treibe nur mit Lieben Spott* and *Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren* with Fischer-Dieskau's versions reveals the latter's clear vocal and interpretative superiority.

Moreover, Wächter's extroverted approach contrasts violently with Seefried's constant restraint. The difference is most jarring in certain of the spiritual songs, wherein the soprano sings the queries and the baritone intones Christ's replies. I see no more logic to this division of labor than there would be in assigning four singers to perform *Der Erlkönig*, or two to any number of Lieder set in dialogue form. Seefried's present vocal condition is certainly better suited to Wolf than to Schubert or Brahms, and some of her individual numbers, notably *Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen* and *Mögen alle bösen Zungen*, come off extremely well. Wolf enthusiasts will probably want the DGG disc for these moments, but if a choice must be made, the Angel disc has the edge.

The most ambitious of the newly recorded Wolf projects is DGG's *Italienisches Liederbuch*, complete on two manual-sequence records. This incredible collection of forty-six songs, set in two periods of furious creative activity totaling about seven months, is probably the highest evidence of the composer's genius. Wolf employed effect for effect's sake perhaps twice in the entire songbook—once in the closing bars of *Wie soll ich fröhlich sein*, which is straight from *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and once in the bombastic piano postlude to the otherwise magnificent *Man sagt mir, deine Mutter wolle es nicht*. I do not think there is another bar here that is not strikingly appropriate.

Since the songs are simply a collection, and not a cycle, the order of presentation depends on the tastes of the performers. By and large, the arrangement adopted here is a sensible one, with several songs of reproach and semiserious despair being followed by the more solemn expressions of passion, praise, and anguish that comprise the heart of the Songbook, and then by a final group of satirical, or at least mocking, numbers. Seefried and Fischer-Dieskau alternate, with one artist rarely singing two successive songs. Most of the texts do suggest one sex or the other as the subject, and the rest have been intelligently assigned. There is some danger that the listener will begin to think of the songs as an extended dialogue, each song answering its predecessor. It should be stated that, with one or two exceptions, this is by no means the case, and such a conception could lead to some grotesque cases of *double-entendre*.

The performance is impressive, although I wish Seefried had been enlisted for the project five years ago. Her shortened range is outmatched in a song like *Verschling der Abgrund*, and her limited resources of color frequently prevent a complete musical projection. But the very feminine, humorous selections are wonderfully conveyed (examples are *Mein Liebster ist so klein* and *Ich hab in Penna*), and her work is filled with inspired little touches, such as the delicious scoop on the phrase "*Ich bin verliebt*" ("I'm in love") just before the *coup de grâce*, "*doch eben nicht in dich*" ("only not with you") in *Du denkst mit einem Fädchen*. About Fischer-Dieskau there can be little complaint, since he brings his customary tonal focus and command of nuance to each song, and carries off the humor every bit as well as the more serious moods. The set's high point, for me, is his perfectly scaled presentation of *Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter*, an incomparable song. Regrettably, there is no way of determining which of the pianists (Erik Werba and Jörg Demus) accompanies which of the songs. Their playing is always competent, and sometimes brilliant, as with the glittering little figure that underlies *O wär dein Haus durchsichtig wie ein Glas*. My impression is, though, that both pianists are more at home with big sonorities than with fine tracery, and taken together, they do not match the standard set by Moore.

Apart from these reservations, the set has two failings, and both of them are grave. The first is in the engineering, and applies only to the stereo version. The sound is very clean and the surfaces flawless, but we are confronted with a disturbing bit of stereophony that places the piano somewhat left of center, and the singer quite far to the right. Why both should not be directly center, with the voice floating above the accompaniment, is beyond me, and I must counsel purchase of the monophonic version. The second failing is by way of an inexcusable omission. In place of the translations and fairly extensive notes which the record buyer has every right to expect, there is only the German poetry and the most miserly of notes. Since understanding of the text is absolutely essential to enjoyment of the songs (and even then, considerable explanatory material is called for if the listener is to grasp a point of view on the work), I'm afraid I can recommend the set only to those Americans who understand German, or are willing to go to some other source—where? —for translations. It would be a pity if the interesting DGG catalogue were lost to the American market because of disregard for the needs of music lovers whose German is less than fluent.

WOLF: *Italienisches Liederbuch* (complete)

Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Erik Werba and Jörg Demus, piano.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18568/69. Two LP. $11.96.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138035/36. Two SD. $13.96.

WOLF: *Spanisches Liederbuch* (excerpts)

Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Eberhard Wächter, baritone; Erik Werba, piano.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18591. LP. $5.98.

● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138059. SD. $6.98.

WOLF: *Spanisches Liederbuch* (excerpts)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Gerald Moore, piano.

● ANGEL 35838. LP. $4.98.

● ● ANGEL S 35838. SD. $5.98.

Fournier and Gulda.

by Robert C. Marsh

Beethoven's Cello Music

Complete and In Stereo

THE Beethoven *Kammermusik für Klavier und Violoncell* consists of five sonatas and three substantial sets of variations. Encompassing a time span of nineteen years, these works provide a highly condensed—but nonetheless faithful—account of the composer in each of his celebrated periods. The first two sonatas, like the first of the variations, are from Beethoven's twenty-sixth year. The second group of variations (and the best, as Beethoven acknowledged himself by giving them an opus number) came along two years later, and the third is a contemporary of the Second Symphony. A gap separates these works from the Op. 69 sonata, which was written along with the *Pastoral* and reflects some of its mood. The final pair of sonatas are products of the summer of 1815 when the composer, at forty-four, was in the throes of loneliness and turning to the expressive baritone of the cello to convey sentiments kindred to Sach's "*Wahn! wahn!*" soliloquy from *Meistersinger*. These are his only really important works from that year, or indeed, the two following. They reflect perfectly a state of mind that seems to have broken only when Beethoven began sketches for the Ninth Symphony and turned back to the keyboard to write the *Hammerklavier* Sonata.

Despite the importance, or, indeed, the delight of the Beethoven cello music, it was long in appearing in a comprehensive recorded edition. Pablo Casals gave us, it is true, all five sonatas for prewar HMV release, but not all of these performances reached the American catalogue. The twelve succulent variations on Mozart's "*Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen*" (from *Zauberflöte*) have been available in this country only for a decade. Yet the longplay era proved, in time, to be bounteous enough in its sources of the Beethoven cello literature, with a second set of Casals performances just one of its notable offerings.

For many of us, however, the performances of the final three sonatas by Pierre Fournier and Artur Schnabel contained a sustained level of artistry that even a Casals-Serkin combination could not eclipse. (There are, in fact, Schnabel performances of four of these sonatas, if you count an earlier collaboration with Gregor Piatigorsky. It, like this latter group, awaits reissue in a Great Recordings edition.) Even with later, and sonically more impressive, versions at hand, it has always been the Fournier account of the Op. 102, No. 2 to which I turned when I really wanted to hear the work again for its content. Fournier does not play this music like a cellist—a man faced with the problem of producing tones of a certain duration, pitch, and quality from a stringed instrument. He plays them like a philosopher—a man with something to say and the urge to say it well. And, with all respect and regard for his colleagues, this approach makes a difference.

The appearance of a complete edition of the Beethoven cello music from Fournier would have been an event at any time. To have it as the initial account of this music in stereo, with Friedrich Gulda as partner in the enterprise, only adds interest to what already had no difficulty securing our attention. As a further attraction, the three records of this set may be bought separately.

I cited the performance of the Op. 102, No. 2, above, since it points up the qualities of elegance, authority, and imagination that Fournier brings to this music. Hearing him state the opening pages, with Gulda's piano providing not accompaniment but the voice of a second actor in the drama, you will appreciate what this edition has to offer that its rivals cannot match. By comparison, even as eminently musical (and attractively priced) a set as the recent Schuster-Wührer version for Vox appears lacking in interpretative subtlety and excessively concerned with maintaining a big, ripe sound.

That Fournier and Gulda can reveal great music in its proper stature is a certain measure of their artistry, but another such indication is their ability to make even the less serious works of this series memorable. The Op. 66 variations, for example, are not intended to be profound. They are Beethoven having some fun, giving his wit and melodic imagination a chance to work over a good tune by his colleague Mozart. When you hear Fournier's performance, you will appreciate how needlessly poker-faced most statements of this music are. Fournier gives them both laughter and nobility. Similarly the Op. 5 sonatas, sometimes pointlessly patronized as early works, prove in his hands to possess the gallant lyric feeling and vigor one would expect from the youthful composer. Since these sonatas were not a part of his series with Schnabel, Fournier's performances here offer the greatest—and most welcome—discovery of this new edition.

At its best, the stereo engineering presents a full, round sound with the piano slightly to the right of center and the cello, clearly defined and impeccably balanced, just to the left. Mono (as heard on dual speakers) provides the impression that Fournier has shifted his chair over a bit, so that both instruments now come from the center—but without significant differences in their other sonic qualities. Neither the mono nor the stereo is exactly the same throughout the set, and the ear must adjust for these shifts. Moreover, the stereo discs sent me have their share of clicks, pops, and rattles and are affected by warpage more than I would have anticipated. The silent surfaces one hopes for from a German-pressed, heavy-weight record are more consistently up to expectations in the monophonic versions.

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 1, in F, Op. 5, No. 1; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2***

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 3, in A, Op. 69; No. 4, in C, Op. 102, No. 1. Seven Variations on "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen"*** **(from Mozart's *Zauberflöte*)**

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonato for Cello and Piano, No. 5, in D, Op. 102, No. 2. Twelve Variations on "See the conquering hero comes"*** **(from Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus*);** ***Twelve Variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen"*** **(from Mozart's *Zauberflöte*)**

Pierre Fournier, cello; Friedrich Gulda, piano.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18601/03. Three LP. $5.98 each.

●● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138081 /83. Three SD. $6.98 each.

CLASSICAL

BACH: ***Cantatas: No. 4, Christ lag in Todesbanden; No. 140, Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme***

Laurence Dutoit, soprano; Kurt Equiluz, tenor; Hans Braun, bass; Vienna Chamber Choir; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska, cond.

● VANGUARD BG 598. LP. $4.98.
● ● VANGUARD BGS 5026. SD. $5.95.

The performance of No. 140 is an improvement, it seems to me, over that by the same conductor (with mostly different forces) on the same company's BG 511; No. 4, however, comes off rather less well than it did on the older disc. Both of the new readings have strong competition. Robert Shaw's recent recording of No. 4 is graver and more elevated; it makes Prohaska sound relatively superficial. Hans Braun's voice is not in its best estate here, and whenever his part goes below the staff he takes the tone an octave higher. The one time he does venture into the depths he gives forth a sepulchral moan that proves how right he was to avoid that region. Shaw solves this problem by having several basses sing in unison, and at least some of them take the low Es and the E sharp with aplomb. As for No. 140, it is better recorded than the Scherchen version on Westminster but the latter strikes me as more vital and imaginative. N.B.

BACH: ***Cantatas: No. 56, Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen; No. 82, Ich habe genug***

Mack Harrell, baritone; RCA Victor Chorus and Orchestra, Robert Shaw, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2312. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2312. SD. $5.98.

A fitting memento of the art of Mack Harrell, whose untimely death, at the age of fifty-one, occurred last January. A singer whose work was always marked by skill and intelligence, Harrell was as much at home in *The Rake's Progress* as in Bach, in *Lakmé* as in Mozart. In the present disc he sings the difficult solos with fervor and musicianship, his voice as solid and rich at the bottom and top of the range as in the middle. It is not, perhaps, as velvety as Fischer-Dieskau's in his recording of the same works for Archive, but in every other respect this is a worthy rival to that disc. Shaw supplies first-rate conducting and orchestral playing here—his solo oboist, Marc Lifschey, deserving special mention. German texts and English translations are provided. N.B.

BACH: ***Partita for Unaccompanied Violin, No. 3, in E, S. 1016***
†Brahms: ***Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108***

Jaime Laredo, violin; Vladimir Sokoloff, piano (in the Brahms).

● RCA VICTOR LM 2414. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2414. SD. $5.98.

Now that this young Bolivian-born violinist, winner of the 1959 Queen Elisabeth of Belgium competition, has reached the venerable age of nineteen, I can only reiterate the estimate of his gifts and potentialities that I made some nine months ago, when his debut recital disc was issued: ". . . here is a real find, an important new artist." Both his Bach and Brahms have a rich tonal texture and a wonderful interpretative poise. Perhaps, when he grows a few years older, he will give a little more attention to subtleties of phrasing in the Bach, though as it stands there is much musicality in his balanced performance here. As to the Brahms, it could scarcely be improved upon—a finely wrought, thoroughly mature conception, nobly set forth by both Laredo and his expert collaborator, Vladimir Sokoloff.

Though stereo affords slightly greater separation in the sonata, it does not add much to the effectiveness of the Bach partita. The importance of this recording is, however, Laredo's artistry. If you haven't heard him yet, try this disc. P.A.

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 1, in F, Op. 5, No. 1; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2***

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 3, in A, Op. 69; No. 4, in C, Op. 102, No. 1. Seven Variations on "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen"*** **(from Mozart's** ***Zauberflöte*****)**

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 5, in D, Op. 102, No. 2. Twelve Variations on "See the conquering hero comes"*** **(from Handel's** ***Judas Maccabaeus*****);** ***Twelve Variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen"*** **(from Mozart's** ***Zauberflöte*****)**

Pierre Fournier, cello; Friedrich Gulda, piano.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18601/03. Three LP. $5.98 each.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138081/83. Three SD. $6.98 each.

For a feature review of these recordings, see p. 51.

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Piano: No. 21, in C, Op. 53 {"Waldstein"}; No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57, {"Appassionata"}***

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano.

● ● LONDON CS 6161. SD. $5.98.

Jaime Laredo: poise at nineteen.

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Piano: No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 {"Moonlight"}; No. 24, in F sharp, Op. 78; No. 30, in E, Op. 109***

Annie Fischer, piano.

● ANGEL 35791. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35791. SD. $5.98.

BEETHOVEN: ***Sonatas for Piano: No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 {"Pathetique"}; No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 {"Moonlight"}; No. 21, in C, Op. 53 {"Waldstein"}; No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 {"Appassionata"}***

Orazio Frugoni, piano.

● VOX PL 11570. LP. $4.98.

Of this group, only the Backhaus disc is consistently satisfying. Well engineered and demonstrating in its full, round tones the merits of stereo in piano recording, it is obviously the work of a great artist. Naturally, in music that has been recorded as many times as these sonatas, any new edition must compete interpretatively with the work of practically every notable pianist of the past two decades. This new Backhaus *Appassionata*, a lithe, lightly inflected performance that reveals full knowledge of the difference between passion and breast beating, will be able to hold its own with the best of them; and although the *Waldstein* is not quite as even in quality, it too bursts forth with some glorious moments. As testimony to a musician whom age has not withered but, rather, renewed, this disc is a remarkable achievement.

Miss Fischer's playing of the *Moonlight* is the best of the current stereo versions, and Angel's stereo piano recording, although not as fine as London's, is distinctly pleasing in quality. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the mono alternate of this disc, which is sadly lacking in brightness and kindred forms of sonic distinction. In both the other sonatas Miss Fischer is less satisfactory an interpreter. She has no stereo competition for Op. 78, but Firkusny's stereo version of Op. 109 remains the only two-channel account of this music competitive with the best of the mono sets.

Frugoni's collection may appeal to some as a bargain, since it provides more than sixty-six minutes of music for the money, but the recorded sound is as unexceptional as the performances. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: ***Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 36; Overtures: Prometheus, Op. 43; Coriolan, Op. 62***

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

● ANGEL 35658. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35658. SD. $5.98.

We appear to be suffering from no shortage of excellent Beethoven Seconds, a situation particularly pleasing after the number of years in which this work was recorded far less than it deserved. Klemperer's approach to the music is consistent with his earlier work in the complete Beethoven series he is in the process of recording for Angel. The warm, relaxed lyricism that others draw from this music is not missing here, but it

Continued on page 54

The supreme collaboration between movie maker and composer came with Eisenstein's film, "Alexander Nevsky." So successful was the music that Prokofieff transformed it into a cantata. This superb performance marks the first truly modern recording of the work, as well as its debut appearance in stereo.

NEW RED SEAL HITS OF THE GOLDEN 60's

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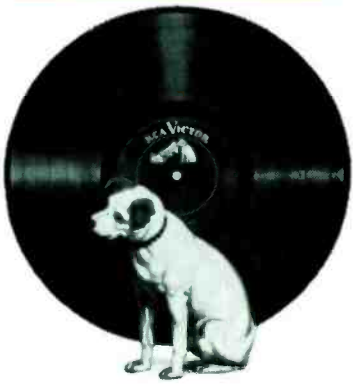
"Appalachian Spring" is probably the single most popular concert work by a living American. What could be better, then, than this first recording of the score conducted by Copland himself. The album also features an important record premiere: the lyrical "Tender Land Suite," based on Copland's opera.

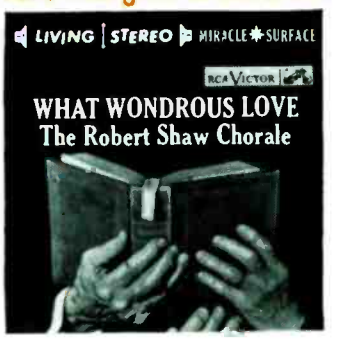


With such singers as Milanov, Di Stefano, Warren, Elias and Tozzi assembled for a recording of this opera, something remarkable was bound to happen. Happen it did, in this production. This is music of vast beauty, even for Verdi, and the performances project it magnificently. 2-L.P. abridged version.

It was a "wondrous love," indeed, and purest grace that inspired the known and unknown creators of these authentic American hymns. Over 200 years are spanned in this album. Some selections came to America with the first colonists; many are still in widespread use in the South. The Robert Shaw settings admirably preserve the true spirit of these rare liturgical treasures.

Opera ballet is designed to relax audiences, rather than to advance the drama. Thus it gives us diverting, colorful scores. Here, in lifelike sound, are enchanting ballets from "Aïda," "Samson and Delilah," "William Tell," and "Khovantchina," interpreted by reigning ballet maestro Anatole Fistoulari.

Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony offer definitive readings of noble Russian works. Orchestra Hall, where this was made, imparts a majestic sound that is eminently right! The program: Moussorgsky's "Night on Bare Mountain," Tchaikovsky's "Marche Slave," Borodin's "Polovski March," three others.



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CIRCLE 66 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

is subordinated to Klemperer's desire to give force of utterance and rhythmic strength a predominant role. The result is a very powerful statement that one can respect without ceasing to enjoy the recent Epic version under Franz Konwitschny.

In the two overtures, Klemperer's recording of the *Prometheus* is not quite as well engineered as the new Ansermet, but the performance is a fine one. Ansermet's *Coriolan*, which fills out his set of the Beethoven Fourth, is also superior in its engineering, in addition to being a more sweeping performance. Both these Klemperer readings deserve respect, however, even if you decide that you find others dramatically more compelling. R.C.M.

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

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
● Epic LC 3658. LP. $4.98.
● ● Epic BC 1066. SD. $5.98.

Szell's is one of those well-calculated readings that have to be respected but lack the excitement and drive of a truly great performance. Unfortunately, the assets of this edition are minimized by disappointing engineering, so the issue is not the somewhat jaunty air of the opening of the slow movement, or the lack of swirl in the first, but whether you will accept these sounds as those of an orchestra. R.C.M.

BERGSMA: *Music on a Quiet Theme*—See Sessions: *Symphony No. 1.*

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo, cond.
● Epic LC 3665. LP. $4.98.
● ● Epic BC 1068. SD. $5.98.

Otterloo presents a solidly grounded reading, orthodox in its conception yet full of vibrancy. The last movement is particularly effective. As to the orchestral execution, it is highly competent except for the solo oboe and English horn, which employ too much vibrato in their duet in the *Scene in the Fields*. This disc is one of the rare instances, however, where this movement is not split between two sides. The monophonic edition offers big, well-rounded, equitably balanced sonics. In stereo, there is a fine spread of sound, more than adequately directional, with considerable spaciousness in a moderately resonant hall. In both versions, the big chimes in the finale come through very clearly. Still, for both sound and interpretation, Otterloo must take second place to the as yet unexcelled Audio Fidelity disc by Wallenstein. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, No. 2, in E flat, Op. 120, No. 2; Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, in A minor, Op. 114*

Gino Cioffi, clarinet; Samuel Mayes, cello; Ralph Berkowitz, piano.
● Boston B 214. LP. $4.98.
● ● Boston BST 1014. SD. $5.95.

There is an extraordinary contrast here between the quality of performance and interpretation in these two late chamber works. In the Sonata, Cioffi gives an almost expressionless performance, all on one plane, without nuances. Furthermore, his instrument is about one-eighth of a tone flat throughout most of the work. Berkowitz gives a more meaningful account of the piano part. There is little appreciable difference between the mono and stereo editions, though the latter does afford slightly more perspective. Both have an excess of reverberation, indicating that they were recorded in too large or resonant a studio. The clarinet somewhat overbalances the piano, whose tone is rather wooden.

The Trio shows a marked improvement on almost all counts. Here the intonation is correct, and there is much more expression and cohesion in the performance, with carefully interwoven passage work and an appreciation of the music's introspective qualities. The balance between instruments in both mono and stereo is good. The stereo effect is more obvious than in the Sonata, with clarinet and cello on the left, piano—still sounding wooden, however—on the right. The surroundings are more intimate, too, with the result that the objectionable reverberation is gone.

Though they are not available in stereo, the recordings of both the Sonata and Trio by Reginald Kell on Decca are still to be preferred for their unsurpassed beauty and subtle phrasing. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108*—See Bach: *Partita for Unaccompanied Violin, No. 3, in E, S. 1016.*

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

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond.
● Decca LPM 18613. LP. $4.98.
● ● Decca SLPM 138113. SD. $5.98.

One does not have to seek far to find a quantity of good Brahms Firsts. Here is another to add to the list of preferred versions. Without straying from the accepted path, Böhm provides a reading that is full of flexibility, freshness, and vitality. My only complaint, one I have voiced on several previous occasions, is the excessive vibrato of the solo oboe, though it is not as objectionable here as it has been elsewhere. The monophonic edition is so clean, resilient, and well balanced that it provides real competition for the only slightly more spacious stereo version. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.
● Columbia ML 5439. LP. $4.98.
● ● Columbia MS 6113. SD. $5.98.

Walter treats this symphony with a fine combination of sanity, strength, lyricism, and loving care. His tempos may be on the broad, leisurely side, for he gives the music time to sing; but one never has the feeling the work is being dragged. Rather, the conductor imparts an impression of richness and nobility. The West Coast musicians he has assembled for this recording, like those he used in his recent Beethoven disc cycle, sound as if they had been playing together for years. Stereo has only a slight advantage over monophony in this performance; it spreads the orchestra out, but with only a minimum of sectional pinpointing. In both editions, the important triangle part in the Scherzo is too thin. Much more important, however, is the eloquence of Walter's interpretation, which overrides any minor sonic shortcomings. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24; Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35, Books 1 and 2*

Julius Katchen, piano.
● ● London CS 6158. SD. $4.98.

Brahms's two greatest sets of variations for one piano afford unlimited possibilities for the serious keyboard artist. Unfortunately, Katchen takes advantage of few of the opportunities. His performances, while big-toned, are stiff, unimaginative, and in the *Paganini Variations* often heavy-handed. The reproduction is full and resonant. P.A.

CASELLA: *La Giara: Suite*
†Respighi: *I Pini di Roma*

Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Fernando Previtali, cond.
● ● London CS 6111. SD. $4.98.

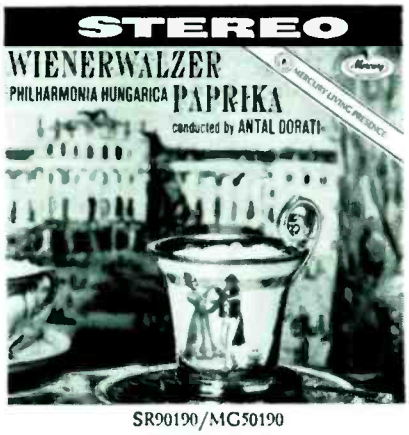
A stereo reconversion of a disc long available

Continued on page 56

SR90260/MG50260

SR90256/MG50256

SR90230/MG50230



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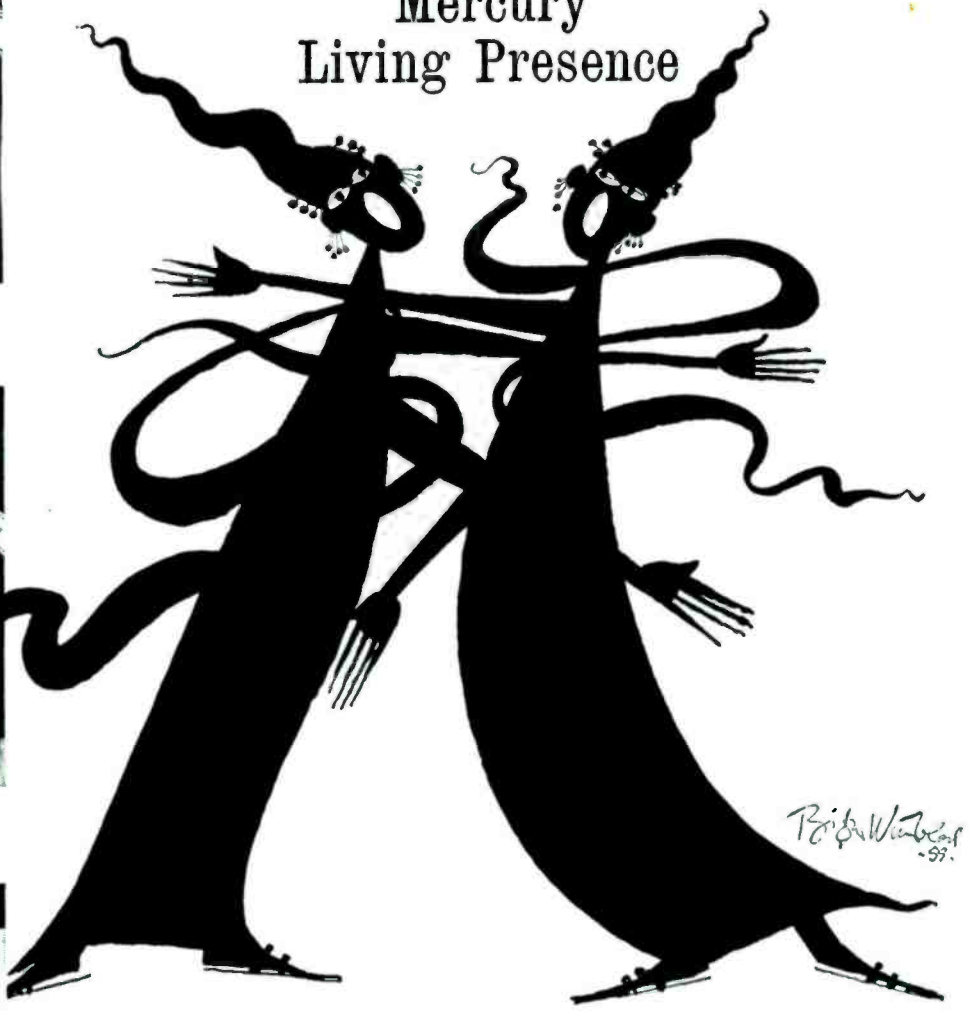

NEW RELEASES

RACHMANINOFF Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor; Preludes in E flat major and C sharp minor. Byron Janis, pianist; Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati. SR90260/MG50260

BALLET FOR BAND. Pineapple Poll (Sullivan); La Boutique Fantasque (Rossini-Respighi); Faust Ballet Music (Gounod). Eastman Wind Ensemble, Fennell. SR90256/MG50256

MARCEL DUPRÉ AT SAINT-SULPICE, Volume IV. BACH "Schübler" Chorales; Fantasias in C minor and G major. Marcel Dupré, organist. Recorded in Paris. SR90230/MG50230

WIENERWALZER PAPRIKA Merry Widow Waltz, Skaters Waltz, Gypsy Princess Waltz, and others. Philharmonia Hungarica, Dorati. SR90190/MG50190

HI-FI A LA ESPAÑOLA. Malaguena, Ritual Fire Dance, Andalucia, and other South American favorites. Eastman-Rochester "Pops," Fennell. SR90144/MG50144

SCHUMANN Symphony No. 2 in C major. Detroit Symphony, Paray. SR90102/MG50102

SR indicates the stereo album number; MG, the monaural album number.

Mercury RECORDS

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CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

monophonically but well worth calling to your attention again, since it contains a neglected masterpiece.

Alfredo Casella's *La Giara* is an Italian *Three-Cornered Hat*, with much of the same masterful quality as that work. A ballet based on a story by Pirandello, it takes place in Sicily and is full of folk tunes, folk-dance rhythms, and pungent orchestral coloring—green and red as opposed to Falla's yellow and red. Previtali's fine performance and London's excellent recording should do much to bring it to the attention it deserves.

La Giara needs a good press agent. The same thing is certainly not true of Respighi's *Pines*, but it seems to me that I have never heard half so good a performance of it, on records or in the concert hall, as this one. It comes, of course, from headquarters, and is the only one of Respighi's three Roman pieces to be recorded for American consumption by a Roman orchestra. Maybe that has something to do with it. At all events, if you are in the market for a disc of *The Pines*, don't overlook Previtali's. A.F.

CHOPIN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11; No. 2, in F minor, Op. 21*

Orazio Frugoni, piano; Orchestra of the Vienna Volksoper, Michael Gielen, cond.
● Vox PL/D 11460. LP. $4.98.

CHOPIN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11*

Orazio Frugoni, piano; Orchestra of the Vienna Volksoper, Michael Gielen, cond.
● ● Vox STPL/D5 11460. SD. $5.98.

Taken singly, the performances of these two concertos fall short of the best. But to get both concertos on a monophonic disc is something of a bargain, and in this respect the Vox recording is superior to the two other such couplings—Badura-Skoda's for Westminster and Musulin's for Period. In fact, Frugoni does some of his best playing here, giving vigorous, straightforward performances, adding some especially felicitous phrasing on occasion, and employing a less percussive tone than usual. The orchestra plods somewhat, but it matters little in these works. The sound is full and rich in the monophonic disc. The stereo version of the E minor Concerto is clear and has depth, but it also has that empty-hall reverberation dear to Vox's engineers but not to me. R.E.

CHOPIN: *Preludes (24) for Piano, Op. 28*

Alexander Brailowsky, piano.
● Columbia ML 5444. LP. $4.98.
● ● Columbia MS 6119. SD. $5.98.

Under the fallacious guise of a "traditional" Chopin style, Alexander Brailowsky indulges in clichés and vagaries of taste that would probably not pass muster elsewhere. His performance here of the superb set of Preludes is grotesque, fragmentary, and clumsy. Moreover, he uses an inaccurate text which perpetuates all sorts of editorial errors, such as the omission of two bars from the end of No. 12. In some of the more bravura pieces, he teeters on the brink of disaster and his rhythmic distortions in No. 18 have to be heard to be believed. The piano sound has a thumpy bass. H. G.

Haitink of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

DEBUSSY: *Images pour orchestre*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
● ● Columbia MS 6097. SD. $5.98.

Mr. Bernstein's first major Debussyan recording essay proves to be somewhat premature, especially in the overepisodic readings of *Rondes de printemps* and *Gigues*, which he as yet knows less well (or is unable to integrate with conviction) than *Ibéria*, where he seems more sure of himself and where his characteristic nervous intensity is more appropriate. Yet even so, the freshness and vitality throughout suggest that one day a more mature Bernstein interpretation may approach more closely the currently well-nigh definitive one by Argenta for London. He is further handicapped here, however, by orchestral playing which, despite some admirable woodwind solos, is less attractive tonally than either that of the Suisse Romande orchestra or the Boston Symphony in Munch's recent version, and which is none too well reproduced in apparently too closely miked, and too sharply focused stereo recording. R.D.D.

DEBUSSY: *Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10*
†Ravel: *Quartet for Strings, in F*

Juilliard String Quartet.
● RCA Victor LM 2413. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA Victor LSC 2413. SD. $5.98.

The Juilliard Quartet does not stress the French repertoire in its concerts, but that, perhaps, is all to the good so far as its performance of Debussy and Ravel is concerned. The Juilliard players do not soften, sentimentalize, or languish over this music, but emphasize its link with classic tradition, employing brisk tempos and powerful, straightforward rhythms. The result is quite astonishing: Debussy and Ravel come out more moving and beautiful than ever. The magnificent interpretation, coupled with perfect recording in both LP and stereo versions, should make this the edition of choice for a long time to come. A.F.

DEBUSSY: *Sonata No. 3, for Violin and Piano*—See Lekeu: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in G.*

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 2, in D minor, Op. 70; Slavonic Dances, Op. 46: Nos. 1, 3, 7, and 8*

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond.
● Epic LC 3668. LP. $4.98.
● ● Epic BC 1070. SD. $5.98.

This disc marks the recording debut of Bernard Haitink, the young Dutch musician who, together with Eugen Jochum, has been appointed coconductor of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw to fill the post left vacant by the death of Eduard van Beinum. Haitink here reveals himself as a musician of tremendous promise. He directs this dark-hued but magnificent symphony with great forcefulness, producing a telling dramatic effect. Much of this is achieved through emphasizing the symphony's rhythmic qualities, though never at the expense of its lyric or emotional ones. A fine transparency of orchestral texture also prevails. As a bonus, Haitink offers idiomatic and spirited readings of four *Slavonic Dances*.

Both mono and stereo bring out the orchestral sound with excellent presence. The monophonic version is bright and full-range, but there is no denying the satisfaction of listening to the beautifully distributed sound afforded by the two channels, an example of stereo recording at its best. P.A.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")*

London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond.
● Everest LPBR 6056. LP. $4.40.
● ● Everest SDBR 3056. SD. $4.40.

Too many conductors take the *New World* Symphony for granted. As a result, a great many listeners also do so. Happily, Ludwig belongs to a different school. He takes a fresh look at this symphony, giving the fast movements strong, vigorous—often exciting—treatment and investing the Largo with true eloquence. Everest's sound is as vibrant as the performance—perfectly balanced and eminently listenable in monophony, naturally directional in stereo. One of the outstanding *New Worlds* on discs. P.A.

GEMINIANI: *Concerti grossi, Op. 2: No. 1, in C minor; No. 2, in C minor. Concerti grossi, Op. 4: No. 1, in D; No 2, in B minor*

Renato Buffoli, Pio Giusto, violins; Gli Accademici di Milano, Dean Eckertsen, cond.
● Vox DL 413/1. LP. $5.95.

Vox's extensive and adventurous exploration of baroque music has resulted in a good deal of illumination being cast into previously dark areas. The new light has not always revealed glowing masterpieces, but Vox's batting average has been a highly respectable one. The new venture, to judge by this first disc (Volume I of Geminiani's Concerti grossi), is not likely to raise that average—or to lower it much, either. The first two concertos of Geminiani's Op. 2 do not seem to me to sustain the level of quality

Continued on page 58

that runs pretty consistently through the Op. 3 set, although there are moments, as in the dignified and elevated opening of Op. 2, No. 1, where that level is touched. Opus 4 began life as violin sonatas, and there are sometimes, as in the first Allegro of No. 1, long stretches of solo with thin accompaniment to betray their origin. In other places, however, as in the first Allegro of No. 2, Geminiani takes the pains to work out a bright, animated, contrapuntal texture. The performances are somewhat more competent and interesting than have been others done by this group, and the recording is satisfactory. N.B.

HANDEL: *Acis and Galatea*

Joan Sutherland (s), Galatea; Peter Pears (t), Acis; David Galliver (t), Damon; Owen Brannigan (bs), Polyphemus; Thurston Dart, harpsichord continuo. St. Anthony Singers, Philomusica of London, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

● LONDON OL 50179/80. Two LP. $9.96.
● ● LONDON SOL 60011/12. Two SD. $11.96.

London has again put us in its debt, this time for a splendid performance of one of Handel's freshest scores. *Acis and Galatea* is at once one of the most captivating representatives of the pastoral tradition and a very vital example of the masque form. Its best-known numbers are the bass air "O ruddier than the cherry," and the tenor's "Love Sounds the Alarm," but every section of the score is inventive and dramatic—in fact, Handel seems to have taken much greater pains in setting this text than in the writing of some of the later oratorios. Especially fine are two arias allotted to Galatea: "Hush, ye pretty warbling quire," which boasts an enchanting accompaniment, and the very moving "Heart, the seat of soft delight," which provides the striking melodic turns for the masque's conclusion. The choruses are unusually imposing, even for Handel; the opening "Oh, the Pleasure of the Plains" is a structural marvel, and "Wretched Lovers!" one of Handel's most graphic descriptive numbers.

The performance is a strong one. Boult leads a clean, transparent rendition by the Philomusica and the St. Anthony Singers, and Joan Sutherland gives a fine account of her music, trilling beautifully, sustaining the long phrases with ease, and producing a silvery—but never white!—tone that is exactly suited to the music. Pears is not a vocal paragon, but he has few peers today in the styling of this kind of music. The quaver which sometimes mars his work is absent here, and he carries off the florid passages most acceptably. Brannigan is a rough, funny giant of considerable vocal amplitude, though his account of the famous song will never replace Bispham's, say, as sheer singing. David Galliver is a rather insecure singer, but his musicality and stylistic know-how make him a satisfactory Damon.

I have two complaints about the set: 1) The repeats are cut from nearly every number. Inclusion of all of them would have entailed a third record, but since recordings of *Acis and Galatea* will never glut the market, it is a shame to disfigure a performance otherwise close to definitive. By omitting the second version of "O ruddier than the cherry," which is included at the end of the set for purposes of comparison with the first (the total effect is close to identical!), a complete *Acis* could probably be arranged on five sides, leaving the sixth for some more of Miss Sutherland, or a few of the Handel tenor arias sung by Mr. Pears. 2) While the small size of the chorus brings a welcome clarity of texture, it also brings a thinness of tone. This shows up badly on the stereo version in the chorus "Wretched Lovers," the tenors sounding particularly weak. In any case, the sound of the basses slamming their way through the long runs in one channel while the higher voices remain in the other channel is merely distracting. Though the sound is good on both editions, I prefer the monophonic set.

Joan Sutherland: an enchanting Galatea.

Do not let these reservations deter you from the purchase of the album, however. It will no doubt be a long time before another recording of *Acis and Galatea* appears, and this is a good one. C.L.O.

HANDEL: *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra, in F, Op. 4, No. 4*—See Haydn: *Mass No. 3, in C ("Stae. Caeciliae.")*.

HAYDN: *Mass No. 3, in C ("Stae. Caeciliae")*
†Handel: *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra, in F, Op. 4, No. 4*

Maria Stader, soprano; Marga Höffgen, contralto; Richard Holm, tenor; Joseph Greindl, bass. Michael Schneider, organ; Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Eugen Jochum, cond.

● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18545/46. Two LP. $11.96.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138028/29. Two SD. $13.96.

It was the Haydn Society—now, alas, defunct—that first called the attention of American record buyers to an important aspect of Haydn's output that had been unknown territory to most of us. In 1950 the Society began to issue recordings of Masses by Haydn; in a couple of years half a dozen of these remarkable works appeared. They revealed a side of the master that few suspected. It had been generally thought that except for *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, Haydn had put all of his best efforts into his instrumental music. But now it became clear that some of his Masses belonged among the finest, most splendid creations in that form of the classic period.

The *St. Cecilia* Mass is such a work. An unusually extended and elaborate setting of the hallowed text, it is crammed full of attention-catching ideas and skilled workmanship. Its style may strike some listeners as rather worldly, but Austrian Catholicism in those days did not draw as sharp a distinction between sacred and secular art as was to be established in the nineteenth century. The work has the solidity of the late baroque and the warm melody and sudden contrasts more typical of the classic style. There is much fugal writing, but it is never stodgy, seldom mere counterpoint spinning. There is a high degree of expressiveness, as in the curved melodies for tenor, punctuated by choral interjections, of the "*Christe eleison*," in the flexible and affecting part-writing of the "*Et in terra*," in the strong and satisfying fugues Haydn wrote for the "*Gratias agimus*" and "*In gloria Dei patris*," in the poignant harmonies of the "*Qui tollis*," in the simple but very moving "*Et incarnatus est*," in the lovely Benedictus.

Of the soloists, only Marga Höffgen, the alto, is inadequate. Maria Stader's singing is clean and steady; she negotiates both the difficult ornamentation of the "*Laudamus te*" and the elaborate coloratura of the "*Quoniam tu solus sanctus*" nicely. Richard Holm, the tenor, with a voice that seems by nature more serviceable than rich, handles it musically and skillfully. He seems at home in any part of the range, and there is power with no trace of effort. The bass, Joseph Greindl, does well with the wide skips in the "*Domine Deus*," but in the Agnus Dei his voice occasionally betrays a need for firmer support. The chorus sings with good tone. It is excellently balanced, even the tenors coming to the fore when they should. Jochum shows once again that he is a conductor of high caliber.

In the stereo version an opportunity is missed, as it often is by recording directors. There are some works, particularly of the baroque and classic periods, where there is considerable dialoguing between first and second violins (here in the Kyrie and parts of the Gloria). Much of the effect of these dialogues is lost when they come out of one speaker. Stereo is of course the perfect solution to this problem, but not when first and second violins are kept on the same track, instead of being separated. This is, however, a fairly minor point. Generally speaking, the sound in both versions is first-class. N.B.

HAYDN: *Quartets for Strings: No. 57, in G, Op. 54, No. 1; No. 65, in B flat, Op. 64, No. 3*

Amadeus String Quartet.
● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18392. LP. $5.98.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138071. SD. $6.98.

HAYDN: *Quartets for Strings: No. 72, in C, Op. 74, No. 1; No. 74, in G minor, Op. 74, No. 3*

Amadeus String Quartet.
● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18495. LP. $5.98.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138072. SD. $6.98.

Were it not for the fact that the Juilliard Quartet, on its one and only competing Haydn disc, demonstrates what is probably the ultimate in resilient phrasing and knife-edge articulation, one might rest content

with the Amadeus Quartet's musical and convincing performances. The fast movements are trim and taut, and there is ease and good humor when the music calls for it—in, for example, the jaunty trot of the Vivace of No. 65. Furthermore, the Amadeus makes its points without being dogmatic about them, a virtue best appreciated when one compares this No. 74 with the Griller Quartet's version, much of which sounds stilted and self-conscious. Yet in the final test the Amadeus does not match the Juilliard—indeed, sounds ever so slightly coarse in comparison. This is due in part to the respective first violins: the Juilliard first, for instance, is perfect in the grace and haughtiness of the No. 74 Andantino grazioso; the Amadeus first, on the other hand, allows some audible shifts to mar his phrases in several of the slow movements. But as the catalogue stands, the Amadeus is the choice on three out of the four works included here, and Haydn could be in far worse hands. DGG's surfaces are wonderfully silent, and the sound is close and clear. I prefer the monophonic version (played through two speakers) to the stereo, which spread the sound a little too broadly for my taste. SHIRLEY FLEMING

HAYDN: ***Quartet for Strings, in C, Op. 76, No. 3 {"Emperor"}***
†Mozart: ***Quartet for Strings, No. 19, in C, K. 465 {"Dissonant"}***

Paganini String Quartet.
● KAPP 9045. LP. $3.98.

These are performances incisive in emphatic passages, tender in poetic ones. The striking competence of the individual players is clearly shown when each has a chance to shine in Haydn's magnificent variations on his own anthem for the Austrian ruler. They play together with unanimity coupled with a high degree of flexibility. A few small questions of interpretation and balance are raised: the first movement of the Haydn seems a little breathless, although the actual count is not fast; in an important spot in the Andante of the Mozart the players follow most printed editions instead of Mozart's manuscript and the first edition; in the eloquent dialogues between first violin and cello of the same movement the cello sounds like a weaker, rather than an equal, voice. But aside from these matters the readings of both masterworks seem to me to be without flaw, and the sound is first-class. N.B.

HAYDN: ***Symphonies: No. 94, in G {"Surprise"}; No. 101, in D {"Clock"}***

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.
● RCA VICTOR LM 2394. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2394. SD. $5.98.

Pierre Monteux must be about as versatile a conductor as there is. I have heard him do a hair-raising *Sacre du printemps*, a glowing and not groveling *Pathétique*, a powerful and dramatic *Eroica*, a truly fantastic *Fantastique*. He has done equal justice to Schumann and Schuman. Now, at eighty-five, he presents us with a polished, witty Haydn, pointed and effective, and free from conductorial idiosyncrasy. He gives the *Surprise* chord a tremendous whack, but this is one of the few Haydn records that have real pianissimos. He knows perfectly well that the composer of these symphonies is not

Monteux: no "Papa Haydn" for him.

the "Papa Haydn" of the plaster-figure legend, and so he is careful to give full weight to the dramatic qualities of the development section in the opening movement of No. 101.

A special leaflet in the sleeve stresses the everybody-loves-Monteux motif. Well, why not? Everybody who has had anything to do with him, even if only as a member of an audience, *does* love Monteux. May he long continue to give us such performances as these. N.B.

JANACEK: ***Lach Dances; Sinfonietta***

Brno Radio Symphony Orchestra (in the Dances); Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (in the Sinfonietta); Bretislav Bakala, cond.
● ARTIA ALP 122. LP. $4.98.

The two compositions on this record represent the earliest and latest work of the Czech composer Leoš Janáček (1854–1928). The *Lach Dances*, which date from 1889, first put his name before the Czech public. They take their name from Lachia, a region of the composer's native Moravia, and may be considered the Moravian counterpart of Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*. Though they are less developed symphonically than the *Slavonic Dances*, the *Lach Dances* quite obviously owe them a musical debt. Like their predecessors, they have a folklike charm and freshness about them, characteristics which are well brought out in this performance directed by the composer's friend, Bretislav Bakala.

The somewhat more familiar Sinfonietta, written in 1926, rather belies its title. True, its movements are short and not very deeply developed, but it is scored for a huge orchestra. Again, the influence of Moravian folk music may be detected, but the writing is much more sophisticated, with many brilliant coloristic effects, generously sprinkled with fanfarelike passages in the brass. Bakala gives a forceful account of this brief but powerful work too.

The Czech engineers evidently like their music loud, for both works—particularly the Sinfonietta—have been recorded at an earsplitting volume level, thereby causing occasional overmodulation and resultant distortion. P.A.

KHACHATURIAN: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D flat***

Peter Katin, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Hugo Rignold, cond.
● ● EVEREST SDBR 3055. SD. $4.40.

A skilled, effective traversal of this bombastic, inflated, and thoroughly worthless concerto. Beautifully recorded, too. A.F.

–LEKEU: ***Sonata for Violin and Piano, in G***
†Debussy: ***Sonata No. 3, for Violin and Piano***

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Riccardo Castagnone, piano.
● EPIC LC 3667. LP. $4.98.

Guillaume Lekeu was a Belgian composer of great promise whose life was cut short by typhoid fever when he was only twenty-four. The two works which keep his name alive today are this Violin Sonata and an Adagio for Strings. He was a pupil of Franck and d'Indy, and his music reflects their influence. The Sonata, while a fine lyrical utterance, could have been more concise. Grumiaux, himself a Belgian and a sonata player par excellence, takes naturally to this melodic score, performing it with great tonal warmth and sensitive musicianship. He is admirably companioned by Castagnone.

The Debussy Sonata, his last completed work, was conceived along more subtle, more delicate lines. Grumiaux and Castagnone apply to it the same warmth and sensitivity as they do to the Lekeu. This does not work to its detriment, though I personally would have preferred a slightly cooler approach. The recorded sound throughout is of the highest order. P.A.

MENDELSSOHN: ***Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in G minor, Op. 25; No. 2, in D minor, Op. 40***

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
● COLUMBIA ML 5456. LP. $4.98.
● ● COLUMBIA MS 6128. SD. $5.98.

Mendelssohn wrote his First Piano Concerto in 1831, when he was only twenty-one; the Second Piano Concerto came six years later. In both works he broke new ground, connecting the three movements and doing away with the independent orchestral exposition in the first movement. For a composer in his twenties, these were daring procedures. And for a man usually associated with light, sunny music, there is considerable storm and urgency in both concertos.

The Concerto No. 1, while full of Mendelssohnian melody, is a dramatic work, and few, if any, pianists have treated it as dramatically as Serkin. From his very first entrance, the music takes fire. Quite appropriately, much of the fire is to be found in the end movements. Some of the dramatic excitement is achieved by stepping up the tempo just a trifle, but without sacrificing clarity in either the solo or accompaniment. In the more lyrical passages the fast pace is imperceptibly slackened to allow the piano to sing. There is much singing quality, too, in the slow movement, yet even here a certain electric tension prevails. The Concerto No. 2 is a somewhat more serious, introspective creation than the First, particularly in the slow movement, which both Serkin and Ormandy set forth with supreme expressiveness. Again, this movement is surrounded by movements of typical Mendelssohnian vivacity. And again, soloist and orchestra invest them with much spirit and fire.

Serkin: his Mendelssohn takes fire.

The monophonic recording offers a fine balance between solo and accompaniment. The piano and all the orchestral instruments come through clearly, though neither this edition nor the stereo (the first for these two works) is very long on bass frequencies. In the latter version, the piano appears to have a more rounded tone quality. The soloist is well placed in the center, and the orchestra, moderately directional, is equitably deployed, most of the directionalism showing up in the strings. This recording should be unchallenged for many years in its presentation of this undervalued music. P.A.

MOORE: ***In Memoriam*—See Ruggles: *Organum*.**

MOZART: ***Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 18, in B flat, K. 456; No. 27, in B flat, K. 595***

Ingrid Haebler, piano; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Christoph von Dohnanyi, cond.
● EPIC LC 3677. LP. $4.98.
● ● EPIC BS 1075. SD. $5.98.

Miss Haebler recorded each of these concertos once before, for Vox. The present readings represent a considerable improvement, both in performance and in recording. Here her playing is elegant, cool but not as cold as it used to be, and immaculate. For K. 595 I would still choose the Serkin version, because he is more poetic in the Larghetto and gayer in the finale, among other reasons; and in K. 456 Miss Haebler is outplayed by Casadesus, in my opinion. But if you must have these works in stereo, you would not, I think, be making a serious mistake if you took this disc. Mozart's cadenzas are used in both concertos. The orchestra is good and the sound first-rate. N.B.

MOZART: ***Quartet for Strings, No. 19, in C, K. 465 ("Dissonant")*—See Haydn: *Quartet for Strings, in C, Op. 76, No. 3 ("Emperor")*.**

MOZART: ***Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, in A, K. 581; Serenade No. 13, in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik")***

David Oppenheim, clarinet; Julius Levine, double bass, Budapest Quartet.
● COLUMBIA ML 5455. LP. $4.98.
● ● COLUMBIA MS 6127. SD. $5.98.

One of the better performances on records of the great Clarinet Quintet. Oppenheim's playing is smooth and musical, though his tone tends here to grow a little thin above the staff, and the Budapests are their usual topnotch selves. The first movement struck me as a bit on the slow side, the tempo chosen giving the marvelous second theme a lugubrious touch; but otherwise interpretation, ensemble, and recording revealed no flaws of any consequence.

Of the many available recordings of the *Little Night-Music*, this is one of only two in which it is played by a quintet of strings, instead of a string orchestra. It is not known what size group Mozart had in mind, or indeed whether he had any preference. Internal evidence—the shape of the themes in the fast movements, for example—would seem to point to an orchestra, but I do not see how anyone could cavil at a performance like the present one, which has the warmth and the tenderness of the Budapests at their best. N.B.

ORFF: ***Der Mond***

Rudolf Christ (t), Der Erzähler; Paul Kuen (t), Karl Schmitt-Walter (b), Helmut Graml (b), Peter Lagger (bs), Four Fellows; Albrecht Peter (b), A Farmer; Hans Hotter (b), Petrus; Willy Rosner, Teresa Holloway (speakers); and others. Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Wolfgang Sawallisch, cond.
● ● ANGEL 3567 B/L. Two SD. $11.96.

This is a stereo edition of an album that has been available for about two years. Stereo is put to good use here, with a good spread in the ensembles, a wonderful directional effect for the rolling of skittles, and very precise re-creation of whispers, sounds of flints being struck, of the moon being clipped with a pair of hedging shears, of dice being rattled, of cards slapped on the table, and what have you. In short, the job has been done to a turn, and if a choice of versions must be made, the stereo gets the nod. C.L.O.

PAGANINI: ***Sonatas for Violin and Guitar (6); Cantabile for Violin and Guitar***

Fredy Ostrovsky, violin; Ernest Calabria, guitar.
● BOSTON B 213. LP. $4.98.
● ● BOSTON BST 1013. SD. $5.95.

The name Paganini is so intimately bound up with the violin that few realize he was also an accomplished guitarist. More than half his known output of eighty compositions contain parts for this instrument. In the music recorded here (its first disc appearance) the guitar has a subsidiary role of accompaniment. A possible explanation is this: between 1801 and 1804, Paganini retired from public life and lived in Tuscany with a noblewoman who played the guitar. Since it is quite unlikely that she was a virtuoso on the instrument, the composer wrote music for her that would not be too difficult. The works on this disc undoubtedly date from this sabbatical period. The two-movement sonatas—really sonatinas—constitute the first third of a set entitled *Centone di Sonate*. They are quite simply constructed—on the bright side but not very profound or harmonically involved. Even the violin parts are relatively uncomplicated for Paganini.

Ostrovsky and Calabria could have employed more subtlety in their interpretations, which are clear but without much expression. The violin emerges with a brighter, more natural tone in stereo than in the monophonic edition. The two instruments have been recorded fairly close up, the violin emanating from the right-hand speaker, the guitar from the left. P.A.

PROKOFIEV: ***Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67***
†Saint-Saëns: ***Carnaval des animaux***

Michael Flanders, narrator (in the Prokofiev); Hephzibah Menuhin and Abbey Simon, pianos (in the Saint-Saëns); Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, cond.
● ● EMI-CAPITOL SG 7211. SD. $5.98.

As a record for entertainment and incidental education of the younger generation, this makes a felicitous coupling. In the Prokofiev orchestral fairy tale, Flanders tells the familiar story with clarity, simplicity, and the delightful sense of humor for which he is noted, while Kurtz directs the orchestra with considerable sensitivity. In the clever Saint-Saëns suite of animal—and musical—impressions, it is the conductor who displays the sense of humor, showing that he grasps all of the composer's sly gibes. The two-piano work of Hephzibah Menuhin and Abbey Simon is also exemplary. There is good distribution of the stereo sonics in both works, but the over-all volume level of the Prokofiev is lower than that of the Saint-Saëns and requires boosting. P.A.

PUCCINI: ***Arias***

Gianni Schicchi: O mio babbino caro. Turandot: Signore, ascolta; Tu che di gel sei cinta. La Bohème: Sì, mi chiamano Mimì; Donde lieta; Quando m'en vo. Madama Butterfly: Un bel dì; Tu, tu, piccolo Iddio! Suor Angelica: Senza mamma, O bimbo. Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide; Sola, perduta, abbandonata. Tosca: Vissi d'arte. La Rondine: Che il bel sogno di Doretta.

Virginia Zeani, soprano; Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Franco Patane, cond.
● ● LONDON OS 25139. SD. $5.98.

Interesting reports regarding this singer have come from Europe over the past several years. Her first solo recital reveals a lyric voice, quite bright on top, and an impressive ability at floating soft phrases. The lower third of the voice is rather raw and disturbingly separate from the rest of her range, and there is practically no vowel definition on top. She is at her best in the more lyrical arias, such as "*O mio babbino caro*" or the *La Rondine* excerpt. She hasn't the vocal caliber for *Manon Lescaut* or *Tosca*, though, and she drives the chest voice hard in these numbers. The accompaniments are decent, if hardly galvanic, and the sound good. C.L.O.

RACHMANINOFF: ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30***

Leonard Pennario, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Susskind, cond.
● CAPITOL P 8524. LP. $4.98.
● ● CAPITOL SP 8524. SD. $5.98.

Ann Schein, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.
● ● KAPP KDC 6000. SD. $5.98.

The Pennario-Susskind SD is a very fine-sounding disc. As in many British recordings, the stereo effect is not very pronounced, but the sound has a richness and spread which is most attractive. Moreover, the solo instrument comes through without the slightly woolly quality heard in the mono version and thus grips the listener's attention more successfully. Pennario's pianism has a refinement and tonal finesse absent from his playing a few years back, but I was rather perplexed by the seemingly almost bored quality of his performance here.

No such complaint can be made against Ann Schein, who has strong technical equipment and a good deal more impetuosity than Mr. Pennario. Unfortunately, the rather monochromatic, graphitelike quality of her tone and her slightly provincial interpretative fussiness seriously limit the dynamic scope and expressive range of her playing on this disc. (Her individualistic retardations of phrase, for example, disrupt the flow of the music without adding anything of real consequence.) Goossens gives a judicious accompaniment, but I am not partial to the rather congested Viennese string sound. Kapp's stereo recording has more conventional instrumental separation than does Capitol's edition. H.G.

RAVEL: *Quartet for Strings, in F*—See Debussy: *Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10.*

RESPIGHI: *Pini di Roma*—See Casella: *La Giara.*

RUGGLES: *Organum*
†Moore: *In Memoriam*
†Ward: *Symphony No. 2*

Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Akeo Watanabe, cond. (in the Ruggles); William Strickland, cond. (in the Moore and Ward).
● Composers Recordings CRI 127. LP. $5.95.

Carl Ruggles of Arlington, Vermont, is the grand old man of modern American music. This is his first major orchestral recording. His Organum is not in the least like the organum of the Middle Ages; he uses the term, one imagines, because it seems to connote rich, full-bodied, dark-toned sonorities. The piece begins with a questioning, chromatic, Liszt-like phrase and develops it with marvelous command of dissonance; harmony, nuance, and orchestral color all blend here into a tremendously powerful musical experience.

The piece by Douglas Moore filling out the side is a deeply felt and finely achieved threnody written during World War II. The symphony by Robert Ward on the other side is brought off with all the assurance in the world, but there is a kind of second-rateness in its thematic ideas which keeps it from attaining quite the stature it strives for. Such, at least, is the impression from this recording, which is not more than passable from the sonic point of view and may not be much better interpretatively speaking. The other pieces come over successfully, however. A.F.

SAINT-SAENS: *Carnaval des animaux*—See Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67.*

SCHUBERT: *Symphonies: No. 3, in D; No. 5, in B flat*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
● Capitol G 7212. LP. $4.98.
● ● Capitol SG 7212. SD. $5.98.

In 1939, during his last season with the London Philharmonic Orchestra before his wartime hiatus from Britain, Sir Thomas made a recording of the Schubert Fifth that quickly became a classic. It was so full of joy, so radiant in its song, that even rapidly aging sonics could not prevent it from holding its public in a longplay transfer long after most discs of its vintage had disappeared from the catalogue.

That performance set the standard by which I judge all approaches to this music. Only Sir Thomas, I felt, could ever find that mixture of magic again, but I was not sure that even he retained the formula until a guest appearance with the Chicago Symphony proved that the miracle was still in his repertory. Moreover, that Chicago engagement revealed a like miracle in the Beecham performance of the Schubert Third. Happily, Sir Thomas and the Royal Philharmonic have been able to record both scores with, if anything, greater refinement than that of the performances I remember, and the result is a new addition to the rapidly expanding shelf of prime Beecham recordings. This too is going to be a classic.

In stereo the sound is ideally suited to the character of the music, but the mono of the Fifth lacks brilliance. R.C.M.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor, ("Unfinished"); Rosamunde: Overture; Ballet Music Nos. 1 and 2*

Royal Danish Orchestra, George Hurst, cond.
● Forum F 70019. LP. $1.98.
● ● Forum SF 70019. SD. $2.98.

Clear, bright recorded sound is notable here, although there is some evidence of overmodulation in climaxes. The *Rosamunde* music (the overture, incidentally, is the familiar one, also known as *The Magic Harp*) fares well from Hurst, but his performance of the symphony is on the fast side and none too expressive. Still, for the price this is a record that many will enjoy. R.C.M.

SCHUETZ: *Historia der Auferstehung Jesu Christi*

Soloists; Instrumental Ensemble; Norddeutscher Singkreis, Gottfried Wolters, cond.
● Archive ARC 3137. LP. $5.98.
● ● Archive ARC 73137. SD. $6.98.

"The Story of the Joyful and Victorious Resurrection of Our Unique Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ," to give this work its complete title, was published in 1623. It is very likely the earliest German oratorio available on records, and one of the earliest in any language. Its historical importance, however, is not its only claim to fame or to the attention of music lovers. Schütz is one of those rare transitional figures who display some of the best features of the two worlds they straddle. He is as skillful a contrapuntist as any of the great Renaissance masters,

Heinrich Schütz, 1585–1672.

while his melody has the somewhat more subjective tone and his harmony the more strongly marked unifying function of the baroque.

In the present work he manages with the simplest of means—a few voices and a few instruments—to suggest the astonishment of the three Maries, the doubts of the disciples, the reassurances of the angels at the sepulcher and of Jesus. The chorus is used only three times: as prologue, for a short comment in the second scene, and as triumphant epilogue. For the rest of the time we have the narrative of the Evangelist, accompanied by four viole da gamba, and the conversations of the characters, the utterances of the individuals being set as duets. The role of the Evangelist is by far the most extensive in the work, though by no means as taxing as in a Bach Passion. It is sung here by the tenor Helmut Krebs with attractive tone and in a manner that reflects his long experience, his understanding of the style, and Schütz's scrupulous observance of the natural rhythms and accents of the German text. All the other singers are equally competent, Wolters does not permit anything to drag, and the sound, in both versions, is first-class. The complete text, in German and English, is provided. N.B.

SCHUMANN: *Dichterliebe, Op. 48* (complete); *Der Nussbaum; Erstes Grün; Jasminenstrauch; Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint; Kommen und Scheiden; Requiem*

Cesare Valletti, tenor; Leo Taubman, piano.
● RCA Victor LM 2412. LP. $4.98.
● ● RCA Victor LSC 2412. SD. $5.98.

As a total emotional experience, this *Dichterliebe* will not challenge Fischer-Dieskau's; it is, though, a very gratifying rendition, clean and lyrical. As one would expect, the tenor is at his best in the quiet, easily flowing songs like *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* and *Hör ich das Liedchen klingen*—these numbers are done to a turn. His voice is not really of heavy enough caliber for the climactic bars of *Ich grolle nicht*, and the limited span of his low tones is in evidence occasionally, as in *Die alten, bösen Lieder*. These reservations aside, his singing throughout the cycle and the six additional Schumann songs is immaculate, and his penetration of mood

and style most impressive. His German pronunciation will never, of course, be entirely free of Latin mannerism, but it is surprisingly idiomatic; that Valletti should even make the effort sets him well apart from nearly all of his Italian colleagues. Taubman's accompaniments are smooth and proportioned. The sound is excellent, the monophonic version every bit as listenable as the stereo. C.L.O.

SESSIONS: ***Symphony No. 1***
†Bergsma: ***Music on a Quiet Theme***
†Smith: ***Tetrameron***

Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Akeo Watanabe, cond. (in the Sessions and Smith); William Strickland, cond. (in the Bergsma).

● COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 131. LP. $5.95.

The Sessions, which dates from 1928, reveals early influences at work in forming this composer's style—especially the influence of Stravinsky in the vigorous rhythms and brassy orchestration of the first movement—but the piece as a whole has the breadth, assurance, and largeness of gesture characteristic of the major master which Roger Sessions has since revealed himself to be. The finale, most unexpectedly, is beguilingly tuneful and entertaining; tuneful entertainment is something one does not expect of Sessions.

The *Music on a Quiet Theme* of William Bergsma is also a masterly piece—short, intense, highly lyrical, somewhat Vaughan Williams-ish, and very much to the point. Russell Smith is a new composer making his debut on records; his *Tetrameron* is a beautifully scored, beautifully proportioned, enigmatic work in a fairly conservative idiom.

The recording is good throughout this attractive release, and the performances must be good or one would not feel so well disposed towards the compositions. A.F.

SMITH: ***Tetrameron*—See Sessions:** ***Symphony No. 1.***

VIVALDI: ***Concertos: in C, P. 84; in E, P. Sin. 19; in D minor, P. 288; in A minor, P. 83***

Soloists; New York Sinfonietta, Max Goberman, cond.

● ● LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPIECES, Vol. 1, No. 3. SD. $8.50 on subscription or $10 separately.

The C major concerto is one of those richly orchestrated works that are among the surprises Vivaldi offers us. There are pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and solo violins, each pair being featured at one time or another. The sound here is much better than on the Columbia Entré version of this work, but in that older version the molding of the melodic line in the slow movement is more flexible than it is here. In the D minor Concerto, for viola d'amore and strings, Goberman's fast movements are livelier than those in the two other available versions (the Virtuosi di Roma on Decca and a Dutch group on Concert Hall), his soloist (Walter Trampler) superior to theirs, and his reading in general as fervent and expressive as that of the Italian ensemble. The A minor Concerto is for piccolo, and here again Goberman's first-class soloist (Samuel Baron) and his more animated style top the competition. Apparently new to records is the Sinfonia in E, a very short but energetic work for string orchestra. As usual in The Library of Recorded Masterpieces, the Ricordi scores are bound into the album. N.B.

VIVALDI: ***Concertos: for Diverse Instruments, in C, P. 16; for Oboe and Strings, in D minor, Op. 8, No. 9; for Flute and Strings, in C minor, P. 440; for Piccolo and Strings, in C, P. 79***

Harold Gomberg, oboe; John Wummer, flute; F. William Heim, piccolo; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5459. LP. $4.98.
● ● COLUMBIA MS 6131. SD. $5.98.

All of these works are available on records (the Oboe Concerto in several versions), but few of the other performances equal and none of them surpass this one in the quality of the solo playing. The lovely tone and extraordinary skill of Messrs. Gomberg and Wummer have long been familiar to New York Philharmonic audiences, but this is the first time we have had a chance to hear Mr. Heim more or less on his own. He seems to have an inexhaustible supply of breath, and he succeeds in making his ordinarily shrill and squeaky instrument sound almost beautiful.

P. 16, originally for a curious combination of instruments some of which were already obsolescent in Vivaldi's time, is here played (as it was by Schippers on an Angel disc) in an arrangement by Casella. There are mo-

ments in its jolly first movement when the players are not all exactly together. Bernstein takes the opening Allegro of the Oboe Concerto rather slowly, diluting the tension that should be set up by the syncopated ritornel; in the finale, however, he conveys the dramatic sweep of the music effectively. His tempo for the first movement of the Flute Concerto might appear slow too, at first, but it is justified by the elaborate configurations of the difficult solo part, which would be impossible even for a Wummer to negotiate at a faster pace. A word should also be said for Bernstein's discreet treatment of the continuo part, especially in the last two movements of the Piccolo Concerto. Balances are excellent, as is the sound in both versions. N.B.

WARD: *Symphony No. 2*—See Ruggles: *Organum.*

WOLF: *Italienisches Liederbuch* (complete)

Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Erik Werba and Jörg Demus, piano.
● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18568/69. Two LP. $11.96.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138035/36. Two SD. $13.96.

WOLF: *Spanisches Liederbuch* (excerpts)

Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Eberhard Wächter, baritone; Erik Werba, piano.
● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18591. LP. $5.98.
● ● DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138059. SD. $6.98.

WOLF: *Spanisches Liederbuch* (excerpts)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Gerald Moore, piano.
● ANGEL 35838. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35838. SD. $5.98.

For a feature review of these recordings, see p. 49.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

TERESA BERGANZA: *"Music of Spain"*

De Falla: *Siete Canciones populares Españolas*. Nin: *Villancicos*. Valverde: *Clavelitos*. Chapi: *Las Hijas del Zebedeo: Carceleras*. Soutullo and Vert: *El Ultimo Romantico: Song of the Mantilla*. Guerrero: *La Rosa del Azafran: Sagrario's aria*. Marqués: *El Anillo de hierro: Romanza de Margarita*.

Teresa Berganza, mezzo; Felix Lavilla, piano; Orchestra, Benito Lauret, Nicasio Tejada, Indalecio Cisneros, conds.
● ● LONDON OS 25113. SD. $5.98.

Berganza again demonstrates her blooming, soaring tone and formidable technique, in addition to plenty of temperament. Musically, though, this is not an intriguing record. The De Falla songs are really far from great, though always enjoyable listening, and Nin's *Villancicos* fall into the same category. The zarzuela excerpts on Side 2 are all effective, but pall fairly quickly. Moreover, this is not one of London's happier engineering efforts—the sound is shallow and frequently edgy, and I very much doubt that the rather distant piano on Side 1 is as thin and brittle as seems to be the case. No texts—the jacket notes are quite sketchy. C.L.O.

EASTMAN WIND ENSEMBLE: *"Diverse Winds"*

Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond.
● MERCURY MG 50221. LP. $4.98.
● ● MERCURY SR 90221. SD. $5.98.

Mr. Fennell and his associates could make a record containing nothing but the C major scale, and it would be well worth hearing; their playing is as close to perfection as you are ever likely to hear from a wind ensemble, and they are always beautifully recorded. Happily, Fennell & Co. offer here a good deal more than the C major scale.

The most important of the four works on their new disc is the Concerto for 23 Winds by a young, hitherto unrecorded composer named Walter Hartley. This is an absolutely enchanting piece in the modern baroque style, full of ingenuities of rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation, completely alive and delightful in every bar. The Symphony for Band by Vincent Persichetti is also a thoroughly engaging and rewarding piece. Percy Grainger's relatively unimpressive *Hill Song No. 2* and two commonplace *Armenian Dances* by Khachaturian complete the program. A.F.

HANS HOTTER: *"Great German Songs"*

Schubert: *An die Musik; Im Abendrot; Ständchen; Abschied; Im Frühling; Der Lindenbaum; Sei mir gegrüsst!; Wanderers Nachtlied; Geheimes.* Schumann: *Mondnacht; Wer machte dich so krank?—Alte Laute (Op. 35); Erstes Grün; Die beiden Grenadiere.* Strauss: *Ach, weh mir unglückhaften Mann; Ich trage meine Minne.*

Hans Hotter, bass; Gerald Moore, piano.

● ANGEL 35588. LP. $4.98.
● ● ANGEL S 35588. SD. $5.98.

Hotter's familiar vocal shortcomings—the spread tone and nasal enunciation—are in evidence here, as they have been for a decade, and work to great disadvantage in lyrical expressions like *Ständchen* and *Der Lindenbaum.* Also present, however, is the singer's interpretative insight and the authority of a seasoned artist, and these qualities tell in such songs as *Im Abendrot* and *Sei mir gegrüsst!* He handles the lighter selections (*Abschied; Im Frühling*) knowingly, and throughout the recital captures and conveys the songs' moods. Particularly rewarding are the two Schumann settings from Opus 35—*Wer machte dich so krank?* and *Alte Laute.* Moore's support is, as usual, impeccable. The stereo version has no significant advantage over the monophonic. C.L.O.

PRO ARTE ANTIQUA: *"Birth of the Baroque"*

Kari Nurmela, baritone; Pro Arte Antiqua of Prague Consort of Viols.

● VANGUARD BG 591. LP. $4.98.
● ● VANGUARD BGS 5019. SD. $5.95.

Although the title of this disc is not very accurate, and although half of the pieces were not written for viols, there is some lovely music here, well worth an occasional hearing. The performers number five players of as many different sizes of viols and, in some pieces, a harpsichordist. Lully's ballet music for Cavalli's opera *Serse* demands an orchestra with violins and probably some oboes and bassoons, not this chamber group. Heinrich Biber's Serenada seems to call for the brilliance of violins too, but even in this softer version it is a striking composition, solidly constructed and full of rhythmic and melodic interest. In one of its movements a baritone sings, a task agreeably discharged by Mr. Nurmela. The pieces that sound fine on viols are by Giovanni Gabrieli (a four-part canzone, *La Spiritade*), Orlando Gibbons (a beautiful Fantasia), Valentin Haussmann (a Pavan and Galliard), and Charles Luython (*Fuga suavissima*, with a lively final section). Also included are four movements from Couperin's *Apothéose de Lully.* The players produce a firm, warm tone, and the sound is excellent in both versions. N.B.

JAMES STAGLIANO: *"French Horn Masterpieces, Vol. 2"*

Glière: *Nocturne, Op. 35, No. 10; Intermezzo, Op. 35, No. 11.* Gretchaninov: *Lullaby, Op. 1, No. 5.* Cui: *Moment Musical, Op. 50, No. 1.* Glazunov: *Reverie, Op. 24.* Tchaikovsky: *Autumn Song, Op. 37a, No. 10.* Scriabin: *Romance; Prelude, Op. 11, No. 4.* Kalinnikov: *Elegy* (mono only). Akimenko: *Melody, Op. 18.* Dukas: *Villanelle.* Fauré: *Après un rêve, Op. 7, No. 3.* Poulenc: *Elégie.* Vuillermoz: *Etude.*

James Stagliano, horn; Paul Ulanowsky, piano.

● BOSTON B 212. LP. $4.98.
● ● BOSTON BST 1009. SD. $5.95.

This disc contains some of the most refined, artistic French horn playing I have ever encountered, either on or off records. Stagliano, first horn player of the Boston Symphony, has a tone that is as smooth as glass and as soft-textured as velvet. His control is amazing and his phrasing beautifully sustained. All this he puts completely at the service of the composer.

Most of the repertoire in this collection is well off the beaten track, and most of it has never been recorded before in this country, at least in this form. Fewer than half of the works are transcriptions; the rest were originally written for the horn. One side of the disc is devoted to romantic, melodic Russian pieces, all written just before or after the turn of the century. The other side contains four French compositions, the most striking of which is the Poulenc *Elégie*, a very moving work in the twelve-tone idiom, written about two years ago as a memorial to another distinguished horn virtuoso, the late Dennis Brain. Paul Ulanowsky's piano accompaniments, as always, are extremely tasteful and carefully wrought.

In either mono or stereo, the reproduction matches the high quality of the performance. Though there seems little need for a two-channel version, it presents the two instruments in nicely separated fashion, with the horn on the left and the piano on the right. P.A.

POPULAR • THEATRE • FOLK


Thurber


Ewell

Humor That's Civilized Rather Than Sick

"A Thurber Carnival." *Original Cast Recording. Columbia KOL 5500, $5.98 (LP); KOS 2024, $6.98 (SD).*

Any original cast recording of a Broadway show is probably expected either to stimulate the listener's interest in a production he has not seen or to keep alive memories of one he has. I can't say that this recording of the current Broadway success, *A Thurber Carnival*, filled me with any desire to sit through the stage presentation, but *qua* disc I found it wonderfully entertaining. Thurber is a humorist (perhaps that should read humanist) whom I want to savor in the quiet of my own living room and alone. His is the humor that raises the quiet chuckle rather than the belly laugh—and I don't see myself sitting in an audience quietly chuckling away, when all around me people are laughing their heads off.

It was somebody's brain wave to take the captions of a number of Thurber cartoons and let them become the *bons mots* one might hear at a dance when the orchestra suddenly stops playing. The idea is a funny one and is brilliantly carried off by all members of the cast. Perhaps I enjoyed these two sections, *W'ord Dance*, so much because of an experience I once had in a hotel dining room. One moment the room was bathed in a clatter of glass and cutlery; then suddenly, for a second, silence. In that moment, from the other end of the room a voice boomed out "No Sulka tie is any good that costs less than fifteen dollars."

There are other good things on this menu though. Thurber's tale of unwanted books and unremembered addresses, *File and Forget*; that fey story *The Unicorn in the Garden*, with its marvelous moral: "Don't count your boobies until they're hatched"; and the moving *Memorial to a Dog*. A Thurber classic, *The Night the Bed Fell*, did not, in Tom Ewell's reading, suggest to me the

youthfulness of the narrator nor did it conjure up all the humor of that hectic occasion, but elsewhere Mr. Ewell is grand. Paul Ford too is outstandingly good in *Casuals of the Keys*, as he explains the difficulties of teaching a mermaid to sit down and asks a visitor "What in heaven's name are the Philadelphia Athletics doing in Kansas City?" (a nostalgia-laden question if I ever heard one).

For this festival of humor Don Elliott has supplied some witty music, which he and his quartet play with considerable urbanity. The stereo sound effectively suggests the lively air of a theatre production and for that reason is slightly preferable to the mono, though that edition too is extremely fine. Columbia's album is a handsome one, replete with Thurber's drawings of rabbits, dogs, and human beings, plus a double-page insert of drawings for *The Last Flower* which he calls "A parable in pictures." A most rewarding hour for those who like their humor civilized rather than sick. J.F.I.

Clooney

Driftwood

Songful Panorama of the Nation's Past

"How the West Was Won." *Soloists; Chorus; Orchestra.* *RCA Victor LSO 6070, $11.96 (Two SD).*

EARLY EXPLORERS brought back reports of a fair country where great herds of buffalo stretched from horizon to horizon, where plews could be had for the mere skinning, where sweet water flowed from the mountains and rich black soil cried out for the plow. Ever since, the West has been the Golden Land of the American imagination—the land of the new challenge and the new chance. Not long ago, *Life* Magazine fashioned a knowledgeable panorama of the early West in word and picture. On the basis of that series, RCA has recorded a stunning set that parallels the text and pictures with authentic songs of the men and women who drove "across the wide Missouri." Bearing the vocal brunt of this enterprise are Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney from the pops ranks, and Sam Hinton and Jimmie Driftwood from the folklore front.

The producers have lavished both intelligence and research upon their selection of songs—some as familiar as *The Streets of Laredo*, some as strange as *Hang Me, Oh Hang Me!* But over and over again the listener will recognize melodic affinities with Anglo-Irish-Scottish folk tunes. Unfortunately, the Spanish—who have left their mark on the West from Texas to the Straits of Juan de Fuca in Washington—are represented by only one item, *Lupita Dwina*. The French fare no better: *En Roulant Ma Boule Roulant* is the sole cursory nod to the men who discovered the Mississippi and most of the country beyond, who left as their memorial place names like Terre Haute and Prairie du Chien—as well as the wistfully christened Grand Teton Mountains.

Crosby has a good deal of trouble getting his performance off the ground. In his first few efforts he is merely playing the role of Bing Crosby to the hilt: *Shenandoah* sounds as insouciant as *I Met a Million-Dollar Baby*, and in his patterlike reading from Carl Sandburg one keeps waiting for the Bob Hope punch line. But once he enters into the spirit, the Old Master is superb. His narration of *All "Pewtrified"* and his singing of *900 Miles* are high spots of the album—as is his tender, evocative collaboration with Miss Clooney in *Green Grow the Lilacs*. Miss Clooney, surprisingly effective throughout, is at her best in a poignant, lightly limned *Careless Love*. The easy baritone of Sam Hinton, bearing the accent of the plains, is a particular treat in the droll *Hell in Texas*, while Jimmie Driftwood—an honest-to-God folk singer—will captivate you with *Billy the Kid* and *Jesse James*.

The set's exultant climax comes in three Mormon songs sung by the descendants of Utah's first settlers. Of these, *The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning* strikingly illustrates how banal words and a banal melody can inexplicably fuse into a majestic anthem.

The engineering throughout is excellent. Towards the beginning, in a masterfully understated scene setting, a lone guitar strums *Shenandoah* in the left speaker, then slowly passes through center to the right speaker. This is the stereo effect at its best. A full-color reprint of the *Life* material accompanies the album. Thanks to everyone concerned in producing this splendid set, we can all cock a nostalgic ear as well as an eye towards the drama of our national past. O.B.B.

Dragon

The Case of the Ambivalent Dragon

"Americana." *Capitol Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. Capitol P 8523, $4.98 (LP); SP 8523, $5.98 (SD).*

PLAYED on a Fourth-of-July evening at the Hollywood Bowl, this lively pops program would be shrewdly calculated to tickle pleasurably both a mass audience's ears and patriotic spirits. What could be more satisfactory in that colossal ambience than rousing readings of such native classics as *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and "On the Trail" from the *Grand Canyon* Suite, such ingratiating novelties as the "Hoedown" from Copland's *Rodeo* and the "Pavanne" from Gould's Second American Symphonette, plus full symphonic arrangements of *Dixie*, *Aura Lee*, *Home on the Range*, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and *America the Beautiful*?

Even listeners in the home also may succumb to the engaging, however naïve, attractions here. With or without fireworks lighting up the sky, an appropriately pyrotechnical mood is effectively generated, less by the music itself than by the assured bravura of the performances and the sonic opulence with which the kaleidoscopic tonal coloring is captured in superb recording.

Perhaps only an egghead will quibble over so chromium-plated a representation of American music; probably only an aesthetic purist will be revolted by the Hollywoodian excesses of Mr. Dragon's inflations of simple folkish tunes and hymns. When the contemporary heroes of musical entertainment are a Kostelanetz and a Mantovani, it's niggling to refuse an accolade to a Richard Strauss redivivus—and since the death of the German master, certainly no one exploits symphonic capabilities more richly than Carmen Dragon.

In any case, it would be unfair to judge him solely by the present examples, only one of which—*Dixie*, with its jauntiness and stereogenic antiphonies—represents him at his imaginative best. I warmly recommend both seriously and idly curious listeners to go back to earlier releases in his long Capitol series to hear such little masterpieces as his arrangements of the *Sailor's Hornpipe*, *Turkey in the Straw*, and *Country Gardens* (in the "Invitation to the Dance" program), *Jesusita en Chihuahua* (in "Tempo Español"), *Alouette* (in "La Belle France"), *La Cucaracha* (in "A World of Music"), and *Meadowland* (in "Russkaya!").

And there is at least a kind of horrid ecstasy in the other side of Dragon's ambivalent genius: the monstrous lushness and schmaltz of his *Kashmiri Song* (in "Orientale") and *Kamenoi-Ostrov* (in "Russkaya!") are quite possibly justified by the inherent needs of their prematurely Hollywoodian materials! But where is one to draw the line? If Mr. Dragon is willing to let the lowest common denominator of mass tastes decide that no line need be drawn at all, he is only too sure to go on to more and more plush reupholster jobs—like that performed here on *Home on the Range*.

However, now that Carmen Dragon has left Hollywood and taken up residence in England, we may hope for an improvement. Beyond the West Coast smog, he should stand a better chance of realizing his finest artistic potentialities as well as developing even further his extraordinary gifts of sheer sound shaping. R.D.D.

"Swinging Dors." Diana Dors; Wally Stott and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1436, $3.98 (LP).

There's more to Miss Dors than meets the eye, and what meets the eye is plenty. Hitherto regarded, figuratively speaking, as merely an updated Mae West, Miss Dors turns out to be an uncommonly gifted singer, with a warm, intimate style that is never forced or mannered. And she really can swing (musically speaking, that is). Her program is nicely balanced between standards and some special material, and Miss Dors herself is something rather special. J.F.I.

"Spanish Folk Songs, Vol. II." Germaine Montero; Orchestra, Salvatore Becarisse, cond. Vanguard VRS 9067, $4.98 (LP).

In the realm of Spanish popular song, Germaine Montero is *la primera*. Her warm, clear soprano can portray with equal ease the sunny joy of a rural ballad or the dark bitterness of a gypsy lament. Her past efforts have won her a *Grand Prix du Disque*, but the power and beauty of this recital of traditional songs eclipses all that has gone before. Becarisse's subtly wrought accompaniments and Vanguard's sound further enhance the impact of her singing. O.B.B.

"Let's Dance Awhile to the Griff Williams Style." Griff Williams and His Orchestra. Mercury MG 20494, $3.98 (LP).

An exceptionally good program of dance music, played by an orchestra that relies on a smooth easy-to-dance-to beat. Fresh simple arrangements of old pop tunes are the fare here, rather than the show numbers that are the staple items in most dance orchestras' books. Though never the darling of debutantes, the late Griff Williams enjoyed tremendous popularity with the college campus crowd. From this recorded evidence, the popularity was well deserved. J.F.I.

"Accent Italiano!" The DiMara Sisters; Joe Reisman and His Orchestra. Roulette R 25117, $3.98 (LP).
The DiMara Sisters, an Italian-born trio as sweet and heady as Strega, manage to impart a pleasantly American cachet to a program that includes *Mattinata*, *Tell Me That You Love Me Tonight*, and the lovely *Parigi, O Cara* (*O, Dear Paris*). Lyrics are sung in Italian and English, accompaniments are atmospheric, and the *sorelli* are irresistible.
O.B.B.

"Like in Love." Nancy Wilson; Orchestra, Billy May, cond. Capitol ST 1319, $4.98 (SD).
Capitol, which unearths and exploits more new talent than almost any other record company, has a real find in Nancy Wilson, a young singer with an excellent jazz feeling and a flair for handling ballads with the aplomb of a seasoned performer. When she has shed a few stylistic eclecticisms, her natural warmth and emotion will shine even more brightly than now. She is accompanied by the Billy May Orchestra in rare form.
J.F.I.

"Sounds from Brasilia." Brasilian Rhythmists. Musidisc MS 16014, $4.98 (SD).
An exciting sampling of the "new sound" in the samba, with its emphasis upon more pronounced but more sophisticated percussion. The Brasilian Rhythmists bring an intriguing assortment of indigenous instruments to their labors, making the final musical product as genuine in coloration as it is danceable. Top-drawer stereo sound.
O.B.B.

"Like Love." André Previn. His Piano and Orchestra. Columbia CL 1437, $3.98 (LP).
The only adjective I can fall back on for this most enjoyable disc is "pretty." Pretty for Previn's tasteful pianism, for his relaxed and extremely inventive arrangements of these songs of love. Just add to these pleasures some perfectly lovely Columbia sound. The perfect record for background music when the lights are low.
J.F.I.

"Songs of the Sabras." Karmon Israeli Folk Dancers and Singers. Vanguard VRS 9069, $4.98 (LP); VSD 2059, $5.95 (SD).
These singers and dancers of Israel's new generation bring ebullience and vivacity—and, where indicated, a touch of poignance—to the songs of their equally new nation. Israeli folk music, to be sure, is a largely synthetic product of the mid-twentieth century, but it looks back to a Middle Eastern heritage that is always underscored in the performances of the Karmon troupe. Vanguard's stereo sound, as deep and crisply separated as you are likely to hear, shades the fine mono edition by a long shadow indeed.
O.B.B.

"Songs of the Bad Old Days." Pearl Bailey; Orchestra, Don Redman, cond. Roulette R 25116, $3.98 (LP).
There is considerable uninhibited abandon in Pearl Bailey's handling of these dozen memorable songs from the late Twenties and early Thirties, and they sound all the better for being subjected to this sort of vocal treatment, which often recalls the work of Adelaide Hall and the early Ethel Waters.

Adding to the period flavor are the driving, typically Twentyish arrangements by Don Redman, whose orchestra provides some really solid backing for Miss Bailey's vocals. J.F.I.

"Music of Spain: Sardanas." Cobla Barcelona. London 5412, $4.98 (LP).
The stately sardana, dappled with light and shadow, is the national dance of Catalonia, the fiercely separatist northeast province of Spain that fathered Pablo Casals. The Cobla Barcelona, possibly the finest of the Catalan instrumental groups specializing in the intricate dance, here offer a definitively played collection. Truly different, and rather astringent to the ear, this is an idiom worth sampling. O.B.B.

"101 Hit Songs." Lou Stein and His Orchestra. Everest SDBR 1082/2, $9.96 (Two SD).
Everything but *The Stein Song* has been incorporated into this marathon dance program culled from pop and musical show songs of the past thirty years. Lou Stein and his orchestra (actually a rhythm trio) present them in irresistible dance stylings, and in this one-hour-and-twenty-minute session I failed to find a single dull moment. The excellent stereo sound brings the group right onto your home dance floor. J.F.I.

"Original Amateur Hour 25th Anniversary Album." Various artists. United Artists UXL-2, $7.96 (Two LP).
Air checks of wartime broadcasts presided over by the benign Major Bowes, who spins his wheel of fortune around and around and where it stops nobody knows. In this case it stops for a youthful Teresa Brewer, Pat Boone, Stubby Kaye, Jerry Vale, and a host of other youngsters then on the threshold of their successful careers. Naturally the sound is dated, but that does not really matter, for this is strictly for those who revel in nostalgia. I can assure them they will be well rewarded; this is infinitely more amusing than one would have thought possible. J.F.I.

Johann Strauss: 10 Waltzes. Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Paul Walter, cond. Epic LC 3624, $4.98 (LP); BC 1045, $5.98 (SD).
As the number of selections indicates, these are abbreviated versions for dancing rather than concert listening, but as such the performances are reasonably straightforward and sonically richer than usual, especially in the broadly reverberant stereo version, which is markedly superior to the more intense and constrained LP. R.D.D.

"All Points East." Gus Vali and His Casbah Ensemble. United Artists UAS 6083, $4.98 (SD).
The exotic dances of the Middle East are well served by Gus Vali's rich and gaily caparisoned musical caravan from Greece through Armenia and Turkey to Israel. Using a happy mélange of native and Western instruments, the Maestro weaves a multicolored Oriental tapestry which wears extremely well in a sonic frame that is bright and clear but no great shakes as to separation. But Gus, old traveler, the Casbah is in Algiers—not somewhere east of Athens. O.B.B.

"The Franz Liszt Story." The Piano and Orchestra of Harry Sukman. Liberty LRP 3151, $3.98 (LP); Liberty LST 7151, $4.98 (SD).
Ten of the venerable Abbé's more popular compositions, arranged for piano and orchestra, which will be included in *Song Without End*, a forthcoming film based on the composer's tempestuous career. Sukman's arrangements are highly commercial but far from unattractive, and he certainly plays them all most effectively. The stereo version offers sound of remarkable breadth and depth. J.F.I.

"Twelve Greatest Hits from the 1960 San Remo Festival." Singers; orchestra. Epic LN 3687, $3.98 (LP).
As suggested by the smashing success of *Volare* and *Piove*, Italian hits are increasingly infiltrating the American scene. However, with the annual San Remo Festival a kind of proving ground for upcoming bell ringers, 1960 looks like a lean year. The prize winners —*Libero*, *Romantica*, and *E'Mezzanotte*—are pleasant enough, but they lack originality. *Libero*, in fact, is a rather embarrassing retread by Modugno of his *Volare*. The performances by Italy's leading pop artists are a joy to the ear. O.B.B.

"Omnibust." Spike Jones and The Band That Plays for FUN. Liberty LRP 3140, $3.98 (LP); Liberty LST 7140, $4.98 (SD).
Here are Spike Jones and his cohorts in iconoclastic mood, taking some of the little gods that flicker across the silver screen of television for a well-deserved ride. The methods are a little less corny than of old, but just as effective. Private Eye programs, Soaperettas, Lawrence Welk, and The Late, Late Show bear the brunt of the satirical attacks, and an old friend, Feetlebaum, is back, racing against new competitors in a funny take-off on a Sports Spectacular shindig. Liberty's stereo sound is extremely effective in the compounding of many of these crimes. J.F.I.

"Leroy Anderson Conducts His Music." Leroy Anderson and Orchestra. Decca DL 8954, $3.98 (LP).
Decca has consistently championed the Leroy Anderson cause with a number of discs of the composer's musical vignettes. In most cases, they have been merely a reshuffling of the same numbers, and this new issue is no exception. It does, however, include two early Anderson works, *Jazz Legato* and *Jazz Pizzicato*, worth reviving and not found on any other Decca LP. The recorded sound is not very brilliant, but the performances have a lilt that only the composer as conductor manages to provide. J.F.I.

"Voices of the South." Roger Wagner Chorale. Capitol P 8519, $4.98 (LP); SP 8519, $5.98 (SD).
As well as the West Coast chorus has sung in the past, it has never sounded better than in these unelaborate *a cappella* settings of fifteen spirituals and Southern airs, topped by zestful *Little David* and *Charlottown*. The group is perhaps smaller than usual, but for once the men's voices are dominant, and the darkly colored sonorities are sheer enchantment. Both editions are superbly recorded, if at an excessively high modulation level

for these materials, but the stereo disc is to be preferred for its superior transparency as well as spaciousness. R.D.D.

"The Mikado." Soloists: Norman Luboff Choir; Bell Telephone Orchestra, Donald Voorhees, cond. Columbia OL 5480, $4.98 (LP); Columbia OS 2022, $5.98 (SD).

Dennis King's richly florid performance as The Mikado and a ripely "spivvish" account of Pooh-Bah from Stanley Holloway are the only redeeming features of this unusually gauche version of the famous Savoy opera. Groucho Marx's unmusical croakings as Ko-Ko qualify him for inclusion in that well-known list of society offenders. As Katisha, Helen Traubel is sadly miscast and uneasy vocally, and the work of the rest of the cast is decidedly sub par. To meet the time requirements of the TV program from which the recording emanates, the work has been heavily cut. Not heavily enough, though. J.F.I.

"Flamenco Variations on Three Guitars." Sabicas, guitar. Decca DL 8957, $3.98 (LP).

On the theory that if a solo Sabicas glitters, Sabicas tripled would dazzle, Decca has juggled tape to enable the artist to play all three parts of this flamenco program. Technically, the performance is without flaw; but this sort of contrived effect saps what is essentially an improvisational art of its substance. Sound? Breath-taking. O. B. B.

"Ebb Tide." Frank Chacksfield and His Orchestra. Richmond S 30078, $2.98 (SD).

Chacksfield's present *Ebb Tide* seems to be receding from a shallower and more sheltered beach than the one in his earlier recording of this popular seascape. Even in stereo, the breakers sound less impressive, the terrain much sandier, and the sea gulls less inquisitive and raucous. The remainder of the numbers are given this excellent orchestra's usual considerate attention. J. F. I.

"The Raunch Hands Pickin' and Singin'." Epic LN 3698, $3.98 (LP).

The Raunch Hands are hardly likely to supplant The Kingston Trio in the affections of those who like their folk songs dished up in highly commercial style. Yet as a relief from the California trio, this Cambridge sextet is worth some attention. Doubling the voices doesn't necessarily mean doubling the value, but this is an agreeable ramble through some old folk songs, plus some amusing kidding of the current craze for rock and roll and the unrecognizable jargon of some current pop songs. This group's teamwork lacks the slickness of its competitors, but it sounds a good deal more honest and enjoyable. J.F.I.

"Marching the Blues." Felix Slatkin's Fantastic Brass. Liberty LRP 3157, $3.98 (LP); LST 7157, $4.98 (SD).

A front-running candidate for the most heavily modulated, sensationally brilliant, earsplitting recording of all time. Uninhibited brasses scream their heads off; the martial blues arrangements (topped by *Sugar Blues* and *Bye Bye Blues*) miss no trick of the trade, including dramatic antiphonies in the stereo version; but the even harder and more piercing-toned monophonic edition can be rec-

ommended only as an *in extremis* kill-or-cure for rock'n' roll addicts. R.D.D.

"Piano Español." Lalo, His Piano and His Orchestra. Tico LP 1070, $4.98 (LP). The Latin Beat, in the adman's term, is probably a way of life. But even the most hardened devotee should wince at the depths of a taste that would offer the *Warsaw* Concerto—pretentious and overblown though it may be—in mambo rhythm. Argentinian pianist-conductor-arranger Lalo Schifrin, who is responsible for these proceedings, abandoned the law for a musical career—proving only that it is as easy to commit a tort as to study one. O.B.B.

"Linger Awhile." Billy Vaughn and His Orchestra. Dot DLP 25275, $4.98 (SD). The twin sax harmonies over a constant rocking beat, hallmarks of the Vaughn orchestra, are here applied to a dozen evergreens. Not much variety results, but if you like this sort of treatment, you'll undoubtedly "Linger Awhile" and have a good time doing so. Those who prefer these songs treated a little more affectionately will do well to listen before buying. There is an outstanding performance of *The Huckle Buck*, a number well suited to this kind of musical attention, and very fine stereo sound. J.F.I.

"Four Below Strikes Back." Original Cast Recording. Offbeat O 4017, $4.95 (LP). The intimate revues that have been housed in Julius Monk's confusingly named *boîte*, Downstairs at the Upstairs, have been productive of at least two gay original-cast re-

cordings. Its present occupant, *Four Below Strikes Back*, never seems to reach the level of entertainment offered by the previous tenants. Although some of the material has a chic, an originality of its own, it is handled too forcefully by a cast who appear determined, at all costs, to seem terribly talented. Unfortunately, this doesn't hide the fact that they aren't. The audience present on the occasion of the recording seemed to enjoy this whole romp a great deal more than I did, and so may you. J.F.I.

"Our Love Story." Sheila and Gordon Macrae; Van Alexander and His Orchestra. Capitol ST 1353, $4.98 (SD).

Sheila Macrae, making her recording debut, joins better-known husband Gordon in a concert of solos and duets. Mrs. Macrae is always in there pitching, but is quite overshadowed by her spouse, a better than average baritone. In fact what few pleasures there are here derive from his robust warblings of songs by Kern and Rodgers. Still, all the world loves a lover (and here are two), and many will find this a pleasant and appealing disc. Stereo sound, though good, does little to enliven the recordings. J.F.I.

"The Merry Widow—Highlights." Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of the Volksoper, Hans Hagen, cond. Vox STVX 421400, $4.98 (SD).

An extremely routine run-through of excerpts from Lehár's durable score. The singing lacks real distinction and style, and the stereo sound is not at all flattering to the tenor, placed too far from the mike, or to the soprano, who is too close. For those who want these delightful *morceaux* in true Viennese style, the London stereo recording, featuring Gueden and Kmentt, is recommended. J.F.I.

"From St. Louis to Seville." Carlos Montoya, guitar; rhythm accompaniment. RCA Victor LPM 1986, $3.98 (LP); LSP 1986, $4.98 (SD).

Here guitarist Montoya attempts to wed jazz and flamenco—with results, in my opinion, likely to induce schizophrenia. Admittedly, a common denominator exists; when Montoya plays *St. Louis Blues* with a flamenco twist, both cats and gypsies will tap their toes. On the whole, however, this jazz-flamenco experiment seems to lead down a path that ends nowhere in particular. The lustrous mono recording is fully as effective as its stereo counterpart. O.B.B.

"Marina." Los Españoles. Everest LPBR 5075, $3.98 (LP).

The five Spanish singers and instrumentalists who compose Los Españoles have been ill-served by echo-laden engineering. Their program ranges across the international scene—including *Ciao Ciao Bambino* and Sidney Bechet's *Petite Fleur*—with the principal emphasis on Latin-American songs. This is regrettable, because tunes like *Perfidia* and *La Paloma* are just not down Los Españoles' *calle*. One suspects that the group might be better on their home grounds, but —based on the present evidence—their American debut on discs seems hardly worth the effort, let alone the price. O. B. B.

Louis Armstrong: "Satchmo Plays King Oliver." Audio Fidelity 1930, $5.95 (LP); 5930, $6.95 (SD).
Armstrong plays and sings with more authority and spirit on several of these selections than one normally expects of him of late. The inner excitement that has always been a characteristic of a good Armstrong trumpet solo sparkles through *I Ain't Got Nobody*, *Chimes Blues*, *I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of My Jelly Roll*, *Jelly Roll Blues*, and the opening ensemble of *Drop That Sack*. And there are strong Louis vocals on *St. James Infirmary Blues*, *Big Butter and Egg Man*, and *I Ain't Got Nobody*. But Armstrong is working against heavy odds for his group is wan and wooden and a few of the tunes chosen are inexcusable (*Old Kentucky Home* and *Frankie and Johnny*, for instance). The disc is *not* made up, as the title seems to imply, of King Oliver tunes—only two are by Oliver and some of the others have no rational relationship to him. It could as easily have been called "Satchmo Plays Satchmo" or even "Satchmo Plays Sidney Frey" since Frey is credited as "arranger" of five of the twelve tunes.

Dave Brubeck Quartet, Trio and Duo: "Southern Scene." Columbia CL 1439, $3.98 (LP).
Dave Brubeck ventures into the Old South by means of *Oh Susanna*, *Darling Nellie Gray*, *Nobody Knows the Troubles I've Seen*, and *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair* as well as the less traditional *Little Rock Getaway*, *Deep in the Heart of Texas*, and *At the Darktown Strutters Ball*. The relatively unassuming side of Brubeck is on display here which means that there is relatively little pompous thumping. Still he remains a remarkably uninteresting pianist. Paul Desmond's alto saxophone is heard only occasionally and Joe Morello (drums) and Gene Wright (bass) provide their usual buoyant foundation.

Kurt Edelhagen and His Orchestra: "A Toast to the Bands." Decca 8934, $3.98 (LP); 78934, $4.98 (SD).
Edelhagen's big German-based band (his personnel is international) is very similar to Ted Heath's band in England and Harry Arnold's in Sweden—a precise, polished group which produces a glistening ensemble spiced with jazz solos. The band heard on this disc includes a gutty, hard-swinging tenor saxophonist and a crisply pungent trumpeter (the soloists are unidentified although the band personnel is given). At first glance the program might seem to be one more in the interminable series of imitations of the best-known arrangements of big bands of the past (*Jumpin' at the Woodside*, *Don't Be That Way*, *Cherokee*, *A String of Pearls*, and so on) but Edelhagen's arrangers have given them new treatments, all in a solid, full-bodied, swinging style, which occasionally improve on the originals (*Ciribiribin* and *Golden Wedding*, for instance). Even when they don't, they still result in quite satisfying big-band performances.

Lionel Hampton: "Open House." RCA Camden 517, $1.98 (LP).
This is a superb collection of small-group recordings made by Hampton between 1937 and 1940 when he was with Benny Goodman. Hampton used the cream of the jazz stars of that period on these studio dates, and they usually swung with tremendous vigor. Here are Chu Berry (*Sweethearts on Parade*), Coleman Hawkins and Charlie Christian (*One Sweet Letter from You*), Jonah Jones (*I Surrender, Dear*), Lawrence Brown (*Memories of You*), Johnny Hodges (*You're My Ideal*), Ziggy Elman (*Gin for Christmas*), plus Ben Webster, Benny Carter, Dizzy Gillespie, Cootie Williams, Nat Cole, and, of course, Hampton in his quadruple role of vibist, drummer, pianist, and singer. This is a basic disc for any jazz collection.

Coleman Hawkins: "With the Red Garland Trio." Prestige/Swingsville 2001, $4.98 (LP).
Hawkins strides through this disc like the jazz giant he is. His playing is consistently authoritative, seemingly spreading out in all directions with its jabbing, riding impulses. Garland is not a soloist in the same league with Hawkins, but he holds up his end satisfactorily and his trio gives Hawkins a strong rhythmic foundation over which to work.

The Jazztet: "Meet the Jazztet." Argo 664, $4.98 (LP).
Starting with several known quantities—Benny Golson's considerable abilities as a composer and arranger, Art Farmer's all-around polish on trumpet, and Curtis Fuller's gutty use of the trombone—the Jazztet has built on these and enhanced the value of all three by involving them in arrangements which make more use of ensemble playing than one usually finds in modern groups. The group's first disc, however, reveals relatively little of the Jazztet's individuality. Their resources are scattered in an apparent effort to provide showcases for each soloist (a full-noted, flowing *Easy Living* for Golson, some tender Farmer on *I Remember Clifford*, and a lip-buster in Fuller's walloping *It's All Right with Me*), straight blowing on *Avalon*, and some pretentious nonsense in an impossible piece, *Serenata*. The group really shows its mettle on Farmer's *Mox Nix*, a strong surging piece with a crackling solo by Farmer and some stomping piano by McCoy Tyner, a crisp and spirited version of Golson's *Blues March* on which Farmer again plays with urgent brilliance, and a rocking, riff-backed arrangement of *It Ain't Necessarily So*. It is, by most standards, an impressive debut disc, but one would like to have heard more of the positive values of the Jazztet in this introductory collection.

Barney Kessel, Shelly Manne, and Ray Brown: "Poll Winners Three!" Contemporary 3576, $4.98 (LP).
Kessel (guitar), Manne (drums), and Brown (bass) comprise an impeccable trio—light, gracefully swinging, imaginative, and mutually sensitive. This set is in the vein of their two earlier discs for Contemporary. It is easygoing, essentially melodic—excellent for taking the knots out of your psyche.

Wingy Manone: "The Wildest Horn in Town." Imperial 9093, $3.95 (LP).
It's normally a long time between good Wingy Manone records but this one has been overdue. After several recorded misfires, however, the Manone trumpet is back in form in this collection of blues and pseudoblues. Its familiar rough-edged tone stabs out solos with exultant joy, and the genially rasping Manone voice turns up on a few numbers. The group he plays with, unidentified, is apparently made up of West Coast studio men—the clarinet is animated and the trombone is lusty, but the rhythm section just plods along. Manone has worked with so many dismal groups over the years, however, that these men rate as one of his better sets of supporters.

Charles Mingus and His Jazz Groups: "Mingus Dynasty." Columbia 1440, $3.98 (LP).
Mingus' increasing control of his materials is very evident on the varied program on this disc. He is now making more selective use of the boiling, tumultuous sound he has been brewing for several years and which, for quite a while, seemed to be an end in itself. Now he uses it as an accent or as a means

towards an effect. Also, he is investigating the possibilities of the flute (he still has some work to do on this), and, a most interesting development, he is using Ellington material. The Mingus versions of *Things Ain't What They Used To Be* and *Mood Indigo* are as thoroughly Ellingtonian in spirit as anything I have heard, yet there is no feeling that Mingus is simply dogging Ellington's creative footsteps. These two pieces sparkle in a set which also includes a furiously chomping bit of gospel-according-to-Mingus, a strange and beautifully developed ballad highlighted by an exceptional piano solo by Roland Hanna, and several of Mingus' urgent weavings of sliding sounds. Not all of Mingus' ideas come off successfully (and he admits in the notes that some things were not played quite as he had hoped, but at least there's always something happening.

Billie and De De Pierce: "New Orleans Jazz." Folk Lyric 110, $4.98 (LP).
Billie and De De Pierce are veterans of the nontourist areas of New Orleans jazz. Billie is a strong and emphatic pianist and a blues singer who derives from the classic blues singers of the Twenties. De De's trumpet playing is in the crackling, full-throated New Orleans style which traces back at least to Joe Oliver and, one might presume, to Buddy Bolden. De De got his training with such bands as Chris Kelly's, Buddy Petit's, and Kid Rena's. He and Billie have been heard together on records once before in some dimly recorded numbers for *Music of the Dance Halls* (Folkways) and Billie was recorded alone to slightly better advantage on *Primitive Piano* (Tone). Technically, the recording on this disc is far better than on either of the earlier ones (slightly echoing but full and clear), and both Billie and De De are in fine fettle. De De is easily the star of the disc, his trumpet playing forceful and biting (although he occasionally is so carried away in his enthusiasm he trips himself up), and his singing full of flowing joy and spirit. Billie plays an effective but subordinate role, appearing mostly as a vocalist, singing blues and old pop tunes with a slightly sour intonation and a pushing, prodding style of phrasing. Harry Oster and Richard Allen, who produced the recording, have done a service for jazz in getting down this evidence of De De's trumpet work.

The Herb Pilhofer Trio. Argo 657, $4.98 (LP).
After making two LPs for small labels, which almost immediately went out of business, Pilhofer has finally landed with a label which should make his work generally available. Possibly it is just as well that he had to go through this frustrating method of progress for, although his early recordings were sufficiently provocative to arouse interest, this Argo disc is a really impressive set. Pilhofer, a pianist, has now honed down his virtuosic tendencies to a firm, propulsive, and economically stated style. He makes ventures into the lower register much as Eddie Costa does to produce percussive, stompings yet linear effects, and he weaves his line, in with those of Dale Olinger, guitar, and Stuart Anderson, bass, to create closely knit and well-balanced ensembles. The program is mildly adventurous (it includes Rollins' *Valse Hot*, Russo's *Sweets*, Brubeck's *The Duke*, Wallington's *Godchild*, and Pilhofer's own *Trio*) and shows Pilhofer and his group as an unusually thoughtful trio, finding interesting approaches to a variety of material.

Sonny Stitt: "Burnin'," Argo 661, $4.98 (LP). "The Sonny Side of Stitt," Roost 2240, $3.98 (LP); S 2240, $4.98 (SD).
Burnin' is as relaxed and ingratiating a disc as Stitt has ever made. Accompanied by Barry Harris, piano, William Austin, bass, and Frank Gant, drums, Stitt flows through a series of selections in a light and melodic fashion that is smooth and polished but never sticky. As a saxophonist who has spent most of his career trying to dodge the influence of Charlie Parker, he even tempts fate—quite successfully—by playing two numbers closely associated with Parker, *Ko-Ko* and *Lover Man*, and making these performances completely his own without disowning their Parker heritage. There are also suggestions of this fully integrated side of Stitt on the Roost disc (on *Moonray* and *Old-Fashioned Blues*), but the choice of tunes for the rest of this set is routine (*I'll Remember April, Skylark, Don't Worry 'Bout Me*, and standards of this stripe) and Stitt seems to find less to respond to in them than he does in the program on the Argo disc.

Billy Taylor: "Uptown." Riverside 12319, $4.98 (LP); 1168, $5.95 (SD).
There is more jazz feeling in this disc than Taylor has shown for a long, long time on records. It may have been the location of the recording (Harlem's "The Prelude") or Taylor's change to a new bassist (Henry Grimes) and drummer (Ray Mosca). Whatever the reason, this is much closer to a realization of the potential that has always been present in his playing. The Taylor polish remains, but there is more of jazz interest under it and his feeling for dynamics is put to more effective use. The program includes Duke Jordan's *Jordu*, Bobby Timmons' *Moanin'*, Garner's *La Petite Mambo*, Sara Cassey's *Warm Blue Stream* (which deserves more attention), and several Taylor originals.

Teddy Wilson: "And Then They Wrote." Columbia 1442, $3.98 (LP).
The practically infallible Teddy Wilson is back with more of his stately little stomps and frolics. But this time, instead of the miscellaneous collection of familiar tunes which usually make up his programs, he is involved in an "idea"—and one that works out quite interestingly. The disc consists of tunes composed by jazz pianists, almost all of whom are better known as performers than as composers (Ellington and Kenton are the exceptions). On the first side Wilson is dealing with tunes and composers from his own era of jazz or earlier—Morton, Ellington, Waller, James P. Johnson, Hines, Basie—and the c stomary Wilson style fits them quite snugly. On the second side, however, he ventures into areas in which we are not accustomed to hear him—Monk, Kenton, Shearing, Brubeck, Garner. It is interesting to find that the compositions of Shearing, Garner, and Brubeck, all of whom have their roots as performers in prewar jazz, settle quietly into the Wilson mold. Monk's *'Round Midnight*, however, brings out an unexpectedly deliberate side in Wilson, while Kenton's *Artistry in Rhythm* is given a gentle, reflective treatment neither Kentonian nor Wilsonian but quite effective.

JOHN S. WILSON

Continued from page 35

Mahler on Microgroove

A Selective Discography

works that make exceptional use of the resources of an unusually large orchestra. Three symphonies fall into this group, and the most effective of them, the first of the series, is available in a powerful stereo recording for Everest, SDBR 3014–2. Rudolf Schwarz conducts, and although he achieves results quite different from those of the old Bruno Walter edition, I find his performance a strong and convincing realization of the composer's ideas.

It ought to be mentioned here that Mahler's practice was to revise his orchestration on the basis of experience gained in the performance of his music, and that the Fifth, in particular, was subjected to extensive overhauls. I have been unable to find a printed score that corresponds exactly to the Schwarz recording, which may incorporate some emendations Mahler left in manuscript. Further, one should note that the production of the Fifth is greatly hampered by the fact that the separate instrumental parts apparently were engraved only once and thus fail to indicate later changes in the full scores. It is this sort of problem that makes the eventual publication of a full, critical edition of Mahler so important.

Neither the Sixth nor the Seventh symphonies has been re-recorded for some time. Stereo, naturally, would be an asset to both of them, but the older versions still provide reasonable monophonic accounts of this music and remain worthy of attention. Adler's edition of the Sixth on SPA 59/60 is, everything considered, preferable to Eduard Flipse's 1955 Holland Festival performance with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on Epic SC 6012, but the margin of superiority is narrow. For the Seventh, Scherchen's Westminster album, 2221, is all we have at the moment. The first movement alone, with its broad-striding theme reminiscent of *Die Meistersinger*, justifies its cost.

In the case of the Mahler Eighth, the "Symphony of a Thousand Voices," stereo is not just desirable but indispensable if the antiphonal effects, central to much of the music, are to be realized. The Holland Festival of 1954 provided the only available recorded performance, under Flipse on Epic SC 6004, which will assist those with good imaginations in forming a reasonable impression of this work; but more than that it cannot do. If you want to get to know the Eighth, this monophonic-only version is worth its price, but let us hope for better.

Since the Mahler Ninth does not call for stereo as urgently as its immediate predecessor, Horenstein's excellent performance with the Vienna Symphony in Vox Box 116 can still be recommended. A stereo version by Leopold Ludwig and the London Symphony offers a very intense account of this music that is close to being the fastest uncut performance of this score ever recorded. It is, of course, technically superior to the Horenstein (although marred by a bad splice in the final movement) and its urgency may serve to make the work more immediately accessible to those encountering it for the first time. Confirmed Mahler admirers will probably find that Horenstein best conveys the Ninth's breadth and emotional content; but Ludwig's version is not to be dismissed as anything less than a good one, and for those whose primary concern is sonic realism it is the outstanding edition.

Mahler's Tenth and final symphony, left unfinished at his death, was to contain five movements, of which we possess the first and third, edited by Ernst Křenek. The remaining three movements have been completed by J. H. Wheeler, although, as in most cases of this sort, his work cannot carry the authority of Mahler's own writing. From the sketches and the portions brought close to completion by Mahler himself, however, it is easy to see that the composer was moving in the directions later followed by the atonalist school.

Bruno Walter is opposed to playing the Tenth at all, since he is, perhaps excessively, sensitive to Mahler's hesitation about the performance of unfinished works. Szell's stereo version of the two movements of the Křenek edition on Epic BC 1024 is among that conductor's most distinguished contributions to the catalogue, although the somewhat more sensual approach of the Adler monophonic recording, SPA 30/1, may be more attractive to some listeners.

Contrary to common misapprehension, Mahler included voices in only four of the symphonies, but his vocal writing is outstanding, and his works in which the voice predominates include some of his most effective and popular scores. *Das klagende Lied*, the earliest Mahler composition we have on records, is available in stereo on Vanguard VSD 2044, but neither the performance nor the recording is as fine as the music deserves. Three other Vanguard Lieder sets offer interesting and well-sung collections on VRS 421 and 424, with a group of works

for voice and orchestra (played by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Felix Prohaska) on VRS 478 outstanding.

Mahler's three major song cycles, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Kindertotenlieder*, and *Das Lied von der Erde*, are all available in interpretatively sound editions and in stereo. The Fischer-Dieskau and Furtwängler version of the first of these cycles makes Angel 35522 the outstanding monophonic set. If you want stereo, London OS 25039 offers Flagstad performances that make effective use of one of the great voices of our time. On the reverse of that disc she offers the *Kindertotenlieder*, but in the stereo versions of Forrester (RCA Victor LSC 2371) or the superb old monophonic collaboration of Walter and Kathleen Ferrier (Columbia ML 4980) you will hear this cycle projected with greater poignancy.

Das Lied von der Erde may yet prove to be Mahler's most durable masterpiece. First recorded by Walter in a 1936 Vienna set with Kerstin Thorborg and Charles Kullman, its later appearances on longplay have been held to the very high standard of this exceptional performance—long overdue in a "great recordings" reissue. The main problem for the engineers is dynamics—page after page of delicate balances between *p* and *pp*, which, in a good many cases, are treated rather crudely. The monophonic set, London A 4212, made by Walter with Ferrier and Julius Patzak in 1952, is deficient in this respect, but the performance remains an outstanding one and the fourth side, containing three of Mahler's Rückert songs, is one of the supreme documentations of Ferrier's voice.

In stereo I prefer the Rosbaud edition, with Grace Hoffman and Helmut Melchert, on Vox STPL 10912. In the two-channel form balances are superior to those of the recent Reiner set for RCA Victor, and the entire performance gives evidence of greater feeling for the music on the part of both conductor and men. Even here, however, the dynamics are not always as marked, and in a number of passages it would be happier if they were. When surfaces and tapes become quiet enough that a real *ppp* can be recorded without the intrusion of noise, music such as this will be far better served.

the Tape Deck

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3, in F, Op. 90*

Houston Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.
● ● Everest 4T 3030. 37 min. $7.95.

If these golden sonorities have been wafted to Elysium, Brahms must be desperately torn between beatific pride in his skill as an orchestrator and agonizing dismay over the gross distortions of his skillfully planned tempos, expressive connotations, and architectonic structure. Interpretatively, this is probably the most mannered Third one is ever likely to hear; sonically, it is one of the most beautiful, with the astonishingly glowing playing of the Houston Symphony enhanced by quite transcendently rich and auditorium-authentic stereoism. A tape that every audiophile should know for sheer aural enchantment, it is one in which even strict Brahmsians may momentarily forgive interpretative eccentricities.

DEBUSSY: *La Mer; Prélude a l'après-midi d'un faune*
†Ravel: *Rapsodie espagnole*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
● ● London LCL 80013. 45 min. $7.95.

Highly praised as was the stereo disc of these performances, the present taping does far better justice both to the low frequencies in the original recording and the over-all spectrum balance. Moreover, the superior channel differentiations here expose even more vividly the clarity of scoring and executant detail, yet without any loss in evenness and breadth of panoramic sonic spread. Interpretatively, Ansermet's readings may be too precisely articulated to satisfy listeners who demand a more romantically atmospheric approach to these works (*La Mer* in particular), but surely his coloristic delicacy and superb sense of air spacing are ideal for an essentially impressionistic treatment—and for the stereo medium itself. There are perhaps more dramatic versions available, but none more plastically contoured, vibrantly nuanced, and radiantly luminous.

GIOVANNI GABRIELI: *Processional and Ceremonial Music*

Choirs and Orchestra of the Gabrieli Festival, Edmond Appia, cond.
● ● Vanguard VTC 1616. 42 min. $7.95.

No collector who fondly remembers the identically titled 1943 album of 78s, conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth, will need to be urged to hear the present tape, if indeed he doesn't already know Appia's performances in their original stereo disc release of over a year ago. Like so much of Gabrieli's work, this is stereogenic music *par excellence*, since it was originally written for performance via the dual choir lofts of St. Mark's Cathedral at Venice. Yet, whether despite this, or for this very reason, the antiphonal effects seem more natural, and much more eloquent, than those of many more self-consciously stereo "specials" of today.

As a purist, I have some regrets that all the instruments used here were not as premodern as the several organs (although these probably are of baroque-era rather than true renaissance origin), and as an insatiable instrumentalist I should have liked more of the variety afforded by the inclusion of a single nonvocal work (the *Canzona Quarti Toni a 15*). But in every other respect, this tape is unalloyed delight: for its warmly lucid recording, its gravely expressive performances, its wealth of glowing color, and above all for its magnificent music.

VILLA LOBOS: *Forest of the Amazon*

Bidú Sayão, soprano; Chorus of the Air, Heitor Villa Lobos, cond.
● ● United Artists UATC 2210. 47 min. $7.95.

Uneven as much of the late Brazilian master's output may have been, I could hardly believe that Alfred Frankenstein's scathing dismissal of this film score (at once "watered down and blown up") could be fully warranted—until I heard the work itself. The only possible tempering of so harsh a judgment on the music alone is that several songs and vocalises by Miss Sayão are aurally at least enchanting, and if one of them (the *Love Song*) is overreminiscent of her famous *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5, at least neither she nor Villa Lobos could find a model more worthy to imitate. The orchestral performance here is competent enough, and the recording (especially of the quasi-exotic atmospheric effects) is superb; but I hope that, if further releases are to come, they will be more characteristic representations of the composer's protean talents.

WAGNER: *Parsifal: Good Friday Spell; Symphonic Synthesis of Act III* (arr. Stokowski)

Houston Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.
● ● Everest T4 3031. 28 min. $7.95.

"For the want of a nail, the shoe was lost." And for the want of authentic chimes, an otherwise spellbinding sonic masterpiece is tragically flawed. Stokowski must have been at his most perverse when he passed up the usual tubular bells (or the oversize ones especially designed for *Parsifal*) to utilize a Schulmerich carillon, which is completely lacking in the solemn sonority demanded here. Happily, however, these quasi-"prepared"-piano clinkings occupy only a few (if vital) bars of the score: all the rest is played with even richer poignance and serenity than in Stokowski's memorable Philadelphian days; the Houston Symphony's performance has a tonal luxuriance I never imagined it capable of; and the recording boasts the most magical of stereo airiness and expansive depth—wholly enchanting in its breathtakingly transparent pianissimos, sheerly apocalyptic in its heaven-storming climaxes.

"Always"; "With These Hands." Roger Williams, piano; Orchestra, Frank Hunter, Pete King, Marty Gold, and Gene von Hallberg, conds. Kapp KT 41024/41023, two reels, 39 and 40 min. respectively, $7.95 each.

The subtitle for the first program, "Melodies That Will Live Forever," is a good index to the nature of its mood-music arrangements of light classics and traditional airs. The romantic sentiment is laid on rather heavily here, and Williams' fluid pianistic skill and command of attractive tonal coloring are better demonstrated in the more suitable materials of the second reel. Here there are welcome contrasts in the livelier *Yellow Bird* and *Syncopated Clock*, while the soloist's expressive gifts are heard at their haunting best in *O mio babbino caro*, *Forgotten Dreams*, *Greensleeves*, *Snowfall*, *Two Different Worlds*, and the title piece. All appear in the purest, sweetest, and most transparent of stereo recording.

"Bravo Bikel." Elektra ETC 1508, 50 min., $7.95.

Bravo, indeed! for these on-the-spot recordings at Town Hall concerts not only display the multilingual singer in his best form but also reveal his superb gifts as an entertainer. Even more than for the songs themselves, this program is to be treasured for its inimitable reading of Robert Nathan's *Digging the Weans* (in which a quavering-voiced archeological scholar of the far future ponders the meaning of enigmatic twentieth-century artifacts and inscriptions), and for its spoken introduction to the "genuine Russian folk song" *Nitchevo, Nitchevo, Nitchevo*, synthesized for one of Bikel's film appearances. Quite unlike the original LP version, which was criticized for its muffled and "distant" miking, the present tape sounds quite clearly and closely recorded with realistic

Continued on next page

TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

hall presence. If it stems from the same master, the reprocessing certainly has made a world of difference.

"Cash Box Instrumental Hits" and **"Cuban Moonlight,"** Stanley Black and His Orchestra. London LPM 70011, 32 min., and LPM 70010, 34 min.; $6.95 each.

The dozen mostly familiar pops standards in the first program, some of which are discreetly Latin-American flavored, are topped by *Patricia*, *Canadian Sunset*, and *Lullaby of Birdland*; the best of the fourteen all-Cuban favorites, played by a smaller ensemble, are *Ay-Ay-Ay*, *Rumba Matumba*, *Os Quindins de Yaya*, *The Moon Was Yellow*, and *Perfida*. Black's own piano and/or celesta sparkles brightly throughout, and the verve and bounciness of both leader and sidemen are invigoratingly reproduced in vivid stereoism.

"Destry Rides Again," Louise O'Brien and Jack Haskell; Norman Leyden Orchestra. Tandberg SMS S29, 28 min., $7.95.

Both fresh-voiced vocalists, but especially the more assured and versatile baritone, deserve better backing in these Harold Rome selections than they get from Leyden's rough-and-ready orchestra (the small size of which is only too synthetically augmented by echo-chambering). Haskell's *Ballad of the Gun* is particularly effective; the strongly stereoistic, closely miked, originally Camden recording more coarsely so.

"Festival Gitana," Sabicas and Los Trianeros. Elektra ETC 1506, 37 min., $7.95.

A kind of flamenco jam session, this "fiesta" is likely to appeal best to flamenco singer *aficionados*, since Sabicas' own vibrant and virtuoso guitar playing (recorded as always with sharply focused clarity) is subordinated here to the florid vocalizations (and incisive stamping and castanet playing) of Enrique Montoya and Domingo Alvarado of the Trianeros group, which also includes the supporting guitarists El Niño de Alicante and Diego Castellon.

"Film Encores," Vols. 1 and 2, and **"Gems Forever."** Mantovani and His Orchestra. London LPK 7003 (twin-pack), 79 min., $11.95; and LPM 70001, 37 min., $6.95.

Undoubtedly these reel versions will be no less successful than their stereo disc counterparts, for they certainly represent the sleek Mantovani style at its most insidious. Yet for me his whistling high strings and other scoring mannerisms get very tiresome; I regret that he doesn't venture farther and more often from his sure-fire formulas. His woodwind and brass choirs play so beautifully here, when they are given a chance, and the recording throughout is so richly luminous and stereoistic, that I yearn all the more to hear what Mantovani might do if he were to escape from his usual interpretative schmaltz and rhythmic flaccidity.

"I Get a Kick Out of You," Marty Paich and His Orchestra. Warner Brothers WST 1349, 35 min., $7.95.

Paich's thirteen-man band, which includes an occasionally featured French horn and vibraphone, plays and is recorded with

smooth plasticity, but too often meanders along so slowly that the inventive arrangements are made to seem excessively lugubrious or lacking in continuity. I much prefer the no less oddly imaginative but more animated *Love for Sale*, *Cottontail*, and *It Don't Mean a Thing*. But all in all, this is a dance program well off the beaten path.

"Gene Krupa Plays Gerry Mulligan Arrangements." Verve VSTC 223, 42 min., $7.95.

No personnel notes are provided, but it's an obviously big and skilled band which revives a dozen of the 1946 Mulligan scores, topped by a bouncing *Margie* and expressively sonorous, if somewhat self-conscious, *If You Were the Only Girl*. But this is mostly mighty raucous and hard-driving. Krupa's own drumming is unimaginatively vigorous and unvaried, and the most interesting feature of the program as a whole is the frequent effectiveness with which Mulligan anticipated the antiphonal potentialities of strongly stereoistic recording.

"New Swingin' Band." Harry James and His Orchestra. M-G-M STC 3778, 42 min., $7.95.

James's own trumpet tone and style seem unchanged, but except in the more lilting playing here (especially in *Get off the Stand*, *King Size Blues*, *Walkin'*, *Slats*, and *Cottontail*) he is able to inspire his "new" sidemen only to routinely swinging gusto, which too often degenerates into squalling stridence. But he is boldly and openly recorded in markedly channel-differentiated stereoism.

"Russian Fair." Don Cossack Choir, Serge Jaroff, cond. Decca ST7 10016, 41 min., $7.95.

It's good to renew a long-interrupted acquaintanceship with the famous Russian singers and shouters. Jaroff is as robust and melodramatic as ever, and I still alternate between admiration of the sheerly vocal proficiencies of his men and a susceptibility to weary quickly of their repeated mannerisms. I liked best here the less elaborate arrangements (especially those of the Ukrainian carol *Glory to Him* and *Tshedrivka* or *New Year's Tale*), but even the more elaborate works are impressively energetic and are recorded far better than ever before, with strongly marked stereoism providing the broadspread and powerful impact which has made the Don Cossacks so successful in concert.

"Sousa Marches in Hi-Fi." The Goldman Band, Richard Franko Goldman, cond. Decca ST7 8807, 41 min., $7.95.

The closest modern approach to the authentic (fast) tempos and swaggering spirit of Sousa's own performances, this stirring program was somewhat handicapped in its disc versions by a tonal hardness and gruffness, most of which is eliminated here. Everyone who knows the familiar marches only in more bombastic and less genuinely spirited readings, which are the rule today, can learn here how differently they should and *can* sound; and anyone who knows only a few of the most often heard and recorded Sousa compositions can discover here what a wealth of tunefulness and rhythmic zest have been often overlooked.

High Fidelity Newsfronts

by RALPH FREAS

Tuner Timing Technology. Back in May our Equipment Report section examined the first amplifier kit turned out by the Precision Apparatus Company, PACO, for short. The product seemed sufficiently interesting to warrant more investigation so we hied out to Glendale, New York for a visit with Sol Sparer, sales veep for the firm. Sales people are an energetic lot and Sparer is no exception. Currently, his spirits run high because of PACO's three-faceted approach to the tuner market.

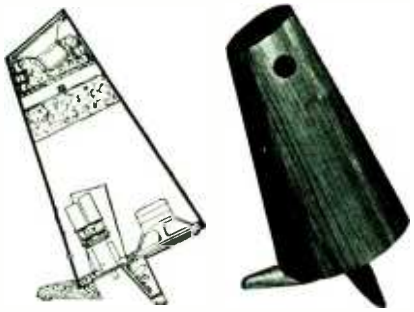
"Some people have no interest in kit building," Sparer explained, "so, naturally, we sell our AM/FM and FM-only tuners factory-wired. Others enjoy putting a kit together but weary if the job goes on too long. For this second group, we have a semikit with many of the subcomponents already wired. The semikit buyer has only about six to eight hours work, doing the simple mechanical stage, and wiring only the power supply, cathode follower, and front switching. And they save $35 off the price of the $134.95 factory-assembled AM/FM tuner (ST-45). But the person who enjoys doing everything and can spend the twenty to twenty-eight hours it requires can save $50.

"I think our FM tuner is unique because it uses the same chassis as the AM/FM model. This allows the buyer to add the AM section later on. When he buys the AM section separately, he gets an AM/FM tuning panel."

Even though the firm sells the semikit, Sparer doesn't think complete kit complexities too great. He tells of a letter he received recently from a woman whose husband bought the complete kit. The unit was delivered while he was on a short business trip and the wife decided to have a go at assembling it. Unlike Penelope, of legend, Mrs. Kit-Builder did no unraveling to prolong the task and the unit was completed by the time her husband returned. And, as she reported with delight and surprise, "It worked perfectly the first time."

"Didn't surprise *us*," grumbled Sol Sparer with just a trace of pride. "We give them an eighty-page assembly manual that a child can follow. In fact, I feel like I'm in publishing instead of the electronics business."

Break with Tradition. We don't ordinarily swing in diplomatic circles but recently, in company with others of the high-fidelity press, we responded to an invitation to break pumpernickel and sample smorgasbord with the Swedish Ambassador to the UN. Fighting an impulse to don Homburg and gray gloves, we dashed to Embassy Headquarters where we were introduced, not



The Elektron-Lund is handsome in appearance (right) and has interesting innards as the drawing at the left clearly shows.

to the Ambassador but to the Elektron Lund loudspeaker system. In the presence of the unique speaker enclosure—a leaning, truncated cone aptly compared to a Civil War cannon—pumpernickel and international politics faded into the background.

The Lund is an integrated speaker-amplifier system. Rather than offer an amplifier with a basically flat frequency response curve, its designer, Stig Carlsson, created a feedback network with equalizing networks for the speakers to make the response curve of the *over-all* system, speakers and amplifier, basically flat. The speakers are driven by two separate amplifiers, housed in the unusual looking enclosure, one operating in the 20- to 300-cps range and the other from 300 cps to "well beyond the audible range."

The Civil-War-cannon-look of the Lund 1001 originated, oddly enough, in a castle in Stockholm. Count Bernadotte, industrial designer son of the King of Sweden, is responsible for the way it looks. Publicists for the unit interpret its appearance as a clear sign that royalty can break with the past and toss conservatism aside. We don't know about that but a pair of the Lund 1001s reproduces clean, wide-range stereo. They are priced at less than $400 apiece.

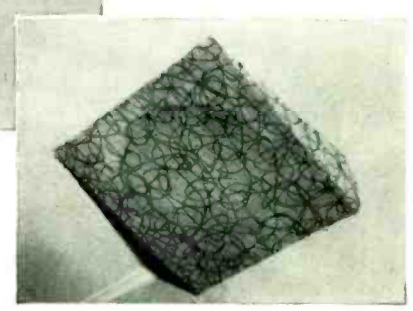
Wrong Impression. Joe Grado wishes us to correct the impression we gave in this column recently that he is going to bring out a new cartridge.

"Our existing cartridges are plenty good enough," says Joe. "We're just integrating them into our new arm, calibrating them for each other, and selling them as a matched pair."

He also added that our announcement of a de luxe turntable was a bit premature.

"Wait'll next year," says the Brooklyn-based Grado.

Cuing Guide. Have trouble getting the needle in the lead groove? Here's a practical solution offered by William Colbert, head of the Audio Exchange chain in the New York City area. Position the post of the tone arm rest nearer the edge of the transcription table so that, if the cartridge shell were laid against the side of the post, the needle would be right over the lead groove of the record. Simple? It's effective too.



by Scott J. Saunders

Mounting a Ceiling Speaker

AN INFINITE baffle has the reputation of being an ideal type of speaker enclosure. If this needs defending, we testify for the defense. The University 312 triaxial speaker (shown above) is ceiling-mounted under a large attic and the sound it delivers is tremendous.

Back radiations from the speaker are able to travel on without ever interfering with the front wave feeding into the room below. In fact, this type of mounting works so well that we are undertaking the installation of a second identical unit eight feet from the first for stereo reproduction. Properly braced, two powerful speakers shouldn't pose any vibration problems. But don't take any chances. Vibration is the most important problem to be faced in mounting a ceiling unit. Unless properly reinforced, the speaker can develop enough resonance to shake loose every nail holding the dryboard ceiling. The speaker mounting shown here is simple to make using ¾-in. plywood, but it must be rigidly anchored to both wall and ceiling supports in order to avoid the vibration problem.

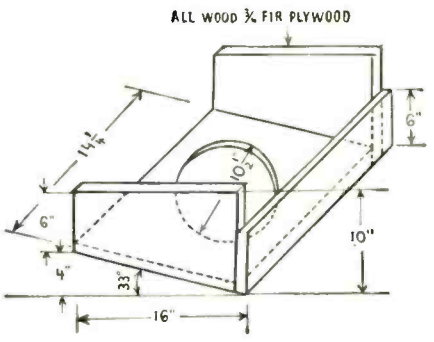
Here's how to proceed. First, get the exact width between the ceiling joists where the speaker is to be mounted. The outside measurements of the speaker frame should fit snugly with a push-fit between the joists. A sloppy fit will pull the joists inward when the frame is secured.

The sides of the frame are dadoed ⅜ths of an inch deep to receive the speaker baffle board. Join the baffle board, sides and rear panel, with wood glue and countersunk screws and set glue blocks at all joints.

When the frame is completed, drill four holes in each side and four holes in the rear panel to receive ¾-in. lag bolts. While the ⅜-in. drill is handy, position the brilliance control and bore a hole for the shank. Mount the frame to the joists and wall header so that the front edge of the frame is exactly even with the ceiling. With the frame in position, drill 5/16ths of an inch holes into the joists and header to receive the lag bolts. Turn the bolts all the way to the head, then remove them. Take down the frame and mount the speaker to the baffle with machine bolts and lock washers.

From the attic side, position the frame and screw the lag bolts into the prethreaded holes. To reduce vibration even more, the two joists can be braced with two ¼-in.-thick iron straps. Also use 4-in. angle irons at the juncture of joists and wall header.

The job is finished off by puttying the countersunk holes and attaching the grille cloth with glue or staples over the exposed frame. The wires which connect the speaker to the amplifier should be snaked through a convenient closet.



RECORD CHANGERS

Continued from page 37

the lead groove is also important. The arm should not drop suddenly and slam the needle against the record.

7) Treatment of record's spindle hole. If a spindle hole is widened by a changer mechanism, the record will tend to turn in erratic fashion and wow will result. The better changer therefore is the one that will not damage the spindle hole. The user also has an obligation to himself in removing

records from the spindle after playing. Worth noting in this respect is the fact that some changers have a removable spindle. After a stack of records has been played, the spindle may be removed and the discs lifted from the turntable. The user therefore does not have to juggle the disc over the spindle notch.

8) Speed adjustment. While not available on many changers and not of vital importance to the average music listener, a speed adjustment control will be an attractive feature for the serious musician or music student. Since any slight speed variation changes the pitch of reproduced sound, the musician accompanying himself via a record will want to be able to make fine adjustments of turntable speed. Interestingly, a performance that sounds slightly off pitch to a keen and practiced ear may have been recorded that way. In such a case, a speed adjustment control can correct this minor flaw which passes unnoticed by average ears.

One final word. Popular opinion has held that the stacking of one record on another may damage the record grooves. This depends on several factors: the cleanliness of the record; the care taken by the user; the condition of the grooves (some pressings produce tiny "horns" on the edge of the plateau between the grooves, which, if flattened, could produce noise). The possibility of damage from stacking discs was more likely in the past. Most records today have outer rims that are thicker than the recorded portions of the discs. When these records are stacked, the outer rims hold the recorded groove portions apart from each other. Some care, however, must still be exercised in handling a stack of records. Anyone who shuffles records together deserves to have them ruined.

THE SWAN

Continued from page 40

I occupied in the Boulevard Montmartre. Here, night and day, the queerest characters in the whole of Paris would wander in and out, smoking, drinking, chattering, shouting, bawling in my ears while I went on composing and trying to hear as little as possible. I am certain that in spite of cultural progress in France you will nevertheless still succeed in finding as many imbeciles in Paris capable of stimulating your grandson in the same way.

"Seventh recipe: In the case of *Mosè* I composed no overture at all and this is the easiest thing of all. I am quite sure that your grandson could use this final recipe with great success. It is roughly the same as that adopted by my good friend Meyerbeer in *Robert le Diable* and *Les Huguenots*, and it appears that he has found it most satisfactory. I am assured that he has made use of it in *Le Prophète* as well and is full of praise for the efficacy of this recipe.

"With my best wishes for the glory of your grandson and my thanks for the *pâté*, which I found excellent, believe me to be, etc.

Rossini,
ex-composer."

This letter is perhaps one of the most revealing and authentic expressions of Rossini's temperament that we have, for—apart from anything else—the composer speaks here in his own words, not as reported at second or third hand. The amateur psychologist will perceive in almost every one of Rossini's apparently facetious "recipes" a comment, an observation, which relates to some aspect of his own personal experience and philosophy (though there is nothing, so far as I can see, that can be attributed to childhood repressions or mother fixation or any of the rest of the familiar rumble-bumble that modern musical biographers inflict on us). It is a letter written by an adult, with all the comic and sometimes bitter experience of a successful adult life behind him. The first recipe, for instance, seems to me typical of Rossini's characteristic self-assurance as an artist, of his contempt as an accomplished professional for the uncomprehending figure of The Impresario who is perpetually concerned by the imperturbability of the creative artist, who, in turn, is instinctively and occupationally impatient with those who doubt his ability to be ready in time. Impresario baiting, indeed, was one of Rossini's favorite pastimes, and he took special delight in tormenting Barbaja, a showman of genius and unbelievable illiteracy whose mistress, Isabella Colbran, Rossini appropriated and, in due course, married. The reference in the second recipe to the watery macaroni was an understandable expression of indignation by a gourmet who particularly enjoyed Naples for the quality of its *pasta* and oysters.

There is discernible both in the third and fourth recipes that slightly contemptuous attitude towards the public which was possibly the cause of so much of Rossini's self-deprecatory humor. Every true artist has enough humility to believe that his most successful work is not all *that* good. How else can one explain Rossini's obvious delight in being able to show that the overture to *La Gazza ladra*, one of the most immediately and sensationally successful overtures he ever wrote, so far from being a work of genius was, in fact, tossed off in the course of a few hectic and reluctantly spent hours? There is a hint of the same pleasure to be found in recalling his successful ruse of using the overture to *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra* (which he omitted to remind his correspondent had been used for *Aureliano in Palmira* before that) for *The Barber of Seville*. "The public was enchanted by the solution." It was a verdict Rossini could have applied to the comparable case of the overture to *La Cenerentola*, of course—an opera which, like *The Barber of Seville*, was also a sensational failure at its Roman premiere. The overture to *Cenerentola* was taken over from *La Gazzetta*, which had otherwise sunk without trace in Naples four months earlier.

Only in Rossini's reference to *William Tell* in the sixth "recipe" is there a hint of any real feeling of bitterness. Rossini never got over his disappointment in *William Tell's* failure to become a popular success—a disappointment readily understandable in an artist who must have recognized, as anybody can who has ever heard the opera, that it was his most remarkable and original musical achievement.

On the whole Rossini's delight in maligning his own work would probably be explained by a psychologist as a defense mechanism against the flattery bestowed on him by his admirers. As Francis Toye has suggested, if Rossini had known his Shakespeare better he might well have reflected "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" for he was fundamentally a modest man. He had no exalted view of his own gifts, and he was essentially a professional in his attitude to art. To the rest of us, however, the psychological explanation of Rossini's wit is merely a luxury; where we encounter it at its healthiest and in least need of analysis or interpretation is where, in the end, a composer's personality speaks most clearly and strongly: in his music.

MAHLER

Continued from page 33

Philharmonic's timpani part at the studio where he teaches. "Sometimes I get it out and play it just as I did for Mahler."

Braun noticed that Mahler seemed to have trouble breathing whenever he got excited. "He couldn't stand the cold weather here," he remembers. Early in his second season at the Philharmonic, Mahler told Braun privately that he could not return the next year, but that he would like to have the young musician come to Europe and be the timpanist in any orchestra he led. "I thought it would be a great opportunity to study conducting," Braun says. He never saw Alma, but he too heard from the men around him that she was a beautiful woman. Mahler, at the time, seems to have been as noted for his wife as for his music.

Life in New York with the beautiful woman was troublesome, and when he got back to Europe that summer of 1910 the conductor paid a professional call on Sigmund Freud, who was then living in Leyden. For *The Haunting Melody*, his psychological study of Mahler, Dr. Theodor Reik wrote to Freud twenty-four years later, inquiring as one psychoanalyst to another of that meeting. Freud's reply to Reik had the date of the meeting with Mahler quite wrong and was replete with revelations the patient may have thought to be professional confidences.

Dear Doctor (Reik)
Thanks for your New Year's letter . . .
I analyzed Mahler for an afternoon in the year 1912 (or 1913?) in Leyden. If I may believe reports, I achieved much with him at that time. This visit appeared necessary to him because his wife at the time rebelled against the fact that he withdrew his libido from her. In highly interesting expeditions through his life history, we discovered his personal conditions for love, especially his Holy Mary complex (mother fixation). I had plenty of opportunity to admire the capability for psychological understanding of this man of genius. No light fell at the time on the symptomatic façade of his obsessional neurosis. It was as if you would dig a single shaft through a mysterious building.
Hoping to hear good news from you, with cordial wishes for 1935.

Yours, Freud 4/1/1935

At the time, with his health failing and his spirit in every kind of torment, Mahler was sketching the anguished strains of the first movements of the Tenth Symphony. "The devil dances it with me. Madness, seize me, the accursed. Destroy me so that I may forget that I am. So that I may cease to be . . ." he scribbled in the margins of the first draft of the score. In Munich, in early September of 1910, he conducted the first performance of the Eighth Symphony in what was perhaps one of the few triumphs he had with performances of his own works. It was the last time he conducted in Europe. When he reached New York in October to

Continued on next page

MAHLER

Continued from preceding page

resume his post with the Philharmonic, he learned that the schedule of forty-five concerts he had contracted to lead was now raised to sixty-five, with tours taking the orchestra to Buffalo, N.Y., Springfield, Mass., Pittsburgh, Pa., and Washington, D. C. In Carnegie Hall, Mahler played his *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen*, his Fourth Symphony, and was his own piano soloist while conducting Scharwenka's Concerto No. 4—a work which has not survived in the Philharmonic repertoire. It was the kind of unfamiliar music that the ladies' committee of the Philharmonic thought responsible for the poor attendance at some of the concerts in Carnegie. At a Philharmonic board of directors meeting at Mrs. Sheldon's home, recounted in ghastly detail in Alma Mahler's memoirs, the conductor heard the complaints against his stewardship of the orchestra. "He rebutted these charges," Alma wrote, "but now at a word from Mrs. Sheldon a curtain was drawn aside and a lawyer, who (as came out later) had been taking notes all the time, entered the room. A document was then drawn up in legal form, strictly defining Mahler's powers. He was so taken aback and so furious that he came back to me trembling in every limb. . . ."

Many of the men who played in the orchestra were by then no fonder of Mahler than were the ladies who supported it. He was always aloof and, according to a surviving member, got all his information about the attitudes of the musicians towards their conductor from Walter Johner, a second violinist. During Mahler's second season with the Philharmonic, Johner decided that there were thirty members of the Orchestra he did not want rehired for the next year. But before Mahler could act one way or another on the purge list, the manager of the Philharmonic managed to purge Mr. Johner for calling in sick when he was in fact fiddling for extra income in a pit band. This turn of the intrigue deepened Mahler's melancholy.

When his concertmaster told him that he intended to be conductor after his Philharmonic contract ended, Mahler told him: "I'll manage to be sick sometime so as to give you a chance." The chance came when Mahler became ill at a rehearsal on February 21, but held up to conduct the concert. That night Toscanini was in the audience to hear Busoni's *Cradle-Song at the Grave of My Mother*, which Mahler gave its first performance. Spiering conducted the rest of the orchestra's concerts in Carnegie Hall that season while Mahler in the Savoy Hotel three blocks away suffered through the pains and fevers of a streptococcus infection. Hope that a bacteriologist in Europe might cure him led Alma to arrange the voyage home. They sailed from New York on April 8, 1911. Failing steadily, Mahler spent a few weeks in a sanatorium near Paris, then returned to Vienna where he died—of angina pectoris complicated by blood poisoning—

on May 18, 1911. Mahler left instructions that his heart should be pierced with a needle to make sure that he was really dead and ordered a simple funeral at Grinzing.

A few weeks after his last concert in Carnegie, the Philharmonic set out to quell the reports of a rift between the management of the orchestra and its conductor. On April 8 it issued a statement assuring its subscribers that "it is the sincere hope of the committee that Mr. Mahler's health may soon be restored and that he may resume those activities which mean so much to the world of art." On the day he died in Vienna, the orchestra announced his resignation and named his successor in New York.

None of Mahler's last scores—his *Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth, or the unfinished Tenth Symphony—was composed in New York. They were, to some degree, orchestrated or revised, mulled over and talked about, but the essential conceptions were committed to paper in Austria. Mahler made a troubled living in the U.S. and made masterpieces in Europe. If it were not for Mahler's music, the last ever heard of him might have been the account in the *Tribune* summing up his years here: "His troubles with the administration of the Philharmonic were of his own creation, for he might have had the absolute power which he enjoyed in Vienna had he deserved it. He was paid a sum of money which ought to have seemed to him fabulous from the day on which he came till the day when his labors ended, and the money was given to him ungrudgingly though the investment was a poor one for the opera company which brought him to America and the concert organization which kept him here. He was looked upon as a great artist, and possibly he was one, but he failed to convince the people of New York of the fact and therefore his American career was not a success. His influence was not helpful but prejudicial to good taste. It is unpleasant to say such things but a sense of duty demands that they be said."

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