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to let you get everything out of your tuner. Perfectly. Our output stage, for example, features a new parallel push-pull circuit that reduces total harmonic distortion to less than 0.1%. Again, well below anything you can possibly hear.

To all but eliminate cross-talk, the SA9500II comes with a separate power transformer for each channel, instead of the usual single transformer for both.

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POWER MIN. RMS. 20 TO 20,000 HZ	80	60	45	30	15
TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%
PHONO OVERLOAD LEVEL	300mV	250mV	200mV	200mV	130mV
INPUT: PHONO/AUX/ TAPE	2/1/2	2/1/2	1/1/2	1/1/2	1/1/1
SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO	95dB	95dB	95dB	95dB	87dB
FM SENSITIVITY (IHF '58)	1.5uV	1.8uV	not applicable	1.9uV	1.9uV
SELECTIVITY	(wide) 35dB (narrow) 85dB	(wide) 35dB (narrow) 80dB	not applicable	60dB	60dB
CAPTURE RATIO	(wide) 0.8dB (narrow) 2.0dB	(wide) 0.8dB (narrow) 2.0dB	not applicable	1.0dB	1.0dB

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TX6500II  
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## THE NEW PIONEER AMPS AND TUNERS.

CIRCLE 29 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# PIONEER PR WE STARTED WITH THE B

Last year, the experts paid Pioneer's integrated amps and tuners some of the highest compliments ever.

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# LAST YEAR'S REVIEWS PRESENTED US WITH A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW.

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*SA9500 — Stereo Review*

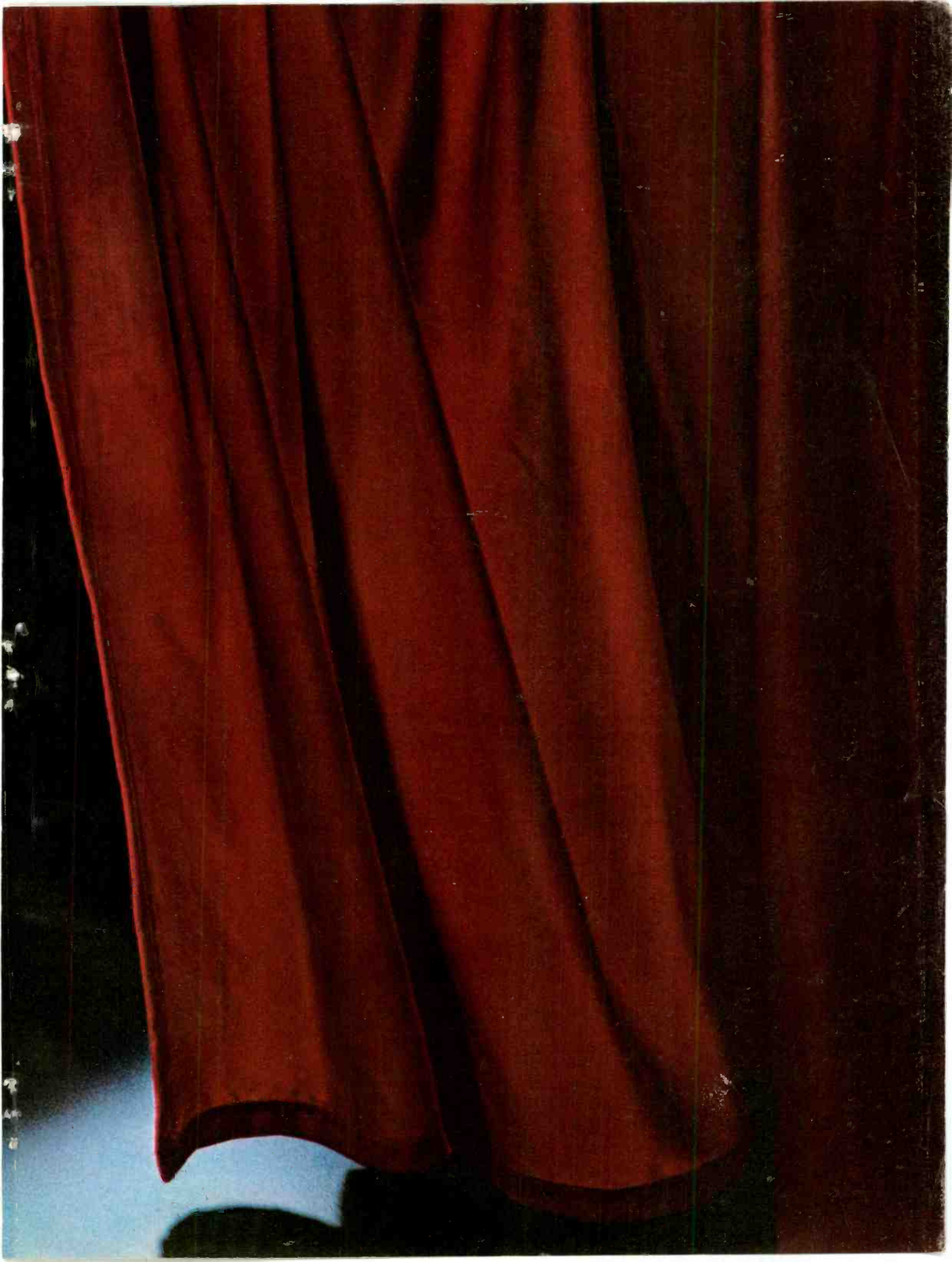
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CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# HIGH FIDELITY

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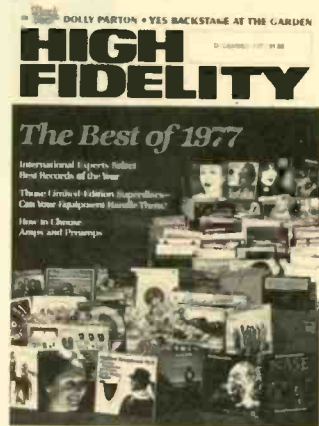
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## COMING NEXT MONTH

We greet the new year with **Ten Lab/Listening Reports** on some of the market's most attention-getting models from Pioneer, Acoustic Research, Mitsubishi, ADC, Heath, B&O, and others. As a tribute to Vladimir Horowitz on the fiftieth anniversary of his U.S. debut, Caine Alder has assembled a discography of the **Unknown Recordings of Horowitz**, including many works that exist only in record-company vaults or in a hitherto secret private collection of the pianist's. Feature reviews include David Hamilton's assessment of how close **Angel's New Boris** comes to honest-to-God Mussorgsky and Andrew Porter's affectionate evaluation of the collected London recordings of **Nellie Melba**. **BACKBEAT** offers an interview with **Billy Joel**, a look at the **Wizards of Arp**, and a **Reviewers' Round Table on the Pop Recording Scene '77**. Plus regular columns and reviews, and more.

## SOLUTION TO HIFI-CROSTIC NO. 30

HUGH [A. J.] AITKEN  
*Syntony and Spark: [The Origins of Radio]*

Hertz and almost simultaneously Lodge discovered ways of empirically testing Clerk Maxwell's model of the electromagnetic field. Later work on radiocommunications represented the consequences of this advance. Pure science was the prime mover.

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**Editorial correspondence** should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Editorial contributions will be welcomed, and payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

## Furtwängler as Composer

It was with great interest that I read the exchange of correspondence between John W. Burnett and your reviewer, David Hamilton, regarding Deutsche Grammophon's reissue of Furtwängler's Second Symphony [September].

Mr. Burnett errs in one important aspect. He believes, on the basis of statements made "countless times in his letters, *Tagebücher*, and published writings," that Furtwängler wanted to be thought of as a composer first and a conductor second. That is not so. I can claim, also on the basis of Furtwängler's writings (now being translated for the benefit of our members), as well as through my correspondence with his widow, that he very early learned that he was not cut out to be a composer. To state, as Mr. Burnett does, that Furtwängler's decision to focus on conducting "was essentially a practical one, occasioned by financial uncertainty" seems to me a rationalization. I submit that he simply used good judgment by relegating composing to a hobby, taken up at times—toward the end of World War II was one—when conducting was impossible in Europe.

Dr. Hans A. Illing  
Wilhelm Furtwängler Society  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## Pathfinders?

I would like to offer a comment on the column on Alexander Poniatoff of the Ampex Corporation in your "High Fidelity Pathfinders" series [September].

During World War II, most German radio stations had two or more tape recorders in their studios. At the end of the war, when the looting began, American Army officers carried off everything that was not bolted down: microphones, transcription turntables, monitor receivers, spare tubes, tape recorders, etc. This equipment (unlike V-2s and other war materiel) was private property, just as much as the jewels and illuminated manuscripts that were stolen from many German families.

The German engineers who developed the Magnetophon were among "the men who made an industry."

Curtiss R. Schafer  
Newtown, Conn.

## The Jewish Contribution

I deeply appreciated Gene Lees's article on the Jewish contribution to American music [July]. He says, however, that "in a sense, there is no such thing as Jewish music, except liturgical music." A great repertoire of Jewish secular song exists in Yiddish (Judeo-German), Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), and other "hyphenated" Jewish cultures. While there is some influence of local mate-

rial upon this repertoire, there are also musical themes internationally common to Jewish liturgical and scriptural chanting.

Useful examples include: "Jan Peerce Sings Hebrew Melodies" (RCA LM 2034), "Victoria de los Angeles Sings Spanish and Sephardic Folk Songs" (Angel S 36716), and Mischa Alexandrovitz, "The Yiddish Song" (Israeli RCA 152 1025).

Larry Josefovitz  
Silver Spring, Md.

Gene Lees expresses astonishment at the number of Jews who have cropped up in the last several decades, as both musical creators and interpreters. The late Gdal Saleski pursued this investigation assiduously in his "Famous Musicians of a Wandering Race" (1927) and "Famous Musicians of Jewish Origin" (1949). In the two intervening decades he found a veritable explosion of activity from Jews as composers, teachers, and interpreters. He conceded, however, that by numbers alone the Jewish genius lies in interpretation.

In the last century, perhaps 90% of outstanding instrumentalists and conductors have been of Jewish descent. Currently, Jewish instrumentalists occupy more than half the seats of symphony orchestras. Jewish composers proliferate in numbers both absolute and relative. To name only three, Jacob Druckman, Morton Subotnick, and Ned Rorem have been honored with prizes, grants, and commissions. This growth may be ascribed to the lightening of social pressures and to the influx of musicians from anti-Semitic countries.

However, Jewish musicality is no novelty, but goes back to Biblical times when both secular and liturgical song were part of Jewish daily life, important in Biblical cantillation, in rituals and in ceremonies. In Israel, where musical life today is extremely vigorous, ethnic influences come together, folksongs are composed, and art music represents a diversity of styles: Eastern and Western European and Eastern Mediterranean idioms, and serial and electronic techniques.

As these new idioms become dominant and Jewish activity is everywhere taken for granted, race, religion, and heritage as influences in creativity and interpretation may prove of only academic concern.

Grace Rubin-Rabson  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## Prima Donna Groupies

I must, as a member of the American classical music industry and an operagoer of long standing, register a strong objection to the gratuitous inclusion of Régine Crespin's rather insulting and ill-tempered remarks on the homosexual element in the opera world in G. S. Bourdain's interview with her [September].

As a member of the gay community, I find it difficult to fathom either the author's or the editors' intent in quoting Mme. Crespin's antiquated and often embarrassing comments at this crucial moment in the ongoing and difficult struggle for human rights and understanding. That the quotation may have been taken out of context does not excuse an offense to an important and knowledgeable part of the operagoing

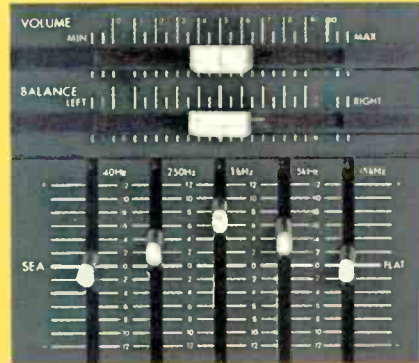
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AF-3030

AD-6300



AD-6550

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AD-6500



AD-1250



AD-6800

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CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

public. Far from being a "phenomenon of the opera world," this is an admirably responsive and faithful portion of the cultural sphere in all its varied elements—films, dance, theater, art, literature, and popular music.

Were the comments necessary to the otherwise informative article? We would never question Mme. Crespin's right to complete privacy and freedom in her personal choices. Can she (or Ms. Bourdain) not understand and respect ours?

Matthew A. Epstein  
Vice President  
Columbia Artist Management, Inc.  
New York, N.Y.

*Ms. Bourdain replies: In my attempt to provide something more than the usual "and then I sang..." interview with a soprano, it seems that I've offended a member of a community and a movement that I support. My question to Mme. Crespin was only about "groupies," not about the opera audience in general. Rock singers' groupies are generally nubile young females trying to scratch notches in their beds; classical pianists' groupies, Garrick Ohlsson told me in an interview, are women over seventy-five. It interests me that the groupies around every soprano I've ever known have been homosexual—and mostly young—men, and I don't recall any singer ever being asked why. Neither my question nor Mme. Crespin's response was meant as a putdown, and I confess to some perplexity that they should be read as such.*

## Whale Oil

I recently began using Maxell UD 35-180 recording tape and have been extremely pleased with its quality and performance. Unfortunately, I have just heard that Maxell has been using whale oil in its manufacture. Is this sad "fact" true?

Kenneth Libby  
Kailua, Hawaii

An inquiry to a company representative produced the information that Maxell does not use whale oil in any products it manufactures and that a number of Maxell executives are members of a special committee formed to lobby for the protection of endangered species.

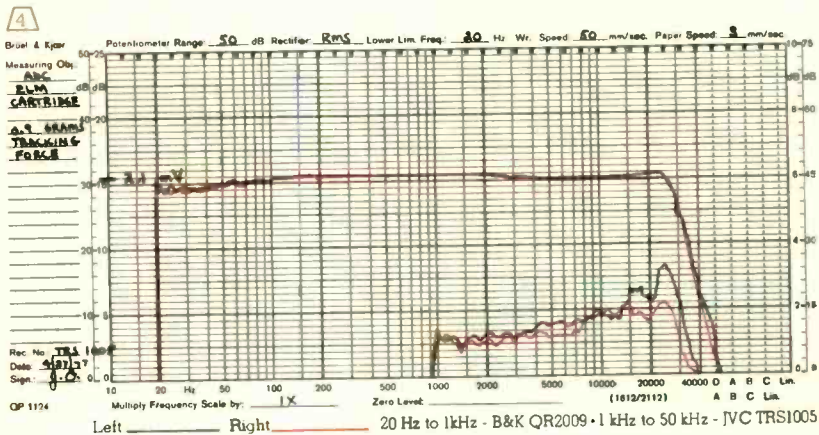
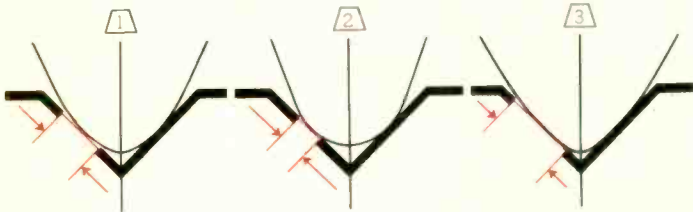
## Klaus Tennstedt

Arthur S. Leonard's letter [June] concerning conductor Klaus Tennstedt was much appreciated, especially since it elicited your editorial comment that his considerable talent will soon be preserved on commercial recordings.

I was unaware of Tennstedt's existence before stumbling onto his performance of the Bruckner Eighth with the BSO two summers ago at Tanglewood. Since then, I have been seeking out all the FM broadcasts I can find in Cleveland of his work with the various orchestras Mr. Leonard mentioned. The Tennstedt "bandwagon" has since become more populous, as noted in recent articles in the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine. Fortunately, the Cleveland Orchestra is also among those inviting Tennstedt back; he was on the schedule at

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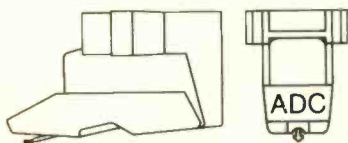
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Blossom Music Center this summer and will conduct at Severance Hall this season.

On another subject, I was struck by a comment made by John Culshaw in his column [April]. If DG has indeed made a recording of Gottfried von Einem's *To Posterity*, the work commissioned for the 1975 U.N. Day concert, I would certainly like to find out how I can obtain it. I have played my tape of the TV broadcast several times but would still like to confirm my impression—so far gained out of aural mush—that the work is a worthwhile and enjoyable one.

David M. Grundy  
Shaker Heights, Ohio

*To Posterity has not been released in the*

U.S., but presumably it is available in Germany and domestically from certain specialized importers.

### Vox Popular

About five years ago I wrote to you complaining about the poor surfaces on some Vox-Turnabout recordings and asked that you admonish your critics to comment on surfaces in hopes of getting the recording companies to concentrate on better pressings. You published my letter, and almost immediately I was contacted by George Mendelssohn, president of Vox Records in New York. He apologized for the problems I had had and vowed to improve his product.

Last week I purchased eight Candide and Turnabout records and held my breath all the way home. I am happy to report that all were just about perfect. It appears Vox has improved its quality control, and I think it deserves a salute.

Don Stewart  
College Park, Md.

### Commendation

Your review of the Satin M-18X cartridge [September] did a fine job in explaining that elusive quality moving-coil cartridges exhibit. We commend your procedure of listening to products as well as making laboratory measurements of them, and we wish more publications would look at both sides of a product's performance when doing such reviews.

Edward M. Healy  
Director, Marketing & Sales  
Osawa & Co. (U.S.A.), Inc.  
New York, N.Y.

### Not Guilty

Readers of HIGH FIDELITY who encounter my liner notes for the new James Levine/Chicago Symphony recording of the Brahms Third Symphony (RCA ARL 1-2097) should note that they contain an outrageous typographical error: Brahms's motto "Free but lonely" becomes "Free but lovely." Anyone involved in publication work knows how easily these things can happen, but I plead not guilty to perpetrating this piece of nonsense.

Robert C. Marsh  
Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Marsh is a record reviewer for HIF.

### Tracking Cale


Nick Tosches' review of John Cale's "Guts" [August] gives the reader the impression that the album is an entirely new work. On the contrary, it is an Island Records compilation of previously released tracks, taken from Cale's three most recent albums. "Helen of Troy" (Island ILPS 9350, British release only, 1975), "Slow Dazzle" (ILPS 9317, 1975), and "Fear" (ILPS 9301, 1974). This aside, thanks to Tosches for the recognition of Cale.

John W. Higley  
Iselin, N.J.

Mr. Tosches replies: Previous albums from which "Guts" was drawn are uneven at best. The new album is a kind of revision rather than a reissue. People should get this one even if they've got the others. It is a pleasure straight through; the others aren't. It is a new album, and it has a power the others don't.

### Awkward Arrangement

The arrangement of music within a set of cassettes normally doesn't demand any comment in a review. But when Brahms's Second Symphony starts in the middle of the second cassette, a few words would seem appropriate. I'm referring to Haitink's complete set of Brahms symphonies (Philips 7699 011) reviewed by R. D. Dar-



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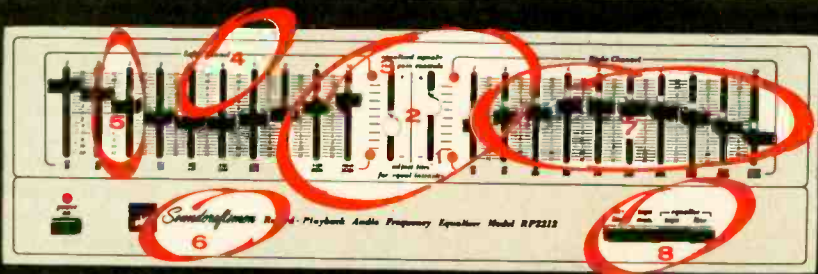
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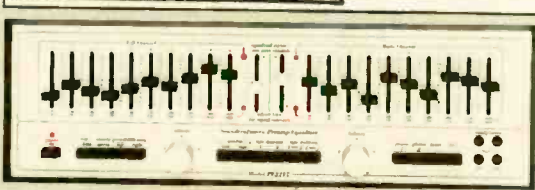
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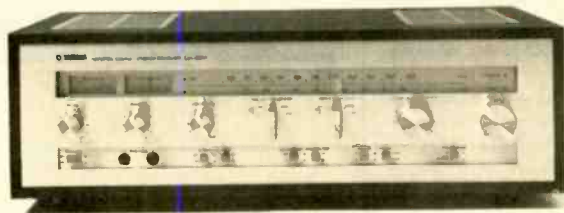
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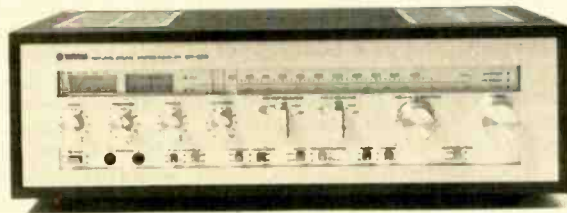
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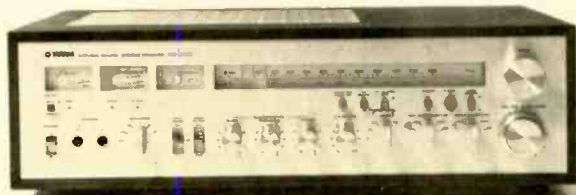
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rell in "The Tape Deck" [July]. What we seem to have here is reminiscent of the "automatic" type of arrangement for record changers. This sequence makes the set undesirable.

Phil Shapiro  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Mr. Darrell replies: I didn't complain in print about the awkward layout of the Philips boxed set, partly because this is a relatively minor nuisance that permits all four Brahms symphonies to be contained on only three rather than four cassettes and partly because anyone who finds this arrangement intolerable can obtain each of the symphonies on a separate cassette.

### Le Comte Ory

The "Recordings '78" preview [September] reveals that a number of gaps in the SCHWANN catalog are being filled. But it is disturbing and disappointing to see the production of yet another Rossini overtures disc (my last count shows thirty-seven extant) while there is not yet a single recording of Rossini's final comic opera, *Le Comte Ory*. This work has had a number of successful performances during the past year both here and in Europe. A recording of this delightful score is long overdue.

C. David Oliphant  
Vernon, Conn.

Though there is no recording of this opera available at this time, there was a 1957 Angel release performed by the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra with Juan Oncina as the Count. Unfortunately it has not been available domestically for fifteen years nor as an import for at least seven. It seems a natural, barring competition from new recordings, for EMI's reissue series on Seraphim.

### The Original Baron Ochs

Harris Goldsmith's review of the reissue of Felix Weingartner's recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony [September] errs in referring to Richard Mayr, the bass soloist, as "the original Baron Ochs." Although Mayr was a widely acclaimed Baron Ochs in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, and recorded the famous set of excerpts with Lotte Lehmann, the original Baron Ochs in the world premiere at Dresden on January 26, 1911, was Karl Perron.

Strauss wanted Mayr, but at the time the bass had a previous commitment to—coincidentally—Weingartner. In 1911, Strauss wrote to Hofmannsthal, his librettist, about Perron: "Such casting is absolutely incomprehensible to me." Still, Perron it was.

Robert Hess  
New York, N.Y.

### The Section

In his review of James Taylor's album "JT" [September], Sam Sutherland incorrectly identified Taylor's backup musicians as The Session. The name of the group is The Section.

Nicholas Galembo  
New Paltz, N.Y.

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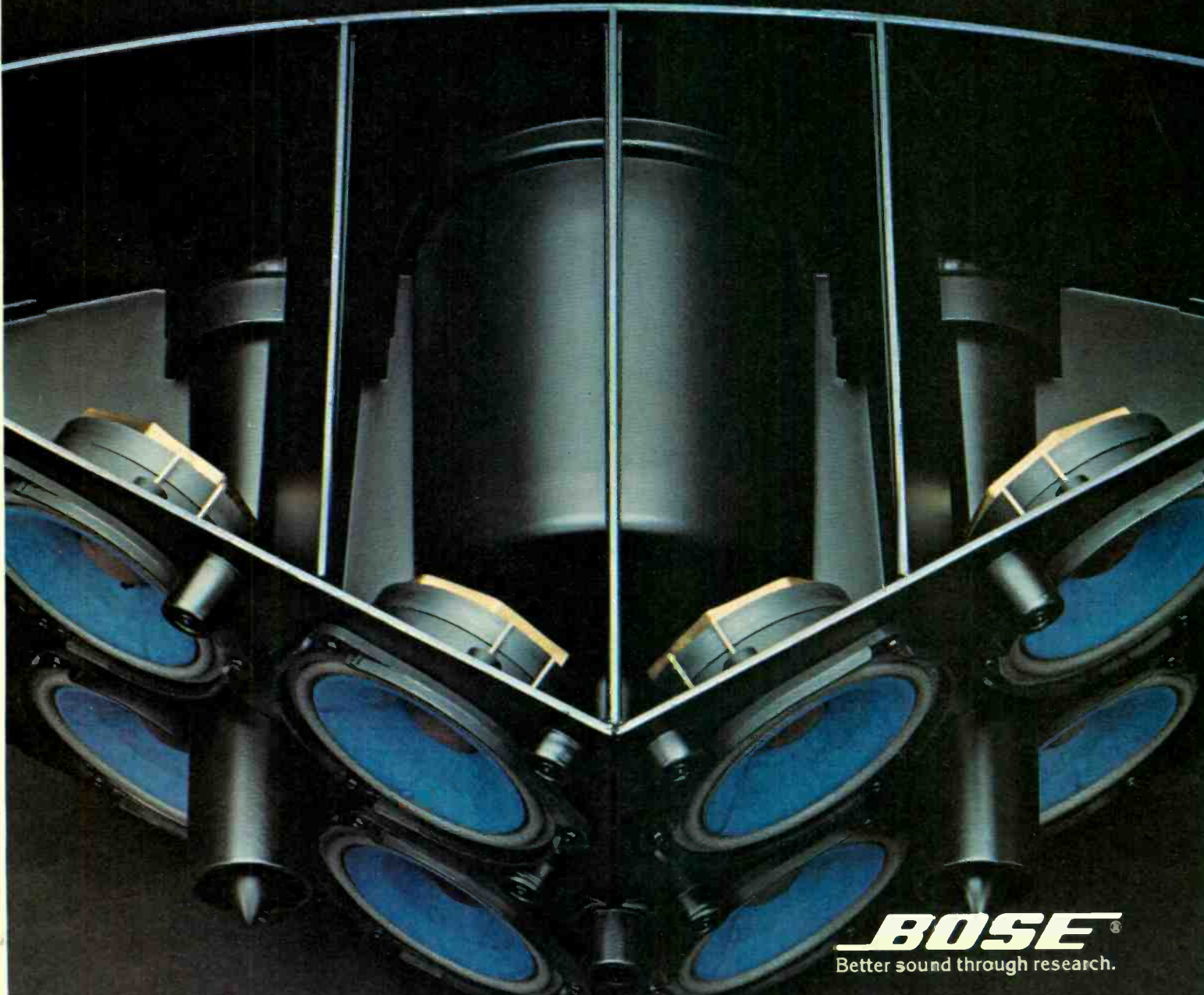
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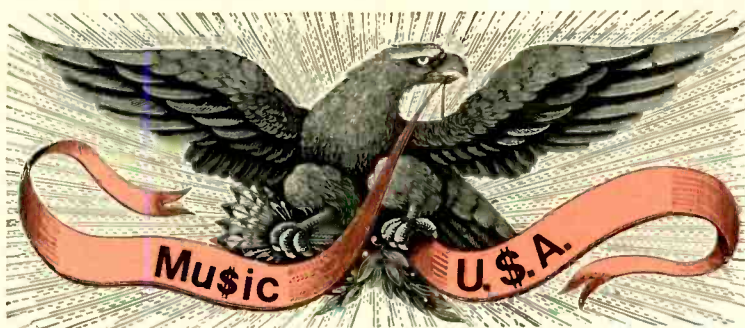
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 **LEAK**



## 11. The Heyday of Network Radio

by Gene Lees

UNLESS ONE CAN remember network radio personally, he cannot grasp the place and power it once held in American life. Certainly one obtains little understanding of it from the recordings of old broadcasts that turn up in the stores today. Selected mostly for nostalgia or novelty, they convey no impression of the nature, ubiquity, and cultural value of this inventive and now departed form of entertainment.

Radio drama—now undergoing a mini-revival on public radio—was theater of the imagination. It was as different from television drama as the novel is from the stage. Television's fatal flaw is an earthbound entrapment in visual specifics: Dry-ice vapors, rubberized makeup, and freaky colored lights cannot inspire the chills that a creaking door and perhaps a few echoing footfalls did in the days of network radio. Humor, too, was at a high level, and the intelligence of *Vic and Sade*, *Easy Aces*, and Fred Allen's *Town Hall Tonight* is all the more striking when compared with current TV comedy.

One of the most important components of radio's content was music. Network radio's treatment of music bore no resemblance whatever to contemporary local radio. It gave the U.S. a cornucopia of musical riches, from Grand Ole Opry to grand opera, from Woody Herman to Arturo Toscanini. And it was "live," not recorded music. The networks paid orchestras and solo musicians, providing employment for countless performers. (Indeed, in the 1940s and early '50s, even local nonaffiliated radio stations often employed live musicians.)

Whatever one's taste, network radio catered to it. The bands of Glenn Miller, Woody Herman, Harry James, and Benny Goodman all, at various times, had their own shows. For classical music listeners, there were

broadcasts every Saturday from the Metropolitan Opera and by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony. On Sundays one could hear the New York Philharmonic. There also were many weekly programs devoted to "light classical" music, including *The Voice of Firestone*, *Carnation Contented Hour*, and *Bell Telephone Hour*. The networks provided about fifteen hours a week of classical and semiclassical music.

What classical music one does find on the air today comes from local stations. It is entirely recorded and too often limited to the chestnuts of the literature. Even the admirable transcription services—of such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, and Cleveland—lack the impact that the live coast-to-coast broadcasts had. These transcription services actually offer more orchestras in more concerts than network radio did in the day of its dominance, but today's classical stations do not have the weight of the networks behind them: Often they are FM stations of limited reach, and many communities have no such station at all. These stations are not in the mainstream of commercial broadcasting, with all the power of money and promotion that the term entails. They preach to an audience of the converted, struggle for survival against the commercial competition, and sometimes succumb to pressure to "go commercial" and switch to Top 40 programming. As valuable as they are to people whose knowledge and love of music already goes deep, they cannot be compared in the extent of their influence to the old networks.

The variety of popular music in network radio also was broad, as a roll call will reveal for those who remember the era. Bing Crosby was the star of *Kraft Music Hall*; John Scott Trotter was his conductor. Dinah Shore

was heard regularly with Paul Lavalle and the Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street. Johnny Mercer was for a time heard every evening, often improvising brilliant blues lyrics from the day's news events. Almost all the comedy programs maintained their own house orchestras and often a singer as well. For Jack Benny, the orchestra was that of Phil Harris; the singer was Kenny Baker and later Dennis Day. Bob Hope employed the Skinnay Ennis Orchestra, later Les Brown; Frances Langford was the vocalist. *Fibber McGee and Molly* had the Billy Mills Orchestra. These musicians were an integral part of the programs. Even in daytime network radio, some excellent small bands were heard.

In addition to all of the regularly scheduled music, the networks used to broadcast "remotes" of the big bands, usually late in the evening or after midnight. Guy Lombardo has recounted that his career was launched in a single broadcast in Chicago. While he was on the air, young people began driving from all over the city to the nightclub where he was appearing. This turned the tide for him. Later, in the mid-1930s, the unknown and faltering Benny Goodman band was heard one night on a remote broadcast from California. The band's success was assured, and with it the Swing Era was launched. This ability to create stars virtually overnight was not limited to popular music. Leonard Bernstein became the superstar of American classical music through a Sunday broadcast in which he conducted the New York Philharmonic.

Network radio, although it was commercially sponsored, to a large extent lived up to the expectations of its pioneers. It was broadly educational—a cultural resource of inestimable value. But in the late 1940s and early '50s, sponsors began putting more and more of their money into television, and the networks became increasingly indifferent to the non-visual medium.

The U.S. is one of the few Western countries with no national radio-television network, financed by the public—like the BBC in England, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française—to alleviate the influence of commercial radio. These nations managed to maintain network radio after the arrival of TV, but in our own country it died a slow and painful death.

The effects of television on radio as a whole and on American music were—and continue to be—far-reaching. I will examine them more closely in the next issue. ■



## Too Hot to Handle

Some manufacturers—Cerwin-Vega, for instance—have loudspeaker ratings like “90 dB/W/m.” What do these expressions mean?—Janet Falkner, Evanston, Ill.

They mean that the manufacturer is trying but doesn't have his punctuation correct. You should read such an expression as meaning, “90 dB per watt at 1 meter”—the equivalent of our CBS sensitivity measurements in dB SPL measured at 1 meter in the anechoic chamber with an electrical input of 0 dBW (1 watt). This information is helpful as a measure of speaker efficiency, which until recently was quantified by precious few manufacturers. Taken literally, however, the expression you quote means “90 dB per watt per meter,” which is nonsense, since the sound pressure level will decrease—not increase—in the anechoic chamber as the measurement distance is increased.

I have noted an advertisement by Lux Audio of America offering an audio equalizer, which is referred to as a twelve-band stereo parametric graphic equalizer with switchable range and frequency contours. If the parametric equalizer is distinguishable by the fact that the parameters are continuously variable, how can Lux Audio call its equalizer parametric?—Francis Clark, Yakima, Wash.

The essential difference between graphic and parametric equalizers is that the former use a large number of “dumb” filters (adjustable only for amplitude) whereas the latter use a smaller number of filters that are “smart” in the sense that they are adjustable for center frequency and bandwidth as well as amplitude response. The Lux equalizer combines a bit of both approaches and quite reasonably uses both descriptive terms.

I am interested in converting my system to four channels for ambience simulation. I now have a Dynaco PAT-5 and Stereo 150 driving a pair of JBL L-100 speakers and don't want to get into CD-4 or matrix decoding. It would seem easiest (and least expensive) to get a pair of JBL L-26s and a Dynaco Quadaptor. Another possibility is the L-26s with a Sansui QSD-2 hooked into the external processing loop connections of the PAT-5, plus a Dynaco Stereo 80 amp for the back channels. Could you please comment on these and other inexpensive ways of creating a sense of depth?—Patrick Burke, Carmel Valley, Calif.

The Dynaco Quadaptor is based on an excellent ambience-recovery circuit, is inexpensive, and requires no additional power amp. It has two drawbacks: It introduces resistive elements that degrade the amp's effective damping factor; and, unless the back speakers equal (or, preferably, exceed) the front pair in efficiency (which is not always economically feasible), the level in the back channels may be too low. The Sansui QSD-

2—which is a QS/SQ matrix decoder—will process normal two-channel discs in a sort of pseudosurround mode as well as an ambience-recovery mode. The latter has no significant advantage over the Quadaptor, in our opinion; the surround mode, while it will deliver great positional accuracy, does add a bit of coloration and noise, like most nonprofessional decoders we've heard. Using a second amplifier, it is possible to circumvent the limitation of the Quadaptor by connecting the back speakers so that they receive the same signals as those in front. Then the ground leads of the back speakers should be disconnected from the second amp and tied together. (The amp will have to have a common ground connection or you will get no sound in the back speakers. If this happens, stop right there! The amp may not like the hookup.) Back levels can then be set via the volume control on the second amp. The circuit works best with the “back” speakers toward the front and off to the sides, but this placement best simulates a concert hall in any event.

After reading your test report on the Microstatic MS-1 add-on tweeter, I became interested in using it to supplement my Bose 901 IIIs. My hope is that it will give some extra crispness to my 901s. Will the tweeter controls on the MS-1 be capable of compensating the 901 equalizer? And is the MS-1 the proper complement to the 901s, or are there other add-on tweeters that will do the job better?—Bill Sakai, Hilo, Hawaii.

To answer your second question first: No, it is not appropriate for the 901s, and we can't think of one that is. Any add-on would be almost certain to upset the balance of direct and reflected sound that is the sine qua non of the Bose 901. We have noted on occasion that in some rooms the reflected sound from the 901 III can seem lacking in highs. If this is not correctable via decor (to make the reflected sound brighter) or the Bose equalizer, it is certainly possible to add more boost via the tone controls, since the 901 will easily handle the extra power. A graphic (or parametric) equalizer is also a good alternative should you wish to make the investment.

This letter concerns the test report of Janszen electrostatic speaker Model Z-324 that appeared in your November 1975 issue. I have bought two of these speakers, and they are excellent. The report says: “Efficiency of the system is fairly high. Only 2.15 watts are needed to drive it to 94 dB (at 1 meter on axis). It handles up to 100 watts (for an output of 109 dB) before distorting excessively,” etc.

This has not been my experience. I drive these speakers from a 105-watt-per-channel McIntosh amplifier, which in turn is driven by

a Crown preamp and from a Shure V-15 Type III cartridge. This amplifier seems just powerful enough to fill the room with sound; once the automatic temperature sensing device went into operation and turned the system off, which means that the amplifier was being driven to its limit. I had expected 100 watts per channel to be enough to drive any speakers with plenty to spare. Either these speakers are very inefficient or something is wrong with my system.—David Fonseca, East Ridge, Tenn.

There is no contradiction of the lab data with the experience you cite. Evidently your listening room is very large or very absorbent or both, and you like to listen at well above “moderate” levels—important factors in the equation. The capabilities of your speakers are such that they can be used with amps capable of producing 24 dBW (250 watts) per channel or more on peaks (though obviously not on steady-state test tones) without undue risk, so you could switch to an even more powerful amp for greater headroom if you wish.

I want to upgrade my four-channel system but don't know which way to go. I have a four-channel receiver (Pioneer QX-9900), which is what I want to upgrade or replace. It seems that the ideal setup would be to use a separate preamp and main amp for the front channels and a second preamp and main amp for the rear channels. Would there be that much difference in terms of less distortion, clarity, frequency response, etc.? Would it be worth the price to pay for the difference? Other components in my system are the QSD-1 synthesizer/decoder and a CD-4 demodulator.—Robert O'Brian, FPO, Seattle, Wash.

Separates would certainly allow for more power and flexibility than your Pioneer. The magnitude of improvement will depend largely on your budget. Whether the change will be worth the price is really a subjective consideration.

I have a Technics SA-8000 receiver and SL-1300 turntable with M-44E, Technics quad, and Empire 2000Z cartridges. In addition, I have four TL-300 speakers and a Realistic five-band equalizer. When the tone arm is at rest and the volume is on full, I get amplifier static noise. When the receiver was new, this was not a problem. The static does not affect sound quality when a record is on. Does the static mean that something is going in my receiver?—Garth S. Nelson, Sussex, Canada.

Any piece of electronics has an internal and, in practical terms, irreducible level of noise, and by using enough gain you can always cause this noise to be heard at the output. If the noise is not present with normal settings of the volume control, there is no cause for concern.

A couple of months ago my stereo system was stolen and, with it, my Bose 901 II equalizer. I don't have the funds to replace it right away, so could you advise me as to the best setting for the tone controls on my Pioneer SX-1250 so as to simulate the tonal conditioning of the equalizer?—Frank S. Kilpatrick, San Francisco, Calif.

Boost of both bass and treble will probably be required. Since the whole plan is makeshift until you can afford a replacement from Bose, we would suggest that you equalize as best you can by ear.



# THE TAPE THAT'S TOO GOOD FOR MOST EQUIPMENT.

Maxell tapes are not cheap.

In fact, a single reel of our most expensive tape costs more than many inexpensive tape recorders.

Our tape is expensive because it's designed specifically to get the most out of good high fidelity components.

So it makes no sense to invest in Maxell unless you have

no one gets into our manufacturing area until he's been washed, dressed in a special dust-free uniform and vacuumed.

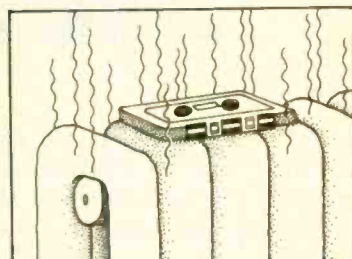
## WE CLEAN OFF THE CRUD OTHER TAPES LEAVE BEHIND.

After all the work we put into our tape, we're not about to let it go to waste on a dirty tape recorder head. So we put special non-abrasive head cleaner

## OUR TAPE COMES WITH A BETTER GUARANTEE THAN YOUR TAPE RECORDER.

Nothing is guaranteed to last forever. Nothing we know of, except our tape.

So our guarantee is simplicity itself: anytime you ever have a problem with any Maxell cassette, 8-track or reel-to-reel tape, you can send it back and get a new one.



Our guarantee even covers acts of negligence.

sounds at your nearby audio dealer.

(Chances are, it's what he uses to demonstrate his best tape decks.)



No other tape starts off by cleaning off your tape recorder.

equipment that can put it to good use.

## THE REASON OUR TAPE SOUNDS SO GOOD IS BECAUSE IT'S MADE SO CAREFULLY.

Every batch of magnetic oxide we use gets run through an electron microscope. Because if every particle isn't perfect, the sound you hear won't be either.

And since even a little speck of dust can put a dropout in tape,



Every employee, vacuumed.

on all our cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes. Which is something no other tape company bothers to do.

## OUR CASSETTES ARE PUT TOGETHER AS CAREFULLY AS OUR TAPE.

Other companies are willing to use wax paper and plastic rollers in their cassettes. We're not. We use carbon-impregnated material. And Delrin rollers. Because nothing sticks to them.

A lot of companies weld their cassettes together. We use screws. Screws are more expensive. But they also make for stronger cassettes.

## GIVE OUR TAPE A FAIR HEARING.

You can hear just how good Maxell tape

You'll be surprised to hear how much more music good equipment can produce when it's equipped with good tape.



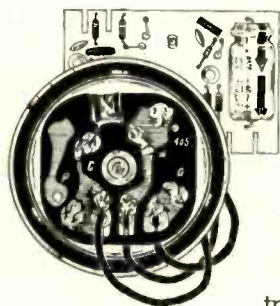
Maxell Corporation of America, 130 West Commercial Ave., Moonachie, New Jersey. O7074.

CIRCLE 31 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# Why you should consider the new Garrard GT35 if you're thinking Dual or B.I.C.

We'll say it straight out. The new Garrard GT35 is the best all-around turntable anywhere near its price. Let's do some direct comparing.

Start with the motor. The Dual 1245 features a fine 8 pole, synchronous motor and the B.I.C. 981, a 24 pole, synchronous unit.



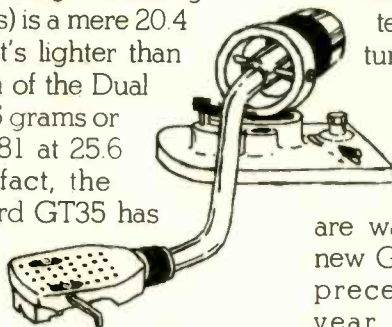
The new Garrard GT35 incorporates a servo-controlled, DC motor.

Servo control provides absolutely steady speed. The motor, (and thus the rotation of the platter), is immune to fluctuations in household voltage or frequency. Len Feldman, writing in *Radio Electronics*, reviewed it as a "significant breakthrough" superior to the "synchronous motor however many poles it might have." The GT35 is the only, belt-driven, single/multiple play turntable in the world with a servo-controlled, DC motor.

Chalk one up for the new Garrard GT35.

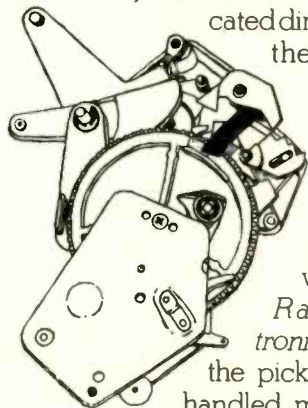
Now for the tonearm. Remember that the delicate stylus, as it traces the groove, bears the full weight of the tonearm. The heavier the tonearm, the greater the wear on the record and stylus. Light is right. The effective mass of the GT35

tonearm (measured with a Shure M95ED cartridge, tracking at 1¼ grams) is a mere 20.4 grams. That's lighter than the tonearm of the Dual 1245 at 27.5 grams or the B.I.C. 981 at 25.6 grams. In fact, the new Garrard GT35 has the lightest tonearm of any single/multiple play turntable.



Chalk up one more for the new Garrard GT35.

The Dual, B.I.C. and Garrard all protect your records as only fully automatic turntables can. And all provide the convenience of multiple play. But only the new GT35 boasts the patented Delglide® system. Unlike the Dual and B.I.C. automatic mechanisms, Delglide is driven by its own belt and is located directly under



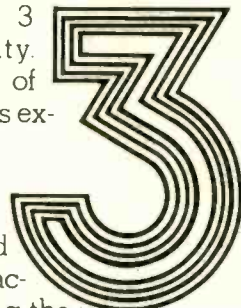
the tonearm. Tonearm control is by simple rotary action. It's no wonder that *Radio Electronics* said, "... the pick-up arm is handled more gently than could be done by the steadiest of hands." We make

this claim: Delglide is the smoothest and quietest automatic system ever incorporated in a turntable—of any kind.

That's still another one for the new GT35.

There's more. The Dual 1245 and the B.I.C. 981

are warranted for 2 years. The new Garrard GT35 carries an unprecedented 3 year warranty. That's our way of underscoring its exceptional reliability.



Finally. The price advertised by the manufacturer. Including the base and dust cover, the Dual 1245 is \$240 and the B.I.C. 981, \$237. The price of the new Garrard GT35: just \$200.

The GT35: a "breakthrough" motor, the lightest tonearm, the smoothest and quietest automatic system and a 3 year warranty.

Consider the GT35. If you're thinking Dual, or B.I.C. Or Technics. Or Pioneer. Or Sony. Or...

**Garrard.**  
The turntable specialist.

For a free brochure, write:  
Garrard, Division of Plessey Consumer Products, Dept. B  
100 Commercial Street, Plainview, N.Y. 11803

CIRCLE 19 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# HiFi-Croctic No. 31 (Xmas Xtic)

by William Petersen

V	1	O	2		W	3	Z	4	F	5		V	6	R	7	G	8	Y	9	T	10	J	11	O	12	E	13	W	14	
B	15	M	16	L	17		T	18	O	19	J	20	G	21		V	22	Y	23	X	24	C	25	P	26	M	27			
E	28	L	29	O	30		I	31	V	32	H	33	D	34		G	35	Y	36	L	37	F	38	V	39	P	40			
W	41	M	42	J	43	C	44	T	45	V	46	A	47	U	48	O	49		E	50	V	51		J	52	Y	53	G	54	
R	55	H	56		B	57	V	58		M	59	T	60	Z	61	X	62	W	63	G	64	I	65	V	66		J	67		
N	68		W	69	O	70	F	71	C	72	A	73	G	74	J	75	H	76	V	77		B	78	E	79	K	80			
G	81	T	82		Y	83	V	84	F	85		W	86	S	87	J	88	O	89	G	90		U	91	Y	92	R	93		
	V	94	E	95	J	96	T	97	D	98	A	99	Z	100		N	101	Y	102	G	103	J	104	V	105	O	106	U	107	
S	108	W	109	A	110		R	111	C	112		B	113	G	114	V	115	T	116	H	117	U	118	K	119	J	120	N	121	
Z	122		W	123	P	124		D	125	F	126		E	127	V	128	M	129	Y	130	G	131	U	132	O	133				
W	134	V	135	B	136	X	137	F	138	N	139		C	140	Z	141	Y	142	V	143	T	144	P	145	W	146	Y	147	K	148
J	149	D	150	G	151		L	152	U	153	V	154	R	155	O	156		C	157	H	158	S	159	U	160	G	161			
P	162	V	163	O	164		E	165	F	166	W	167	Y	168		I	169		A	170	S	171	O	172	V	173	J	174		
G	175	M	176	H	177	K	178		O	179	T	180		O	181	J	182	B	183	G	184	Z	185		X	186	L	187		
O	188	V	189	Y	190	A	191	P	192		W	193	N	194		G	195	V	196		C	197	U	198	M	199	P	200		
Z	201	V	202	J	203																									

### DIRECTIONS

To solve these puzzles—and they aren't as tough as they first seem—supply as many of the Output words as you can in the numbered dashes following the Input. Unless otherwise specified in the Input, the Output consists of one English word. "Comp." means compound, or hyphenated, word.

Transfer each letter to the square in the diagram that bears the corresponding number. After only a few correct guesses you should begin to see words and phrases emerging in the diagram, which when filled in will contain a quotation related to music, recordings, or audio.

The words in the quotation are separated by darkened squares and do not necessarily end at the end of a row.

Try to guess at these words and transfer each newly decoded letter back to its appropriate dash in the Output. This will supply you with further clues.

A final clue: The source of the quotation—the author and his work—will be spelled out by the first letters in Output, reading down.

The answer to HiFi-Croctic No. 31 will appear in next month's issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

### INPUT

- A. With Word B., English composer (b. 1901): "Virgin's Cradle Hymn"
- B. See Word A.
- C. In Gregorian chant, what the cantor sings before the chorus enters (Lat.)
- D. Barbara \_\_\_\_\_, composer: Her *Trobar Clus* is on Turnabout disc with Pulitzer Prize-winning piece by Davidovsky
- E. Withstands
- F. English composer (1825-89) of 70 anthems
- G. Traditional song celebrating the Nativity (6 wds.)
- H. Song of praise to the Lord: Purcell, Handel, Berlioz, Verdi, Britten (2 Lat. wds.)
- I. Boyle's or Bonar
- J. English organist/composer (1874-1946): "Lord, Thou hast been our Refuge" (full name)
- K. Christmastide
- L. *The Old Maid and the \_\_\_\_\_*
- M. Portion; giving aid
- N. Barber wrote two for orchestra, Henze one on pigs

### OUTPUT

110	170	47	99	191	73			
136	78	57	15	183	113			
72	157	140	25	197	44	112		
34	98	150	125					
13	95	165	50	127	28	79		
38	166	71	85	138	126	5		
74	8	103	184	54	114	195	35	
81	151	131	175	64	90	161		21
177	158	56	33	76	117			
65	169	31						
104	11	52	96	174	88	67	182	
		120	43	149	203	75	20	
178	148	119	80					
152	29	187	17	37				
42	199	16	59	176	129	27		
121	194	139	101	68				

### INPUT

- O. Made manifest
- P. See Word Y. (2 wds.)
- Q. Conductor Eugene; oboist Leon
- R. See Word Y. (2 wds.)
- S. \_\_\_\_\_ *Susanin*, Glinka opera
- T. Verdi opera, 1850, still not recorded
- U. Carmen's "*L'amour est un oiseau rebelle*"
- V. Bach cantata for Christmas Day (4 Ger. wds.)
- W. Type of harpsichord ornament in which the lower second of the normal note is simultaneously struck, then immediately released
- X. Diana \_\_\_\_\_, Motown star
- Y. With Words R. and P., one of Handel's *Chandos Anthems* (4 wds.)
- Z. 17th- and 18th-century keyboard pieces; pupil's assignments

### OUTPUT

12	172	89	188	181	30	106										
145	40	162	200	124	26	192										
133	179	19	70	164	156	2	49									
55	7	155	93	111												
171	159	87	108													
45	18	144	180	82	116	97	10		60							
153	48	118	91	132	160	198	107									
6	84	39	1	115	46	66	202									
135	173	196	94	58	143	22										
128	154	77	32	105	51	163										
									189							
69	134	41	63	14	167	109	3									
									123	146	86	193				
24	137	62	186													
147	9	190	92	130	23	142	102									
													53	83	168	36
185	201	100	61	141	4	122										

Solution to last month's HiFi-Croctic appears on page 6.



Harman Kardon's ultrawideband 430 and 730 receivers. Frequency response: 4-140,000Hz.

Amplifier design: true Twin Power.

Two features you won't find in any other receiver except our own limited-production Citation.

Two features you won't find even in separate components—at anything less than twice the price.

They're there for just one simple reason.

The sound.

In sonic terms, ultrawideband components deliver two important benefits. Phase linearity and outstanding transient response.

Outstanding transient response is the ability of a component to respond instantly to the onset of a sound. It keeps the reproduced music as open and clear as the original.

Phase linearity describes a component's ability to pass multiple frequencies without changing their

time relationships. It gives you a sound that stays open and accurate, clear on down to the bottom.

Harman Kardon feels so strongly about these benefits that, in a market full of narrowband components, with frequency response from 20 to 20,000 Hz, we make only ultrawideband components.

The twin power supplies give you a further benefit. When the music makes extreme dynamic demands on one channel, the other channel simply cannot be affected—so even the loudest passages remain clear and open. That's why you'll find this feature in the world's finest high fidelity components.

Among which, of course, the Harman Kardon 430 and 730 receivers have been enthusiastically accepted.

Harman Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, New York 11803.

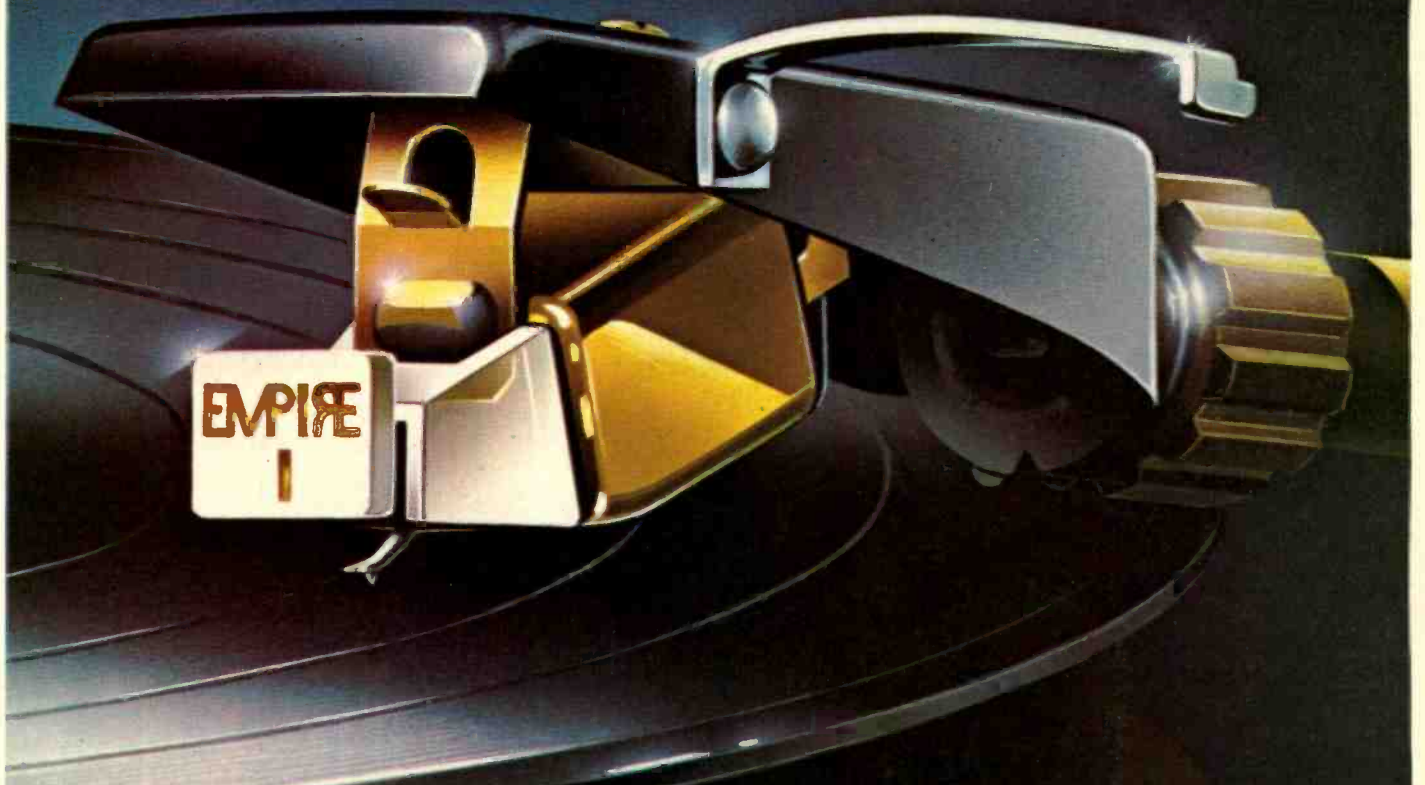
**harman/kardon**  
wide,  
open sound

**Most people think only expensive separates can give you wideband response and twin power supplies.**

**Except for these two receivers, they're right.**



Here's a tip  
to make your  
records  
last longer.



No matter what system you own, a new Empire phono cartridge is certain to improve its performance, three ways.

One, your records will last longer. Unlike other magnetic cartridges, Empire's moving iron design allows our diamond stylus to float free of its magnets and coils. This imposes much less weight on the record surface and insures longer record life.

Two, you get better separation. The small, hollow iron armature we use allows for a tighter fit in its positioning among the poles.

So, even the most minute movement is accurately reproduced to give you the space and depth of the original recording.

Three, Empire uses 4 poles, 4 coils, and 3 magnets (more than any other cartridge) for better balance and hum rejection.

The end result is great listening. Audition one for yourself or write for our free brochure, "How to Get the Most Out of Your Records" Cartridges  
Empire Scientific Corp.  
Garden City, N.Y. 11530



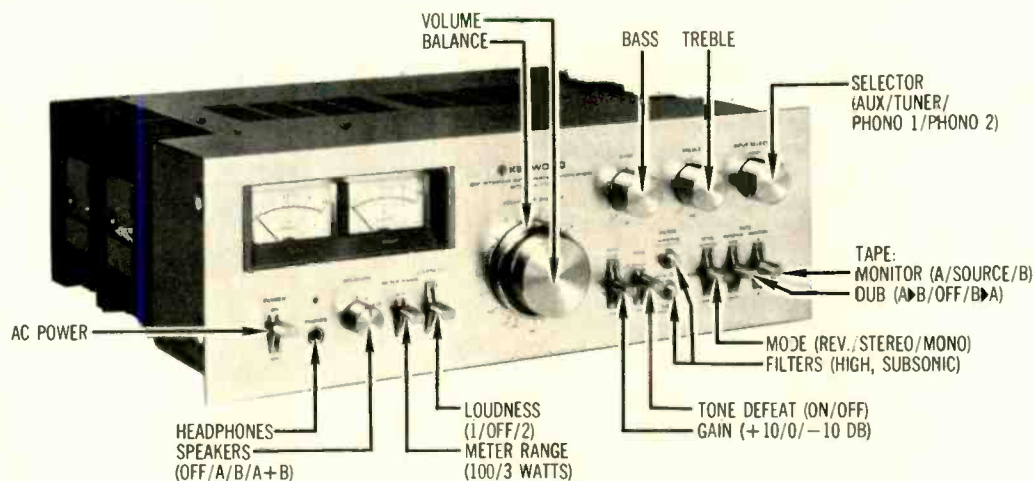
*We bring music to life*

**EMPIRE**

Preparation supervised by  
Robert Long, Harold A. Rodgers,  
and Edward J. Foster  
Laboratory data (unless otherwise noted)  
supplied by CBS Technology Center

## A CONSUMER'S GUIDE

# New Equipment Reports



## Kenwood's KA-9100 Is Cool—And More

**The Equipment:** Kenwood KA-9100 amplifier in metal case. Dimensions: 16 15/16 by 5 7/8 inches (front panel), 12 7/8 inches deep. Price: \$500. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Trio Electronics, Japan; U.S. distributor: Kenwood Electronics, Inc., 15777 S. Broadway, Gardena, Calif. 90248.

**Comment:** If heat be the bane that most crucially shortens the life expectancy of electronic componentry, the Kenwood KA-9100 must aspire to Methuselah-hood. Considering the ample power rating (19 1/2 dBW—90 watts), it stays exceptionally cool in normal operation. The relatively massive heat sinks are mounted externally, keeping the internal temperature low. And in general, the appearance and heft of this amplifier reinforce the impression of quality that it radiates.

The specs of the KA-9100 are tight—0.03% THD at rated output, for example—but lab data taken at CBS Technology Center bear witness that they are met handily. Over most of the range, in fact, the THD is only about one-fifth of the rating and approaches 0.03% only at 20 kHz. The clipping level isn't reached until an extra 1/2 dB of power is delivered into standard 8-ohm loads. Similarly, IM distortion stays well below its 0.03% rating until substantially more than 19 1/2 dBW is pumped out. In other respects—damping factor, sensitivity, phono overload, and fre-

quency response—Kenwood's claims are met or exceeded. The phono equalization is exceptionally accurate and the low- and high-cut filters are very effective.

This is described as a DC amp, meaning that its stages are direct coupled (using no capacitors) and therefore will amplify signals far beyond the audio band (approaching, at the low end, DC—direct current). Consequently the response of the power amp section is rated as 0 Hz to 100 kHz. The CBS measurements are made through the entire ensemble and confirm Kenwood's alternate spec (-1 dB at 50 kHz) covering this situation. The lab data also suggest the presence of a low-pass filter (18 dB per octave above 70 kHz) to prevent transient or other intermodulation, which can occur with wideband designs under some circumstances. Be that as it may, the design delivers clean sound in the audio band with no detectable side effects.

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**REPORT POLICY** Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Technology Center assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.

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The KA-9100 sports most of the usual features of an integrated amp and includes several that are less common but nonetheless handy. For example, there is a three-way lever that introduces an additional 10 dB of gain or attenuation into the circuit to improve the level match between various inputs. In the +10 position, the output from a moving-coil cartridge can be boosted to correspond more closely with that of moving-magnet types; the -10 position can calm an overly enthusiastic tape deck or tuner.

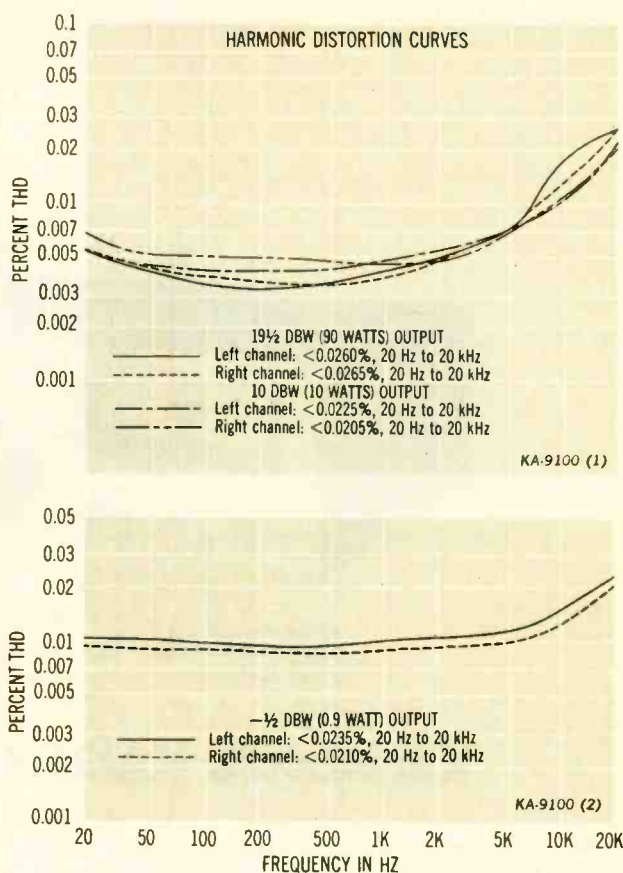
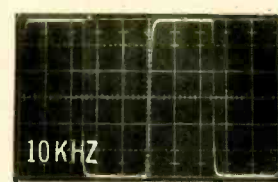
Two loudness contours are provided, each affecting only the bass region. The maximum boost in either case is 10 dB, but it is reached either at 100 or 30 Hz, depending on the switch setting. While we preferred the latter, others might enjoy the extra midbass boost of the former.

The balance control is concentric with the stepped attenuator volume control (in our opinion an eminently sensible arrangement) and has a well-defined detented center. The tape facilities are very good and allow two-way dubbing—even while the user is listening to another source.

A pair of good-sized meters, calibrated in watts into 8 ohms, monitor the power output. Full-scale indication is either 4¾ dBW (3 watts) or 20 dBW (100 watts), depending on the setting of the METER RANGE switch; in either case, the scale is roughly logarithmic (which is to say, readable over a wide range of output power levels—though with some speakers a third, intermediate, sensitivity setting might have been useful). The ballistics appear well chosen for typical music.

Rather than using removable links between the preamp and power amp sections, Kenwood uses a back-panel slide switch that internally connects or separates them. This arrangement allows the bypassing of external processing equipment with no defeat switch. Though the back panel is not the most accessible spot for this switch, it's an improvement over having to pull cables and insert jumpers; still, it's less convenient than a front-panel accessory on/off switch. Knurled binding posts for two sets of speakers are provided. A DIN connector (as well as the conventional pin-jack array) is provided for one of the tape hookups, and each phono input has its own grounding post—a thoughtful touch. There are three convenience outputs: two switched (rated at 100 watts) and one unswitched (300 watts).

It would be difficult indeed to fault the performance of

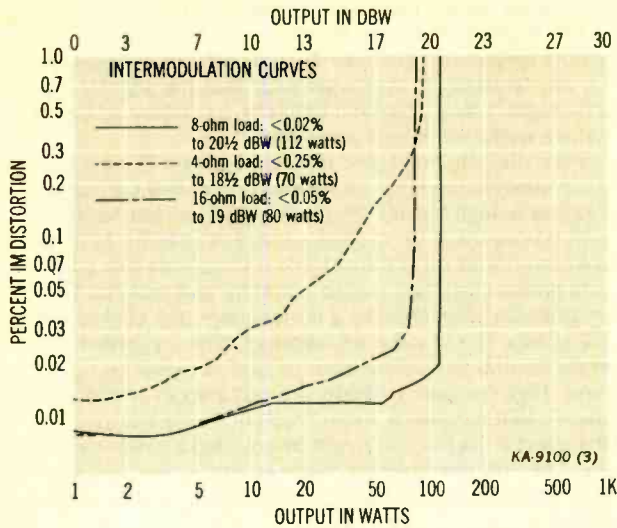


### About the dBW . . .

We express output power and noise in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. We repeat herewith the conversion table so that you can use the advantages of dBW in comparing current products with those we have reported on in the past. You can, of course, use the figures in watts that accompany the new dBW figures for these comparisons, but then you lose the ability to compare noise levels for outputs other than rated power and the ability to figure easily the levels to which specific amplifiers will drive specific speakers—as explained in the June 1976 issue.

WATTS	dBW	WATTS	dBW	WATTS	dBW
1.00	0	10.0	10	100	20
1.25	1	12.5	11	125	21
1.6	2	16	12	160	22
2.0	3	20	13	200	23
2.5	4	25	14	250	24
3.2	5	32	15	320	25
4.0	6	40	16	400	26
5.0	7	50	17	500	27
6.3	8	63	18	630	28
8.0	9	80	19	800	29





## Kenwood KA-9100 Amplifier Additional Data

Power output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)

L ch 20½ dBW (107 watts)

R ch 20½ dBW (108 watts)

Frequency response ±0 dB, 20 Hz to 40 kHz  
+0, -3 dB, below 10 Hz to 70 kHz

RIAA equalization ±½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

Input characteristics (for rated output at full gain)

	Sensitivity	Noise	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	2.4 mV	-55½ dBW	75 dB
tuner	160 mV	-77 dBW	96½ dB
aux	160 mV	-77 dBW	96½ dB
tape	160 mV	-77 dBW	96½ dB

Phono overload (clipping point) 300 mV at 1 kHz

Damping factor at 1 kHz 64

High filter -3 dB at 8 kHz; 12 dB/oct.

Low filter -3 dB at 21 Hz; 12 dB/oct.

the Kenwood KA-9100. It is very quiet in all modes of operation. The phono preamp has adequate gain for typical cartridges in the normal position (and, again, will accommodate moving-coil models with 10 dB of extra amplification available at the flick of a switch). Even high-output cartridges should mate with the KA-9100 without danger of front-end overload. The fine transient response and tonal balance indicate low cartridge/preamp interaction, and the inner definition of music is exceptionally fine. Stereo imagery is very stable and wide, especially at the higher frequencies. Bass reproduction, though not the forte of this amplifier, is quite good and reasonably tight.

Since we could note no audible degradation stemming from the subsonic filter, we employed it continually in the phono mode. It is very effective in eliminating the unwanted pickup output resulting from record warps, as the output meters confirm. Although the 8-kHz cutoff fre-

quency of the high-cut filter is a well-chosen compromise, we would have liked a choice (say, 5 and 10 kHz), especially since this filter really works. The tone control range of the KA-9100 is modest (about ±7½ dB at 20 kHz in the treble, shelving to about ±9 dB below 100 Hz in the bass) by comparison to some amps but more than adequate for our tastes. Perhaps because of this limited range, the controls strike us as more useful than most at moderate "touchup" settings.

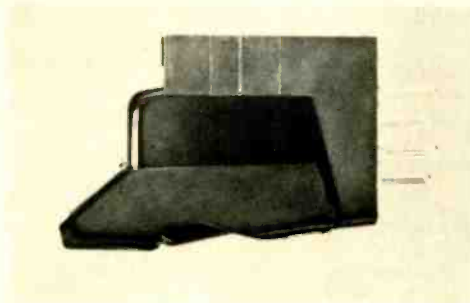
To our way of thinking, the Kenwood KA-9100 provides an extensive combination of features in a compact package. Its power is adequate for most audiophile systems, and it sings with very low distortion. To what extent this can be attributed to Kenwood's DC amplifier circuitry and separate power supplies (one per channel, to prevent what Kenwood calls dynamic crosstalk) is a moot point; suffice it to say that the sonic quality is there.

## REPORTS IN PROGRESS

The January issue will feature equipment reports on ten products. Among those in preparation, for that and future issues, are:

Dual C-939 cassette deck  
Nakamichi Model 630 tuner/preamp  
Ortofon M-20 Super  
FL pickup cartridge  
Pioneer Spec-4 power amplifier

Acoustic Research AR-15 loudspeaker system  
Heath Model AD-1304 Active Audio Processor  
Mitsubishi DP-EC1  
automated direct-drive turntable  
Russound SP-1 switching and patching center



## ADC's New Pickup: Idiosyncratic, but Superb in Sound

**The Equipment:** ADC Model ZLM Deluxe, a stereo magnetic pickup cartridge. Price: \$135. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: ADC (a BSR company), Pickett District Rd., New Milford, Conn. 06776.

**Comment:** ADC seems to have come full circle. The original XLM cartridge was a leader in the trend toward ultracompliant stylus suspensions. It was followed by the XLM Mk. II, which in one giant step went to a suspension that was much stiffer. The new ZLM, judging by its (almost ideal) 9.8-Hz resonance in the SME-3009 tone arm, takes another step away from the outmoded "ideal" of ultra-compliance.

This change is reflected in the minimum vertical tracking force (11.5 millinewtons, or 1.15 grams) at which the ZLM can negotiate the "obstacle course" tracking test administered at the CBS Technology Center. The new value is more than 50% in excess of that required by the XLM Mk. II in the same test, despite the fact that the older cartridge had a stylus assembly twice as massive as that in the ZLM. Compared with this lab data, ADC's recommended range of tracking forces (0.75 to 1.25 grams) seems a trifle optimistic. The lab used the figure from the torture test in making its other measurements; for convenience in adjusting the stylus-force mechanism on our tone arms, we ran the listening tests at the upper extreme of the recommended range.

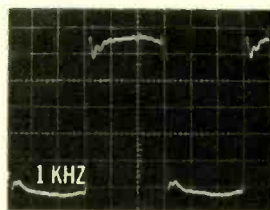
The low- and mid-frequency response of the ZLM is commendably flat, with one or two broad but negligible excursions (on the order of 1 dB). High-end peakiness is a good deal less apparent than in most of the pickups we have tested, one channel rising in response by 2½ dB at 20 kHz and the other rolling off by 1 dB at the same frequency. The channels match fairly closely (and are dead on at 1 kHz in the lab's measurements), but there is nonetheless enough variation between them to cause a slight instability in the stereo image. This is most noticeable with a soloist at center front. Channel separation is very good; nominal sensitivity is on the high side.

Performance of the ZLM with respect to second harmonic distortion is slightly better than average, as is that for intermodulation distortion. The measured vertical tracking angle of 23 degrees—greater than "standard"—is

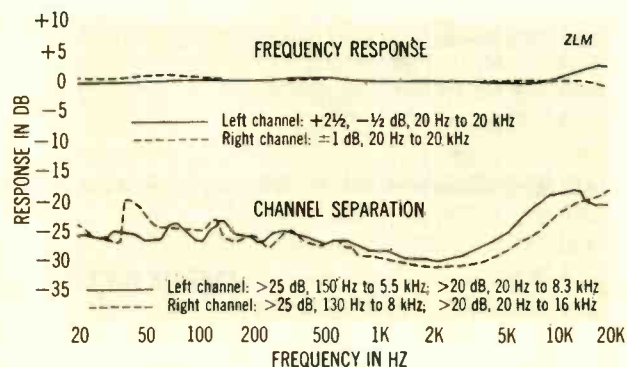
close to what most cartridge manufacturers seem to have been using lately. The stylus tip shows good alignment and polish together with an extended area of contact that should spread the VTF over enough vinyl to compensate for any tendency to increased wear that the slightly high VTF might create. Transient behavior, as evidenced by the square-wave test, is well controlled.

From our listening tests, the ZLM appears to be a little fussy about its loading—as are many other fine cartridges. Feeding a high-quality feedback-equalized phono stage with no provision for custom capacitive loading (and an unknown input capacitance), the unit sounds like a first-rate phono cartridge; loaded correctly and isolated from undesirable interaction by a buffer stage, the ZLM is simply superb. The sound is full, detailed, and airy, with a generally neutral frequency balance and virtually no harshness. High-frequency details are outlined in a way that some might consider a trifle clinical or overly analytic, but the effect is slight—and might be counted a virtue by others. The ZLM may have its minor eccentricities, but when they are satisfied, it certainly can do a lot for the sound of a record.

CIRCLE 134 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Square-wave response



### ADC ZLM Cartridge Additional Data

Maximum tracking levels (11.5 mN; re RIAA 0 VU)

300 Hz	+ 12 dB
1 kHz	+ 6 dB
10–20 kHz	> -5 dB

Output per cm/sec of groove velocity (at 1 kHz)  
1.125 mV

Channel balance (at 1 kHz) no measurable difference

# Select what you want in a record cleaner.

## Convenience in use and storage.

You shouldn't need a separate shelf, elaborate motions or an act of Congress to clean your records. A comfortable, hand-held instrument that works best on a rotating turntable is ideal.

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Tiny, invisible dust particles hide in delicate record grooves and can be ground into the vinyl. Only a slanted (directional) fiber using special ultra-small fiber tips can scoop up, rather than rearrange, this micro-dust contamination.

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The result is a totally new standard in stereophones: the PRO/4 Triple A. Because the new Koss PRO/4 Triple A

expands the realm of pure sound with a freshness and life-like intensity every music lover will want to hear. Indeed, with a frequency response from 10 Hz to 22kHz, the Triple A offers a full bandwidth dynamic Sound of Koss that makes every note blossom to its fullest harmonic growth. Add to that the human-engineered, contoured, Pneumalite® earcushions that provide both comfort and a flat, low bass response to below audibility, and you've got a whole new state-of-the-art stereophone. And while the new Triple A's extra large voice coil, and oversize diaphragm mix the music in

your head, its extra light construction and unique Pneumalite® suspension dual headband let you float, hour upon hour, unconfined through your private realm of listening pleasure.

Ask your favorite Audio Dealer to show you the new Koss PRO/4 Triple A. And write c/o Virginia Lamm for our free full-color stereophone catalog. But if you really want to see how great the new Triple A is, take your favorite records or tapes with you to your Audio Dealer and listen to them thru the new Koss PRO/4 Triple A. The difference you hear is why we say: "hearing is believing".

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CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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

## Complete with drive system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Another important inheritance is the Vario-belt drive system. It consists of a high-torque synchronous motor, a precision-machined Vario-pulley, a precision-ground belt and a machine-balanced, die-cast platter. The Vario-pulley simply expands and contracts for reliable fine-speed adjustments.

There are no complicated mechanics or electronic

circuitry, which add nothing but cost.

### Versatility and reliability too.

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

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

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

Now we suggest that you visit your favorite audio dealer and see first hand what Dual engineering is all about. You

may then wonder why no other manufacturer puts so much care and precision into a turntable. The answer is simply this. For more than seventy-five years, craftsmanship of the very highest order has been a way of life with the Dual people in the Black Forest. As nowhere else in the entire world.

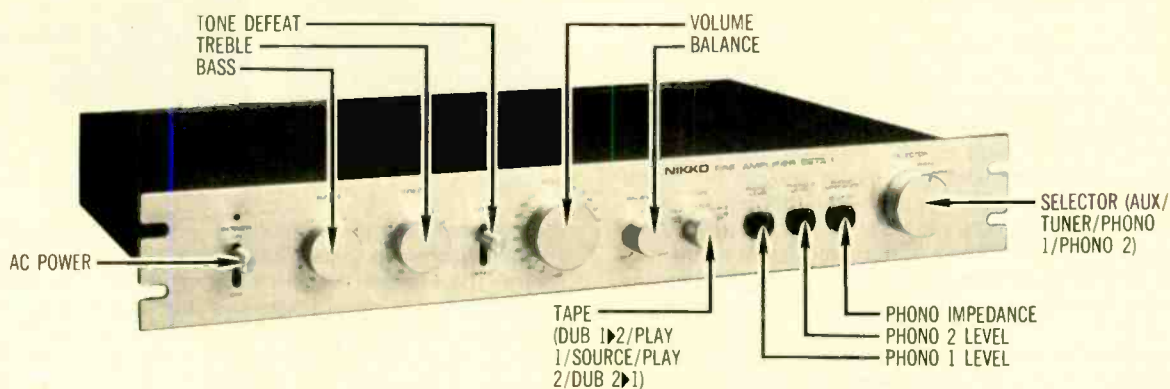


Dual 1237: less than \$135; base and cover less than \$30 additional.  
Dual 1241: less than \$200; including deluxe base and cover.  
Dual 1245: less than \$230; including deluxe base and cover.  
Other Duals to \$400. All with two-year limited warranty.  
Actual resale prices are determined by and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

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For the life of your records

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## Nikko Beta 1: Smart Looks and a Dandy Phono Stage

**The Equipment:** Nikko Beta 1 stereo preamplifier in metal "rack-mountable" case. Dimensions: 19 by 2½ inches (front panel), 17¼ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$299.95. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Nikko, Japan; U.S. distributor: Nikko Electric Corp. of America, 16270 Raymer St., Van Nuys, Calif. 91406.

**Comment:** Complementing the Alpha 1 power amp in Nikko's recently introduced Professional series is the Beta 1 preamp. It is a slim-line unit well accoutered in satin-finish brushed aluminum. All controls are silky smooth in operation, which of course adds to its professional cast. The generous input complement—two phonos, two tape decks, tuner, and aux—is controlled by a pair of rotary switches: the main selector and that for the tape decks, which provides two-way tape-to-tape dubbing. (This arrangement precludes dubbing tapes while listening to another source: While dubbing, say, from 1 to 2, you can listen only to the output from the second deck.)

Beta 1 offers a selection of phono-input impedances via a front-panel switch that controls both phono inputs simultaneously and allows a choice of 22,000, 47,000, and 100,000 ohms. We know of cartridges for which the two higher settings are appropriate, and we have heard that some cartridges intended for a 47,000-ohm load sound better with 22,000 ohms or so, but for real flexibility in such experimentation it would be nice to have at least a small range of adjustment. The phono level controls (one for each input), which provide a range of adjustment from maximum gain to full off, would be more useful if the preamp had somewhat more gain to start with. Even with a high-output cartridge, we generally find ourselves running with the controls wide open—which is how the lab made the measurements.

Lab data taken at CBS Technology Center indicate a high level of performance all around. The maximum output capability is about 15 dB more than the Beta 1 is likely to be called upon to deliver in practice. THD is very good, roughly at the point where further improvement looks better on paper than it sounds. Although THD at 20 kHz is not high in itself, it is rather greater than at lower frequencies,

which hints at possible transient distortion. In use, however, we discerned no untoward sounds that we could attribute to this.

The signal-to-noise ratio from the high level inputs is very good, and, while that from the phono input may not elicit raves from the bench, it shines in the audition room. Subjectively, the Nikko has a much quieter phono section than the numbers suggest. Evidently the measured noise components are concentrated where the ear is relatively insensitive.

The basic frequency response of the Beta 1 is very flat and very wideband. That of the phono preamp is equally impressive. The maximum range provided by the eleven-dent bass and treble controls is exceptionally broad, yet we found that subtle changes in tonal balance could read-

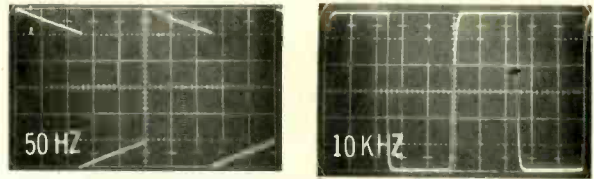
### Nikko Beta 1 Preamp Additional Data

Output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)		
L ch	11.75 volts	
R ch	12.50 volts	
Frequency response	+0, -1 dB, below 10 Hz to 70 kHz	
RIAA equalization	± ½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Input characteristics (for 2 volts output)		
	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	3.9 mV	70 dB
tuner	225 mV	94 dB
aux	225 mV	94 dB
tape 1, 2	225 mV	94 dB
Phono overload (clipping point)	500 mV at 1 kHz	
Total harmonic distortion at 2 volts output		
L ch	<0.020%, 20 Hz to 10 kHz	
	<0.053%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
R ch	<0.018%, 20 Hz to 10 kHz	
	<0.055%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Intermodulation distortion	0.065%	

ily be achieved at the lower settings. Though we do not mourn the absence of a loudness control, we would like to have seen a good subsonic filter (and perhaps a high-cut as well).

There are subtle little extras that one expects from audiophile gear carrying a professional appellation, and Nikko has its share. For example, its array of convenience outlets, though not large (two switched, one unswitched), is quite husky (ratings of 600 and 200 watts, respectively)—and the line cord looks heavy enough to handle that load. There are two outputs, and a DIN input/output jack is provided for TAPE 1 in addition to the normal complement of pin-jacks. There is no center detent on the balance control, but the volume control has twenty-two detents, with the steps well chosen for smooth coverage of the range.

The Beta 1's appearance and dimensions suggest it is meant for rack-mounting, but neither its panel height nor its hole spacing is standard for the purpose, which makes it rack-mountable in style only. It does offer an attractive

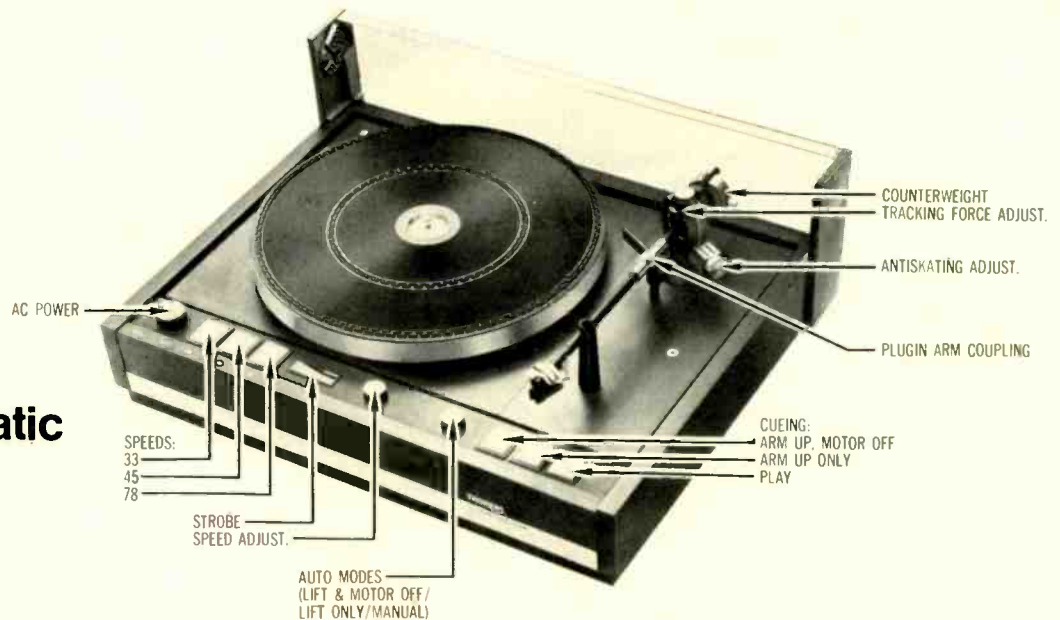


Square-wave response

package aesthetically, in features, and in performance. The phono preamp, in particular, rates with the best we've heard. The excellent transient response—most apparent on direct-to-disc recordings—and the exceedingly low noise level also are high among its sonic virtues. Furthermore, it's virtually overload-proof and matches well with high-impedance cartridges. That combination looks hard to beat, especially at the Beta 1's price.

CIRCLE 131 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Thorens' Latest Semiautomatic Features a Plug-in Arm



**The Equipment:** Thorens Model TD-126 IIC, a three-speed (33, 45, 78 rpm) semiautomatic single-play turntable assembly, with Isotrack tone arm, base, and dust cover. Dimensions: 19¾ by 15¼ inches (top); 6¾ inches high with cover closed, 17½ with cover fully raised. Price: \$625; also available without tone arm, as TD-126 IIB, \$500. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Thorens, Switzerland; U.S. distributor: Elpa Marketing Industries, Inc., Thorens & Atlantic Aves., New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040.

**Comment:** Okay folks, here it is: a high-quality modern turntable with automated features from a major name brand that does *not* turn its back on the 78 speed and that has a replaceable headshell (well, arm, in this case). The Thorens TD-126 IIC offers a combination of modern stereo record playing and speed adjustment range needed by those with collections that include antique records. We trust that the letters we have been receiving, railing against abandonment of the old speed, will now cease.

The actual adjustment range is close to 8% either way at each of the three operating speeds, with the speed-control

scheme so designed that once one speed is adjusted (with the aid of a built-in strobe), the other two also are correct. (The three speeds are not individually adjustable.) This range is great enough to allow correction of errors as gross as that in the notorious Furtwängler Beethoven Ninth that came out in E flat minor instead of D minor; it encompasses "78s" that should run at everything between 72 and 85.5 rpm (the vast majority of acoustics fall somewhere between 73 and 82 rpm); and the speeds that have been set suffer no measurable variation when the power-line voltage is raised to 127 or lowered to 105.

Flutter is very low at 0.03% average and 0.05% maximum using the ANSI/IEEE method; rumble is similarly excellent at -62 dB, CBS ARLL weighted. These data appear to justify Thorens' adherence to belt drive. The system has its peculiarities, however; presumably because of stretch in the belt plus a motor of relatively low torque, it takes a long, slow revolution for the massive platter to come up to speed and a couple more for the strobe to settle down. Quick starts, such as are needed in back cueing, are not possible. (In one sample we encountered some hesitancy about starting at all, but when this happened, a slight



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The features and specifications of TEAC decks have changed, but the timeless constant has been TEAC reliability. Every improvement we've made has added to this reliability. It's our most important feature.

Every TEAC cassette deck from the least expensive to the most expensive is built to last a long, long time. That's been true since the first TEAC was built more than 25 years ago.

#### A-103 Specifications:

Wow & Flutter:  
0.10% (NAB weighted)  
Signal-to-noise ratio:  
50dB (without Dolby)  
55dB (with Dolby at 1kHz)  
60dB (with Dolby over 5kHz)  
Frequency Response:  
30-14,000Hz (CrO<sub>2</sub>/FeC<sub>2</sub>)  
30-11,000Hz (Normal)

Take the new A-103, one of the least expensive TEAC's you can buy.

Despite its low price, the A-103 is manufactured to the same tolerances as decks costing three times as much. And, where most decks have a maze of hand-wired switches, harnesses and boards inside, the A-103 boasts an innovative design which replaces all that with a single circuit board directly coupled to the front control panel.

#### A-640 Specifications:

Wow & Flutter:  
0.06% (NAB weighted)  
Signal-to-noise ratio:  
57dB (without Dolby)  
62dB (with Dolby at 1kHz)  
67dB (with Dolby over 5kHz)  
Frequency Response:  
30-16,000Hz (CrO<sub>2</sub>)  
30-14,000Hz (Normal)

TEAC's more expensive A-640 brings engineering sophistication to a new high with plug-in circuit boards, two motors and electronically operated push buttons for feather-touch, maintenance-free reliability. People who work with tape recorders know

TEAC tape recorders work and keep on working. That's the reason people whose living depends on sound judgement, depend on TEAC. You can, too.

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# Why you should judge a receiver on specs, but buy it on PPR.

Specs are fine. They tell you how much performance, technology and power you'll get from a receiver.

PPR, the price performance relationship, is even better. It's Technics way of telling you how much receiver you'll get for your money.

Look at the chart. You'll discover one simple fact: Technics gives you a lot. A lot of power. A lot of technology. And a lot of performance. For a lot less money than you would expect.

If we sound this good on paper. You should hear how great we really sound. There's solid power for solid rock 'n roll. Reserve power that'll even blast the cannons in Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. And a phono section that will uncover

the hidden dynamic range in your oldies. To turn them into goldies. With a powerful 78dB S/N IHF.

And when you turn on to FM, you'll tune in clear reception. Even from overcrowded bands or marginal signals. With little noise or interference. As well as outstanding separation and

negligible distortion. Thanks to Technics flat group delay filters and Phase Locked Loop IC's in the tuner circuitry.

Technics receivers. A lot more than you would expect. For a lot less.

Stereo Receiver	Sugg. Ret. Price*	Min. RMS Power Per Channel Into 8 Ohms (From 20Hz to 20kHz)	Total Harmonic Distortion at Rated Power (Max.)	FM Selectivity	Stereo Separation (at 1kHz)
SA-5370	\$329.95	48 watts	0.1	70dB	45dB
SA-5270	279.95	35 watts	0.3	70dB	45dB
SA-5170	229.95	25 watts	0.5	65dB	42dB

FM sensitivity for all receivers is 1.9µV (IHF '58) or 37.2dBf (stereo—50dB, IHF '75).  
\*Technics recommended price, but actual retail price will be set by dealers.

## Technics

by Panasonic



nudge—or a short wait—soon resulted in normal operation.)

When you turn on the power, the TD-126 fires up with the platter turning at 33 and the cueing function up—no matter how it was set at the last use. There are three operating modes: ML (the motor turns off and the arm lifts at the end of the record), L (the arm lifts, but the platter continues to turn), and O (all automatic functions off, making it a straight manual turntable). As compared with the previous semiautomatic (the TD-145C, reviewed in January 1976, which incidentally cost considerably less but did not achieve the 126's performance level in any respect and wasn't even a near miss in some), this system is a joy to work with since it will not shut itself off when you move the arm to an inner band on the record and, in any event, has the manual option to meet any quirky requirements of this sort. As expected, no arm drag could be found from the optical tripping system.

Nor could any arm friction be measured at CBS Technology Center, where the tracking-force calibrations were found to be on the nose at all settings and antiskating bias well within accepted limits. We were more interested, however, in the arm itself. To accommodate high-compliance styli while retaining plug-in cartridge replacement (which generally adds weight to the arm and makes it prone to

mistracking on record warps), Thorens has moved the coupling back toward the pivot, reducing its moment of inertia and, therefore, its effective mass. Thus, in changing cartridges, you replace about half the arm, not just the shell. Tested with the Shure V-15 Type III, which is very compliant, the resonance measures 7.9 Hz, a little on the low side. Yet since the rise is only 2 dB anyway, the frequency of resonance is not particularly critical.

The arm, motor, platter, and top plate are suspended as a unit and seem well isolated from transmitted vibration, though the high sprung mass makes the assembly react badly to sharp shocks against a less-than-sturdy mounting surface. We recommend placing the turntable on solid furniture or a securely fixed shelf, or at least outside your room's traffic pattern.

No turntable can be all things to all users, and the styling and general operating "feel" and personality of the TD-126 IIC must ultimately be judged by each prospective purchaser. Cartridge mounting, for instance, is exceptionally complicated (though no required individual operation is really all that difficult), so while we find ourselves enthusiastic about the design, it may well irk others. Be your own judge, keeping in mind that whatever you decide about its externals, its performance is above reproach.

CIRCLE 135 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Superex TRL-77 —a Comfortable Way to Listen



**The Equipment:** Superex Model TRL-77, a dynamic stereo headset with 7-foot straight cord and standard headphone plug. Price: \$30. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Superex Electronics Corp., 151 Ludlow St., Yonkers, N.Y. 10705.

**Comment:** The Superex TRL-77 stereophone is an open-back model that weighs 10 ounces as it is worn (exclusive of the cord) and has replaceable foam ear cushions that offer excellent comfort. The stainless steel headband is easily adjustable, and the fact that the open design does not require a particularly tight seal to the ear allows the band to be adjusted for a very light pressure. The sole circumstance under which we could imagine these phones causing physical fatigue would be in a very warm environment, where the lack of air circulation through the pads could become a problem.

Fortunately, the likelihood of auditory fatigue is similarly remote: Our first impression of the TRL-77 was dominated by the ease with which our ears could accept its sound. From the clean, solid bass to the clear, sparkling treble, the over-all frequency balance seems reasonable and smooth,

with none of the glitches that make certain instruments or sometimes even single notes stand out alarmingly. Analytic listening is the domain of the TRL-77. High woodwinds, for example, tend to be etched out rather than blended. What is missing is a truly sensuous midrange of the type that makes the chest tone of a massed alto section gorgeous to hear. At the price of a slight loss of treble clarity, a touch of midrange boost will restore some of this, of course.

Efficiency of the headset is quite high, and so is relative power-handling capability—which means that it is not at all hard to play it uncomfortably loud. This temptation should be resisted not only for the sake of your ears, but because the TRL-77 is sufficiently linear at low power inputs to sound clear at modest sound pressure levels. The abundant headroom available under these conditions virtually eliminates the possibility of distortion due to transient overdrive.

While stereo imaging is hardly the forte of any headphone, there do seem to be differences in the way the pseudolocations assumed by an ensemble's various singers and instrumentalists are maintained as the parts go up and down in pitch. This effect probably depends to a degree on how well the frequency, temporal, and phase responses are matched in the two drivers. The Superex spared us unpleasant surprises in this area by yielding a sonic image that is better than acceptably stable.

In all, we find the TRL-77 a well-balanced headset that reproduces music in a manner that is both pleasant and comfortable. It lacks the dreamlike, more-vivid-than-life quality heard in some more expensive headsets but does not give away much in such basic virtues as frequency balance and freedom from distortion. In its own rather modest price bracket, the Superex TRL-77 headset looks competitive indeed.

CIRCLE 132 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## BASF's "Superchrome" Cassette Tape

Scheduled for imminent introduction is a new cassette tape from BASF using an improved version of chromium dioxide. According to the manufacturer, the new tape can be expected to give about 6 dB more recorded level at 15 kHz than a standard chrome, and 8 dB more than a ferricobalt intended for chrome bias, before running into saturation. Since the improved performance has been achieved by producing a smaller magnetic particle with a more efficient shape without altering the basic coercivity of the material, the tape can be used on any cassette recorder having a standard CrO<sub>2</sub> bias/equalization position. Sensitivity of the "super" tape at mid and low frequencies is about 1 dB greater than that of a typical chrome and 1 dB less than that of a typical ferricobalt, so Dolby tracking should be within good tolerances.

Like other vendors of chromium dioxide products, BASF pooh-poohs the "wear scare," that is, rumors that chromium dioxide is more abrasive than other magnetic materials and contributes to faster head wear. The company states, to the contrary, that the composition of the binder and the finish of the oxide surface bear far more on abrasiveness than does the choice of pigment. Further, BASF's tests show that its chrome is less abrasive than a leading ferricobalt. In any event, we at HF can find only insignificant differences in wear characteristics between chromes and nonchromes no matter whose data we examine.



### Our Man at CBS Assumes AES Presidency

Emil Torick, who directs the lab tests at CBS Technology Center for HF's equipment reports, has been elected president of the Audio Engineering Society—a post he assumed last month. Though it is relatively little known among consumers, the AES has for many years been a potent force in the dissemination and cross-pollination of ideas within the professional audio community. It now has members in seventy-two countries and active sections in thirty.

Emil also is associated with a number of other professional organizations and has served on several U.S. and in-

ternational standards committees. More important, from our point of view, he is a musician (he holds academic degrees in music, science, and business administration), having been a professional symphonic violinist and choir director. Despite his obviously heavy schedule, he continues his musical pursuits on what he calls "an avocational basis." Though his present music-making may be a labor of love, everything Emil undertakes is touched with professional polish.

At the same time BASF will bring a new ferric tape to light. Convinced that one of the largest barriers to getting top performance from ferric tape is the fact that the magnetic properties (and the necessary bias/equalization settings of recorders) vary all over the lot. BASF has engineered the ferric so that it lies in the center of the available range and will work at least reasonably well on most machines.

This move is symptomatic of what we see as a very significant thrust in tape manufacture. The cassette recorder and tape market seems to have achieved a reasonable maturity, and it is possible to know what kinds of machines are in the hands of the public. Rather than producing the "best possible" tape and *hoping* that buyers can make best possible use of it, the tape companies are, more and more, formulating for best possible use of the characteristics of existing equipment. This kind of thinking was at work at 3M when it was determining what the current Scotch Master cassette line would be like; Maxell has applied it to open-reel equipment in its new mastering tape. And there are other examples—all of which we applaud.

One consistent advantage of chrome tapes has been that virtually all work with the same bias and eq. A bit more uniformity could certainly improve the situation for ferrics, and the present offering from BASF (among others) looks like a harbinger of fewer hassles in choosing tape.

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### Head of the Class?

We hope that, by now, most readers have at least a passing familiarity with the various classes of amplifier design. (If you don't, you may want to look up Edward J. Foster's article, "How to Translate Amplifier Jargon," March 1975.) Several new circuit concepts have been added only recently (Class G by Hitachi and Class H by Soundcraftsmen). But Technics now has gone back to the beginning of the alphabet with a new design it calls Class A+.

Its signal-amplification stages are all Class A—meaning that they use the amplification devices (transistors, as in most modern amplifiers) only in their linear operating regions, where distortion is low. This linearity has made Class A the purist way to go for ultra-clean amplification

ever since the beginnings of high fidelity. But, in today's high-powered world, it exacts a heavy price in efficiency; a conventional Class A amp is usually far less than 50% efficient and dissipates a large portion of its house-current input as heat. Class B circuits, by contrast, are more economical, but they must rely on tricks like partial Class A biasing (technically, Class AB) and heavy negative feedback to tame their inherently higher distortion.

So Technics has set out to provide the efficiency of Class B along with the superior performance of Class A. To do so, it feeds the signal to a second, Class B amplifier that supplies bias voltages to the main (Class A) amp, providing the large voltage swings needed for high power output without the voltage difference in the Class A amp's bias that would

entail massive internal heat dissipation at low output. If, for example, the amp must deliver 75 volts, the bias voltages may be 80 (for the "positive") and 70 (the "negative"), creating a difference of only 10 volts across the Class A amp.

The first product to employ Class A + circuitry will be the SE-A1 power amplifier (rated at 350 watts—25½ dBW—per side), which probably will arrive on the U.S. market next year. Technics admits that its \$4,000 cost is on the steep side and says it expects to sell the superamp primarily in professional circles, pending models that—through manufacturing economies and perhaps somewhat lower power capabilities—can be sold at more affordable levels.

## Tape Pirates Strike at Maxell

Maxelite, a bogus cassette brand wearing falsified Maxell colors, has made its unwelcome appearance in the audio marketplace. We say unwelcome because the newcomer, in addition to mimicking an established trade style, constitutes truly inferior merchandise. According to Maxell Corporation of America, the company first learned of the situation when several samples were tendered for replacement under its open-ended, no-exclusions warranty. The complaining customer was most dissatisfied with the cassettes and the fact that they had jammed.

Even a cursory examination of the Maxelite product reveals construction that should make jamming very likely. As the accompanying photographs show, the impostor lacks slip sheets, stainless steel pins, and guide rollers—to say nothing of Maxell's head-cleaning leader tape. In addition, the oxide surface of the tape appears to be less well polished than in legitimate Maxell cassettes, which could mean greater abrasiveness and head wear.

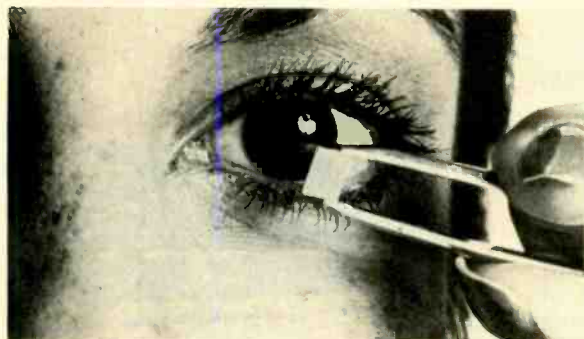
Maxell is conducting an investigation to find the source of the counterfeits and is prepared to take legal action when and if this is accomplished. In the meantime, it behooves the alert consumer to protect himself and to realize



that Maxell is not responsible for Maxelite product. Look carefully and be sure of what you are buying—no name brand is immune to such piracy. The counterfeits were first spotted in the western states but may be spreading elsewhere.

## A Sharp Idea

Sharp—the people who recently introduced the Optonica component line—have come out with a still more sophisticated version of the random-access system for locating



The heart of the matter—an LSI chip that contains the micro-processor for Sharp's random-access system.

“cuts” on cassette. (See our review of the Optonica RT-2050U deck, August 1977.) The Sharp Computer Controlled RT-3388 is equipped with a keyboard on which you can punch commands for custom-sequenced playback of the numbers of the tape. In this respect, it is to cassette what Accutrac is to disc.

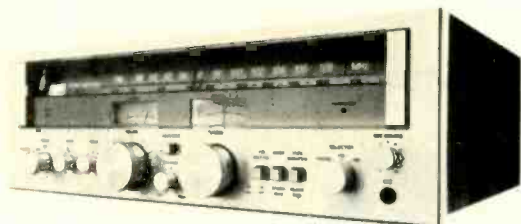
Note that this deck is part of Sharp's general consumer (or mass-market) line, rather than an Optonica component. Sharp says the computer will be incorporated into future Optonica offerings, but no date or specific model appears to have been settled upon. Nor does it appear that the space-sensing circuitry by which cassette contents are indexed has been subject to further development. As we said in our review of the 2050U, the company must be given high marks for coming up with any cassette random-access system, but this one still has some trouble dealing with extended soft passages and long pauses. Once these little bugs are worked out, the Sharp system could rival the Elcaset's indexing track.

The RT-3388 also has other goodies—like a liquid-crystal digital clock/timer that can be used in automatic timed recording.

### GAS enters phono cartridge market

Great American Sound Company's maiden effort in the cartridge field is a line of moving-coil models that share the name Sleeping Beauty. The three are differentiated by stylus configurations: Super Elliptical, Elliptical, and Spherical. All of the low-mass cartridges use elastomer-damped cantilevers (said to reduce subsonic resonances) and have a 6-ohm output impedance. Recommended tracking force is 1.8 grams. The Super Elliptical has a rated frequency range of 5 Hz to 40 kHz and stereo separation of 30 dB at 1 kHz. The price is \$200; the Elliptical and Spherical sell for \$180 and \$160, respectively.

CIRCLE 136 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



### Sansui's budget receiver, the G-2000

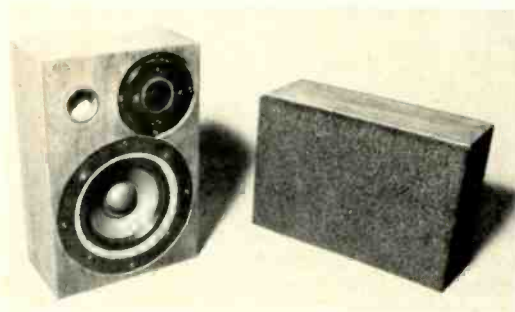
New in Sansui's component line is the G-2000 AM/FM stereo receiver. Designed for the budget-conscious consumer, it features an FET front end and front-panel meters for signal strength and zero center tuning. A mike-mixing level control and Sansui's proprietary phase-locked loop differential stereo demodulator are also provided. Rated power output of the G-2000 is 12 dBW (16 watts) per channel into an 8-ohm load from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.2% total harmonic distortion. Mono signal-to-noise ratio is said to be 65 dB. The G-2000 costs \$230.

CIRCLE 137 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### Marantz's cassette decks bow

Marantz's new front-loading cassette decks are headed by the Model 5030, which incorporates Dolby noise reduction, tape and source monitoring, and a DC servo transport. Also offered are mike and line mixing, a master level/fader control, memory rewind, and a defeatable peak limiter circuit. Further gracing the front panel are two VU meters, peak LEDs, and a three-button bias/equalization selector (for normal, CRO<sub>2</sub>, and FCR). The cost of the 5030 is \$419.95; other decks in the series are Model 5025 (\$309.95) and Model 5010 (\$249.95).

CIRCLE 138 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



### A compact speaker from Laser

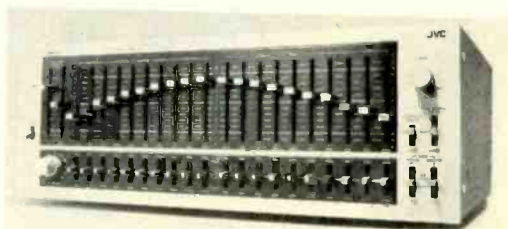
Laser Acoustics' compact M-5 loudspeaker system, designed primarily for automotive use, has a 5 1/4-inch woofer and a 1-inch dome tweeter mounted in a one-piece enclosure. This speaker is said to be capable of handling power up to 18 3/4 dBW (75 watts). Rated frequency response is  $\pm 4$  dB, 50 Hz to 20 kHz. The model comes in three forms for varied uses: It can be installed in vans or campers; as the M-5F it can be flush-mounted on door panels or rear seat panels; as the M-5W, a wedge-shaped kit, it can be mounted on rear package shelves. The M-5 costs \$200 per pair.

CIRCLE 139 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### JVC offers a graphic equalizer

The SEA-7070 graphic equalizer from JVC offers ten bands per channel with center frequencies from 31.5 Hz to 16 kHz. Additionally, each band can be switched one-third octave above and below nominal center frequency. An extra frequency control with eleven possible tunings that duplicate none of the basic ten is provided. The switchable range for all controls is  $\pm 6$  dB and  $\pm 12$  dB. Equalization during recording and two-way tape monitor/recording duplication with equalization are possible. A three-position input attenuator (0 dB, -6 dB, -12 dB) allows optimum input level settings. Frequency response is said to be 20 Hz to 100 kHz, +0, -0.5 dB, with total harmonic distortion 0.005% at rated output. The price of the SEA-7070 is \$699.95.

CIRCLE 140 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →



**Dynaharmony**

**RMS output power per channel**  
*(both channels driven into 8 ohms  
 20Hz - 20,000Hz 0.1%THD)* 200 watts

**Transient Music Power**  
*(within rated distortion)* 400 watts

**Frequency Response** 5-80,000Hz (+0, -1dB)

**S/N Ratio**  
*(IHF A Network)* 110 dB

## Extra Power with Improved Efficiency

# Hitachi's Class G

Hitachi's Class G is one of the most incredible cost/performance amplifiers ever created.

It is about three times as efficient as the conventional Class B amplifier. And it looks as sophisticated as it sounds.

Simply expressed, Class G is two amps in one. During the musical "downs" and "averages" the primary amp works on the low-voltage amplifier. But let one of those musical peaks come along and the standby

high-voltage amplifier cuts in for clear, powerful sound without clipping distortion.

Technically the standby amp consists of additional power transistors which are activated only when the signal peak demands it. But practically it means we can offer more usable power at a lower price.

Or in other words you're not only getting a little extra, you're getting about twice the amplification for the price of one amplifier.



**HITACHI**  
 When a company cares,  
 it shows.

# Play it as it lays.

Many of the records you own were mastered with Ortofon cutterheads. That tells you what we know about laying the music into the grooves.

Now we'll tell you what we know about getting the music out.

Our patented VMS Magnetic Cartridges.

At the heart of the VMS

(Variable Magnetic Shunt) principle is a unique, low-mass ring magnet. It forms a super-sensitive flux field that responds to stylus movement with incredible accuracy.

What comes out is a sound that sets new standards in spatial realism. You'll actually hear the violins up front left, the basses back right, the brass

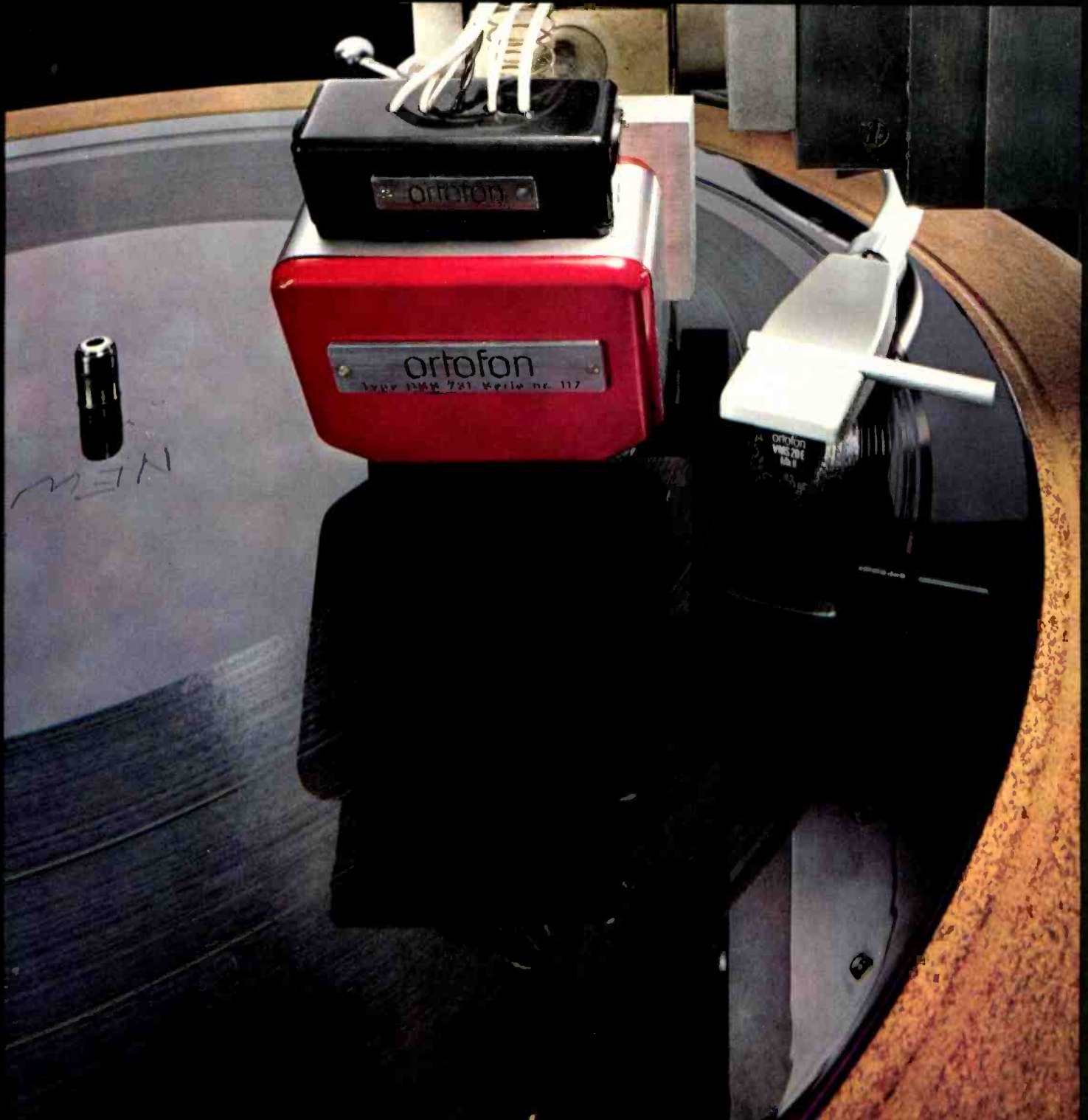
center rear. All with minimal distortion and maximum clarity.

Hear VMS for yourself. It's available at your audio dealer in five Ortofon models, from \$35 to \$400.

Each will play the music exactly as the music was laid down.

Ortofon, 122 Dupont Street, Plainview, NY 11803

## ortofon







## DCA-120 amp from A&E

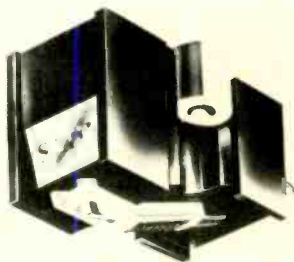
A&E Technical Research designed its DCA-120 power amplifier for high phase accuracy, which is said to be within 3 degrees from 0 Hz to 20 kHz. The power output of this amp is rated at 17 $\frac{3}{4}$  dBW (60 watts) per channel into 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.02% total harmonic distortion. Rated frequency response is -3 dB, 0 Hz to 500 kHz. Features include input sensitivity attenuators and a switchable low-cut filter with a 6 dB per octave slope and 7 Hz turnover frequency. The DCA-120 sells for \$800.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Rank brings Wharfedale to U.S.

Rank Hi-Fi is currently marketing Wharfedale speakers in the U.S. The E-70, top of the line, is a computer-optimized three-way system. A 10-inch woofer, 4-inch midrange, and 1-inch horn-loaded tweeter make up the driver complement. Frequency response is rated at 50 Hz to 18 kHz; impedance is said to be 8 ohms, never falling below 6.8 ohms within the audible range. Two five-position contour controls allow up to 5 dB of frequency adjustment in the ranges from 200 Hz to 2 kHz and 2 kHz to 20 kHz, according to Rank. Enclosed in a walnut-veneer cabinet, the E-70 costs \$420.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## New cartridge with the Satin touch

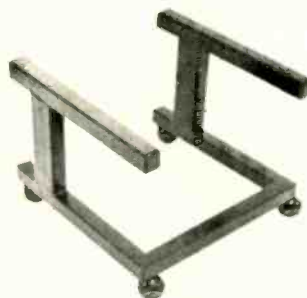
According to Osawa, the Satin M-18BX moving-coil cartridge uses a high-conductivity aluminum ribbon wire to achieve high output. Rated output of 2.5 millivolts allows it to be plugged directly into regular phono inputs, making a stepup transformer or pre-preamplifier unnecessary. The Shibata stylus of the M-18BX, which is user-replaceable, is fixed to a beryllium cantilever. A special lubricant is said to provide precise damping in proportion to the speed of the stylus. Rated frequency response is 10 Hz to 40 kHz and recommended tracking force is from 0.5 to 1.5 grams. The price of the Satin M-18BX is \$325.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Grabern introduces movable speaker stands

Grabern Audio of England is distributing its Appolo speaker stands through Neosonic Corporation. The stands, which are supplied in a flat pack to be assembled by the user, come with ball-caster wheels and are 10 inches high. The Sabre II model (shown here) will support most of the larger speaker systems. A pair costs \$65. The Appolo II, which is designed for small- and medium-sized speakers, costs \$49.50 per pair. A swiveling wall-mount bracket (\$29.50 per pair) also is available.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Studer/Revox markets new open-reel recorder

The B-77 open-reel tape recorder from Studer/Revox offers  $\frac{1}{4}$ - or  $\frac{1}{2}$ -track head configuration, 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  and 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  ips, and 7- and 10-inch reel capability. Mike and line level inputs are provided, as well as tape and source monitoring, logic control, and a built-in tape cutter and splicing block. The machine is also said to have an unusually large (24-dB) headroom margin. Frequency response is rated at 30 Hz to 20 kHz, +2, -3 dB at 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  ips. Total harmonic distortion, according to Studer, does not exceed 1%, and wow and flutter are below 0.1%. The price of the B-77 is \$1,195.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Callas with Di Stefano, recording *Rigoletto* in Milan, 1955

## Maria Callas: A Personal Footnote

by John Culshaw

LONDON—By the time this piece appears there will, I am sure, have been dozens of lengthy tributes to Maria Callas by people who knew her a great deal better than I. My only reason for adding this footnote is that it covers an area that may not be too familiar to the others—namely, television.

I never worked with Callas in the recording studio. In my years with Decca/London the reigning prima donna under contract was Tebaldi, to be followed later by Sutherland. I remember Maurice Rosengarten once told me that he could have signed Callas in the 1950s, but that he could not face the almost inevitable loss of Tebaldi had he done so. My own involvement with Callas began when I went over to BBC television in 1967. More than two years had passed since her last appearance in London, and reports about her vocal condition were disturbing. Yet I felt that she might have something revealing to say in a carefully conducted television interview, and with that in mind I went to see her in Paris. (I was told not to take flowers. The way to her heart, it seemed, was a kind of chocolate for dogs—she had two poodles—that was obtainable only in London. Somewhere in the BBC archives is a petty-cash form that may baffle future historians just as it baffled the accountants at the time. It read: Dog biscuits for Maria Callas—eight shillings.)

She responded enthusiastically to the idea, so much so that we made two fifty-minute interviews instead of one,

during which she talked to Lord Harewood at length about her career and her approach to the parts that had made her famous. There was no gossip and no intrigue, and her private life was kept out simply because it was irrelevant to the issues under discussion. Predictably, she looked magnificent on the screen.

"The Callas Conversations," as they were called, were filmed in the main room of her apartment on the Avenue Georges Mandell. Now I suppose everyone knows about the terrible disruption caused by even the most disciplined film crew, and Callas' apartment was—as you'd expect—elegantly and expensively furnished. It also happened to be on an upper floor of a building that had no elevator, so the crew had to carry cameras and lights and all the other apparatus up a winding staircase that might have come straight out of *Traviata*. As the producer, I told them they'd have to strip out all the equipment each day and reinstall the next morning, so that at least her living room would be habitable in the evenings. But not a bit of it: At the end of the first day, as soon as Callas saw the crew begin to dismantle, she insisted that everything should remain where it was and that all of us should join her in the kitchen for a spaghetti dinner. Some of the crew who knew only of her reputation as a tigress were struck dumb for a while.

I saw a lot more of her when I took the rough-cuts of the films to Paris a month or two later. She liked them

and did not ask for a single change. I had the impression then—and it grew stronger in later years—that she was a lonely woman. It is unusual for a star of that magnitude to answer her own telephone, but she did so because she loved to be telephoned. She used to like to sit on the floor of her apartment and rummage through boxes of old photographs from the days before she lost weight. I gained the feeling that the only thing that might provoke the legendary temperament would be a lack of professionalism—in any area, not just opera.

Our last professional encounter was in 1973, when she and Giuseppe di Stefano, with Ivor Newton at the piano, ended a long European tour with a recital in London. I was still with the BBC at that time and had a strange hunch it might be her last London appearance; accordingly, we video-taped the performance for transmission a day or two later. From my point of view as the television director it was a nightmare, because the program listed twenty-nine items, of which they would sing about twelve, deciding only at the last moment which item would come next. Thus it was only a second or two before they stepped on the platform that the floor manager backstage would say over my headphones. "It's *Gioconda*" or "It's the final scene from *Carmen*."

And the truth is that she sang badly, sometimes to the point of embarrassment. Any real control of the voice had gone. On radio or on records it would have been a disaster. Yet in the hall (and on television) Callas turned the evening into a triumph against all the vocal odds, such was her beauty and personal magnetism. At the end, after she had sung Lauretta's aria from *Gianna Schicchi* as an encore, the audience went mad. The applause and cheers went on for twenty-five minutes: flowers poured down from the boxes, and the whole audience surged toward the platform, with many people trying to reach out and touch her gown. I don't think there were any illusions about her voice; it was just that people were trying to say "thank you" for what she had done in the past and for giving them a last glimpse of the acting ability that was uniquely hers.

I'm glad it has been preserved on video tape so that posterity will be able to see her facial expressions and the way she moved (the voice can be judged from the records she made in her prime), and I'm glad "The Callas Conversations" are securely on film. My deepest regret is that the last project we were discussing—a film of Callas at work on a master class—never took place. ●



## Nikko's Mix and Match Components

The separate components series from Nikko Audio features two well-designed tuners and three integrated amps. New this year is the NA 550 integrated amplifier with 45 watts\* per channel, with less than 0.05% THD.

Also new in the Nikko line is the NA 850 with 60 watts\* per channel, and less than 0.05% THD. Both the NA 550 and NA 850 integrated amps have myriad features like responsive VU meters with variable control, 5-position tape control switch (for dubbing), speaker protection circuitry, and Nikko's exclusive circuit breakers. The NA 850 also features a subsonic filter and tone defeat.

The TRM 750 integrated amp, like all

Nikko products, is a superb performer, from its quality features to its built-in reliability. The TRM 750 delivers 55 watts\* per channel, and no more than 0.15% THD.

Nikko's NT 850 AM/FM tuner is uncannily quiet and station grabbing. Normal and narrow IF circuitry provides high selectivity and low distortion while a front mounted multipath switch aids in reducing noise.

Last, but not least, is the FAM 430 AM/FM tuner. It's an established performer with excellent specifications and a typically modest Nikko price.

Now that you've read about our exciting separate components, we invite you to write to us for complete product infor-

mation and the name of a Nikko Audio dealer near you.

Once you have seen and heard Nikko Audio products, we think you'll make this your year of Nikko.

\*Minimum RMS per channel, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz.

## Nikko Audio

For those who take their stereo seriously

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16270 Raymer St., Van Nuys, Calif. 91406  
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In Canada: Superior Electronics, Montreal, Quebec

# The Tenth Annual High Fidelity/International Record Critics Awards

## Judges

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Edward Greenfield, England  
Ingo Harden, Germany  
Alfred Hoffman, Romania  
Leonard Marcus, U.S.A.; President  
Bengt Pleijel, Sweden  
\*Edith Walter, France

\*Unable to attend for personal reasons

## First Prize



**SHOSTAKOVICH:** The Nose. Moscow Chamber Opera, Gennady Rozhdestvensky. MELODIYA/EURODISC 89 502 XFR (2). Not issued in the U.S.

## First Prize



**MAHLER:** Symphony No. 9. Carlo Maria Giulini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 097 (2).

## First Prize



**FREDERICA VON STADE:** French Opera Arias. John Pritchard. COLUMBIA M 34206.

## Koussevitzky International Recording Award



**BERIO:** Concerto for Two Pianos. Bruno Canino, Antonio Ballista, Luciano Berio. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1674.

## Special Citation

**MOMPOU:** Complete Piano Music. Federico Mompou. ENSAYO AL 5555/1 (5). Not issued in the U.S.

## Nominating Committee

### Belgium

Albert De Sutter, *Union de la Presse Musicale Belge*  
Marcel Doisy, *Revue des Disques*  
Roger Hofmans, *Spectator*

### Bulgaria

Dimitar Zenginov, *Bulgarska Musica*

### France

Staff of Diapason  
Edith Walter, *Harmonie and HiFi Conseil*

### Germany

Karl Breh, *HiFi Stereophonie*  
Ingo Harden, *HiFi Stereophonie and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*  
Carl-Heinz Mann, *Hamburger Abendblatt*  
Herbert Müller, *Fono Forum*  
Felix Schmidt, *Welt am Sonntag*

### England

John Crabbe, *Hi-Fi News & Record Review*  
Edward Greenfield, *Guardian and Gramophone*  
Thomas Heinitz, *Records and Recording*  
Anthony Hodgson, *Records and Recording*  
Robert Layton, *Gramophone and BBC*

### Italy

Luigi Bellingardi, *Nuova Revista Musicale Italiana*  
Ornella Zanuso, *Discoteca*

### Japan

Shiro Horii, *Stereo Geijutsu*  
Tadao Koishi, *Mainichi Shimibun and Record Geijutsu*  
Kenji Tsumori, *Asahi Shimibun*  
Kaneyoshi Umekawa, *Record Geijutsu*

### Netherlands

Jan de Kruijff, *Disk*

### Romania

Alfred Hoffman, *Muzica and Romania Literara*

### Spain

José-Luis Perez de Arteaga, *Revista Musical Ritmo*

### Sweden

Bengt Pleijel, *Musikrevy*

### Switzerland

Dominique Chouet, *La Tribune de Genève*

### United States

John Ardoin, *Dallas Morning News*  
Martin Bernheimer, *Los Angeles Times*  
Martin Bookspan, *Consumer Reports*  
Milton Caine, *American Record Guide*  
Carl Cunningham, *Houston Post*  
Peter Davis, *New York Times*  
Thor Eckert, *Christian Science Monitor*  
David Hamilton, *Nation*  
George Jellinek, *WQXR*  
Speight Jenkins, *Record World*  
Richard Kaye, *WCBB*  
Irving Lowens, *Washington Star*  
Karen Monson, *Chicago Daily News*  
Robert Myers, *Sacramento Union*  
Staff of HIGH FIDELITY  
Hewell Tircuit, *San Francisco Chronicle*  
Michael Walsh, *Rochester Democrat-Chronicle*  
Tilden Wells, *Columbus Dispatch*  
James Wierzbicki, *Cincinnati Post*

### Yugoslavia

Dorde Saula, *Radio Zagreb*

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# How to Organize a Prize-Giving Institution

by Leonard Marcus

FOUR YEARS AGO this month Contributing Editor Gene Lees devoted his column to describing a TV special that he hosted in Canada. His guest star was Maureen Forrester, and during the course of the show Gene actually sang a duet with her. Still awed by a compliment the contralto gave his singing, he ended his column with: "How do you like them apples, George Plimpton?"

Well, for my overseas trip to help judge our best-record awards this year, I went from Massachusetts to Europe by way of Cleveland. The Blossom Festival—where the Cleveland Orchestra has its summer home—had invited me to talk to its audience about twentieth-century music before one of its final concerts. As a "blackboard," members of the orchestra had been assembled behind me in order to illustrate my points with music. At prearranged spots in the lecture, I would turn around to conduct the players in musical examples. One example was the beginning of Stravinsky's complex *Le Sacre du printemps*. All right, if you want to be picky, I didn't have a huge orchestra around me, just seven wind players. But the mammoth score starts with just winds, and there I was, conducting at least an appropriate section of the Cleveland Orchestra in the opening passages of *The Rite of Spring* at the Blossom Festival.

How do you like them apples, Gene Lees?

The concert itself included *Le Sacre*, with Lorin Maazel trying to best my debut by playing the whole thing, and Bartók's *Két kép* (or *Deux Images* or *Two Pictures*), an early and delightful work I had never even heard of before. The following day, having been thoroughly bested, I left the country.

Ever since my predecessor, Roland Gelatt, organized our record awards a decade ago, we had been holding them in conjunction with the music festival in Montreux, Switzerland. But during the past year certain differences arose between HIGH FIDELITY and the Montreux Music Festival in the handling, determination, and promotion of the awards. Also, changes were to be made that I felt would seriously compromise their unique credibility. As these differences seemed irreconcilable, we had to look elsewhere.

I wrote to other music festivals, stating that we would now like to hold our deliberations in a different country each year. (When, in Cleveland, I explained the new plans to Maazel, he pointed out, "That makes the awards really international now.") I soon had invitations from Italy to Sweden offering to collaborate with us. Berlin offered the most specific and earliest proposals, jointly from the Berliner



Wolfgang Albrecht

Edward Greenfield (England) drops his vote into ballot box held by Leonard Marcus (U.S.A.) as Bengt Pleijel (Sweden) stands ready to count the ballots. Seated at left is Alfred Hoffman (Romania); at Greenfield's left are José-Luis Perez de Arteaga (Spain) and Ingo Harden (Germany). The drinks, to be sure, are all nonalcoholic.

Festwochen and the city's biennial audio show, the Funkausstellung. They would supply us with hotel rooms, set us up with a well-equipped listening room, place their facilities at our disposal for the public announcement of the results of our deliberations, arrange for tickets to all musical events, and assign somebody to look after our interests and needs while we were in Berlin. I accepted.

Next, I wrote to the previous judges who over the years had most impressed me. (At Montreux a judge could not serve more than two years in a row—with the exception of the HF judge.) All but one accepted. The next order of business was to rename our international record critics award. And that's what we decided to call it (IRCA for short, Prix International des Critiques de Disques in French, Preis der Internationalen Schallplattenkritik in German).

I apprised Mme. Serge Koussevitzky of the situation, for our judges had long since become the judges as well for the Koussevitzky International Record Award, which goes to the composer of an orchestral work recorded for the first time. Without hesitation, she asked me to have IRCA carry on the tradition.

Then there was the matter of organizing a nominating committee. Letters went out to the world's major record critics, asking them to send me their lists of "best records" (ten single LPs and ten multi-disc albums) plus any Koussevitzky nominations, released for the first time between May 1, 1976, and April 30, 1977. Again, nearly everybody cooperated and we ended with twice as large a nominating committee as we had ever had before. A good sign. Things were now really beginning to roll smoothly.

By this time I had received a letter from Reinhard

Wehner of the Braun company. Herr Bodo Kettelhack of the Funkausstellung had gotten in touch with Braun's officials and asked them to supply us with appropriate stereo equipment and a technician.

Finally, it was time to leave for Berlin. I had scheduled a one-day stopover in Salzburg to meet with Dr. Hans Widrich of that city's festival and Dr. Heinz Rennau of its tourist bureau to discuss the possibility of our meeting in collaboration with the Salzburg Festival next year. (The possibility looks very good so far, although for the life of me I can't see how they can afford to give us press passes. Next year tickets will be going at \$112 apiece!)

That night was the 1977 Festival's final concert, which featured Leonard Bernstein conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in a string-orchestra transcription of Beethoven's C sharp minor Quartet, Op. 131. I had first heard Bernstein conduct it when I was in college during the early '50s and didn't think much of it then either, even though the double-bass part (the only real addition) was determined by Dimitri Mitropoulos from, I understand, notes left by no less creative a musician than Gustav Mahler, with a few well-chosen fillips added by Bernstein. Not that it wasn't effective. It was, and among my indelible memories will now be a screaming Salzburg audience still calling for Bernstein after the lights had been turned on and the orchestra had departed, with the conductor taking his final bows on a deserted stage and looking all the more striking as the only flesh among the skeletons of music stands. But with full strings, the rough edges of this bare-boned work become rounded and polished and lose the impact of their inherent incisiveness. (I must say I am even more frustrated by the familiar string orchestra version of the *Grosse Fuge*, wherein the lushness of the full strings destroys that apotheosis of ugliness at its core. Again, it can be impressive, but I prefer Beethoven.)

Next stop Berlin, missing by one day Associate Audio-Video Editor Hal Rodgers, who had been covering the Funkausstellung for us. I checked in with Monika Krumnow, Kettelhack's charming and efficient English-speaking secretary, who, it turned out, had made all the arrangements (hotel rooms, a luxurious listening/conference room at the Kongresshalle, liaison between the Funkausstellung and Festival for us, storage of the recordings and scores until our arrival, contact with Braun, publicity outlets at our disposal, press passes, and all the currant juice we could drink) and who now assigned to me the equally charming Dr. Heide Riedel to ease my way through the concert, opera, and Braun offices where all the IRCA necessities were waiting. Do you want to know how to set up an awards-giving organization in one day? Find a charming and efficient young lady who can take care of everything for you.

It was at our welcoming cocktail party that we received our only major disappointment: Edith Walter, our French judge (the name may look British, but it's pronounced Ay-deet Vahl-tair; one of France's most prominent record critics is named Harry Halbreich), would not be able to come. That left only six judges voting, with the possibility of a tie. It also created the unusual situation wherein a two-thirds vote—necessary, for instance, if we were to award a fourth or

fifth prize—would be exactly the same as the majority vote needed to determine from one to three awards.

Down to business the following morning, September 3, and discussions soon revolved around the two *Meistersingers*. Solti's, a major production in glorious sound, did not boast equally fine singing: Jochum's, with Fischer-Dieskau as an original and convincing Sachs and Domingo as a superlative Walther, sounded as though it had been recorded through a blanket. (Our German and sole first-time judge, the impressive and justly esteemed Ingo

Harden—who is also head of the classical Deutscher Schallplattenpreis—pointed out something that most of us were unaware of: Domingo's German is not quite *echt* and doesn't match the accent of the rest of the cast. This didn't bother me; after all, Walther is a stranger in town, and who knows what sort of accent a wandering minstrel of the Vogelweide persuasion would have?)

Frederica von Stade also provided an occasion for lengthy discussion. Both her recital records were highly praised (just as this was the first time that two versions of the same opera—*Meistersinger*—had

## Other Nominated Recordings

**BARTÓK:** Bluebeard's Castle. Tatiana Troyanos, Siegmund Nimsgern, Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 34217.

**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Concerto No. 4. Maurizio Pollini, Karl Böhm. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 791.

**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Sonatas Nos. 27–32. Alfred Brendel. PHILIPS 6747 312 (3). Issued in the U.S. on single discs only.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 7. Carlos Kleiber. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 706.

**BIZET:** Carmen. Tatiana Troyanos, Plácido Domingo, Kiri Te Kanawa, José van Dam, Georg Solti. LONDON OSA 13115 (3).

**BLOCH:** Schelomo. Mstislav Rostropovich, Leonard Bernstein. ANGEL S 37256.

**CHARPENTIER:** Louise. Ileana Cotrubas, Plácido Domingo, Georges Prêtre. COLUMBIA M3 34207 (3).

**ELGAR:** Violin Concerto. Pinchas Zukerman, Daniel Barenboim. COLUMBIA M 34517.

**FALLA:** Three-Cornered Hat; Harpsichord Concerto. Jan DeGaetani, Igor Kipnis, Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 33970.

**GALUPPI:** Piano Sonatas. Marian Migdal.

EMI 1C 057 30718. Not issued in the U.S.

**HAYDN:** La Fedeltà premiata. Ileana Cotrubas, Frederica von Stade, Luigi Alva, Antal Dorati. PHILIPS 6707 028 (4).

**IVES:** Songs. Jan DeGaetani, Gilbert Kalish. NONESUCH H 71325.

**LISZT:** Piano Concertos Nos. 1, 2. Lazar Berman, Carlo Maria Giulini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 770.

**MAHLER:** Das Lied von der Erde. Janet Baker, James King, Bernard Haitink. PHILIPS 6500 831.

**MAHLER:** Symphony No. 3. Marilyn Horne, James Levine. RCA RED SEAL ARL 2-1757 (2).

**MESSIAEN:** Quartet for the End of Time. Tashi. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1567.

**MOZART:** Piano Concertos Nos. 19, 23. Maurizio Pollini, Karl Böhm. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 716.

**PUCCINI:** Tosca. Montserrat Caballé, José Carreras, Ingar Wixell, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 6700 108 (2).

**STRAUSS, R.:** Horn Concertos. Peter Damm, Rudolf Kempe. ANGEL S 37004.

**VERDI:** Macbeth. Shirley Verrett, Piero Cappuccilli, Claudio Abbado. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 062 (3).

**WAGNER:** Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Catarina Ligendza, Plácido Domingo, Eugen Jochum. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2713 011 (5).

**WAGNER:** Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Norman Bailey, Hannelore Bode, René Kollo, Georg Solti. LONDON OSA 1512 (5).

**WEBER-MAHLER:** Die drei Pintos. Lucia Popp, Werner Hollweg, Kurt Moll, Gary Bertini. RCA RED SEAL PRL 3-9063 (3).

**WEILL:** Vocal and Instrumental Works. London Sinfonietta, David Atherton. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 064 (3).

**DOCUMENTS OF ANCIENT ROMANIAN VOCAL MUSIC.** Madrigal Choir, Marin Constantin. ELECTRECORD STM ECE 01277. Not issued in the U.S.

**INSTRUMENTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND RENAISSANCE.** Early Music Consort of London, David Munrow. ANGEL SBZ 3810 (2 plus book).

**PAUL JACOBS:** Piano Etudes (by Stravinsky, Bartók, Busoni, Messiaen). NONESUCH H 71334.

**FREDERICA VON STADE:** Mozart and Rossini Arias. Edo de Waart. PHILIPS 9500 098.

## The Best of Pop and Jazz

**Selected by HF's editors and reviewers** The list covers the twelve-month period ending mid-September 1977. In-depth consideration of the year's releases will follow in next month's Backbeat section.

### POP

**KARLA BONOFF:** COLUMBIA PC 34672.

**JOHN CALE:** Guts. ISLAND ILPS 9459.

**FLEETWOOD MAC:** Rumours. WARNER BROS. BSK 3010.

**FOREIGNER:** ATLANTIC SD 18215.

**PETER GABRIEL:** ATCO SD 36-147.

**EMMYLOU HARRIS:** Luxury Liner. WARNER BROS. BS 2998.

**GARLAND JEFFREYS:** Ghost Writer. A&M SP 4629.

**JERRY LEE LEWIS:** Country Class. MERCURY SRM 1-1109.

**LORETTA LYNN:** I Remember Patsy. MCA 2265.

**JONI MITCHELL:** Hejira. ASYLUM 7E 1087.

**CANDI STATON:** Music Speaks Louder than Words. WARNER BROS. BS 3040.

**STEELY DAN:** Aja. ABC AB 1006.

**TELEVISION:** Marquis Moon. ELEKTRA 7E 1098.

**WINGS:** Wings Over America. CAPITOL SWC0 11593.

**STEVIE WONDER:** Songs in the Key of Life. TAMLA T 13 340C2.

**NEIL YOUNG:** American Stars 'n' Bars. REPRISE MSK 2261.

### JAZZ

**COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Prime Time. PABLO 2310 797.

**MILES DAVIS:** Water Babies. COLUMBIA PC 34396.

**DUKE ELLINGTON:** The Intimate Ellington. PABLO 2310 787.

**DAVE FRISHBERG:** Getting Some Fun Out of Life. CONCORD JAZZ 37.

**ELMO HOPE:** Last Sessions. INNER CITY 1018.

**KEITH JARRETT:** Staircase. ECM 2-1090.

**CHARLES MINGUS:** Three or Four Shades of Blue. ATLANTIC SD 1700.

**GERRY MULLIGAN'S NEW SEXTET:** Idol Gossip. CHIAROSCURO 155.

**WEATHER REPORT:** Heavy Weather. COLUMBIA PC 34418.

**WILDFLOWERS 4:** The New York Loft Jazz Sessions. DOUGLAS NBLP 7048.



Berlin Mayor Dietrich Stobbe greets the IRCA judges at ceremonies opening the Berliner Festwochen.

# The Berlin Festival Throws a Bash



Paul Moor, HIGH FIDELITY/  
MUSICAL AMERICA Berlin  
correspondent, right, chats  
with London Times  
chief book critic  
Michael Ratcliffe.



HF editor Marcus finally meets Korean-German composer Isang Yun nearly a decade after HF organized the U.S. protest against his kidnapping from Germany and death sentence by the South Korean government. (For stories, see HF, August and December 1968.) Looking on is British poet Stephen Spender.



Siegfried Palm, manager of the German Opera, seems to be meditating over whatever point IRCA judge Arteaga is making.



made the final list, so it was the first time that a performer had had two recital records nominated), and most of the judges considered her among the brightest stars in today's operatic galaxy. To me, some of her phrasing in the Mozart arias was absolutely revelatory. Our Romanian judge, Alfred Hoffman, whose French is exemplary, had some reservations about the American singer's pronunciation on the French recital disc, but José-Luis Pérez de Arteaga, from Spain, countered that that didn't seem to affect the rave reviews it received in France.

We also were highly impressed by Dorati's recording of Haydn's marvelous opera *La Fedeltà premiata*

(but thought that an even greater Haydn opera, *Orlando paladino*, would be more worthy if, when it comes out, it is as well performed and recorded\*; one judge warned that Philips was still hesitant about recording all of Haydn's operas and suggested that the award would encourage it, but we all agreed that this was not the reason for our awards); by the Charles Ives songs (pianist Gilbert Kalish came in for even higher praise than mezzo Jan DeGaetani, but the recorded sound was found wanting); by Paul Jacobs' recording of twentieth-century etudes (again, the Nonesuch recording was deemed not sufficiently

\*It was. See Paul Henry Lang's review in this issue.

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## Leopold Stokowski

(April 18, 1882–September 13, 1977)

As I was preparing the above report, word came in that Leopold Stokowski had died. Three days later death claimed Maria Callas. I never knew Callas (John Culshaw, who did, pays tribute to her in his column this month), but I did know "Stoky" and wanted to write a few words at his passing.

Although I had already met him once or twice before, I didn't get to know him until he was in his eighties. In 1964 he hired me to be the program annotator for his American Symphony Orchestra, an orchestra of, characteristically, youngish musicians that he organized, helped sponsor, and conducted without pay to help a new generation of instrumentalists gain experience. He showed the same generosity of spirit by constantly referring to his assistant conductors—some young enough to be his great-grandchildren—as "Maestro."

His memory was already beginning to fade for many things, if not for the notes of the scores he conducted. Every few weeks I would go to his Fifth Avenue apartment to discuss the music he was preparing, yet each time I arrived for over a year I had the feeling he didn't remember who I was. Almost as soon as we started talking he would leave the discussion of the scores at hand to philosophize about music in general and, again characteristically, to discuss his taste in women.

That he could keep an active career going into his midnineties was as much the result of his rigorous will as his hearty constitution. Once, as I attempted to help him out of a car, he slapped my hand away, commanding, "Never rely on anybody for assistance; otherwise you'll end up needing the assistance like a crutch." Only in his nineties did he finally, and grudgingly, accept such "crutches."

The day after his death the *New York Times*

labeled him "An Audience's Conductor," implying that he was not "a musician's conductor." These days, when music is taken by many devotees as a religion, with "authenticity" a major dogma, Stokowski may not have been a "connoisseur's" conductor—but he certainly was a musician's. He did not hesitate to arrange the music of even the most sanctified composers if he thought he could "improve" it, i.e., make it more accessible or effective for what he conceived his audiences' tastes to be—a prerogative that the orthodox insist belongs solely to the original creator, but one that musicians had considered part of their job for centuries—until the twentieth.

His list of American or world premieres of now standard works is legendary, from Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* in his early days to Ives's Fourth Symphony, the reconstruction of which he encouraged and whose premiere by him in 1965 first brought Ives's music to its present international stature. And more than any other musician, he stimulated the art and science of sound, by his experiments in orchestral seating and by his continuing involvement in sound reproduction: one of the first major conductors to record (1917), the first to record electrically (April 29, 1925), the first to record stereophonically (1939, for the movie *Fantasia*), and a sonic innovator all his life. He was the right man at the right time to abet the development of orchestral recording during the earliest century of sound reproduction. If the length of his career carried him into an age that was antithetic to his musical impulses, his ghost may still someday be able to laugh at our present narrow-mindedness.

Stokowski holds a unique place in the history of music-making. He was unique. L.M.

# Handing Out the Awards

Waltraud Heidak



At the Kerr pinki (counterclockwise from top) Dr. Klaus Jürgen Seidel of Eurodisc accepts the award for Shostakovich's *The Nose* from Marcus; DG's new a&r director, Günther Breest, holds the award he received from Artega for the Giulini Mahler Ninth Symphony he produced; Spanish Consul-General Emilio de Motta prepares to accept from Hoffman the tribute voted Ensayo for Federico Mompou's recording of his complete piano works; and Jürgen Vorlauf, clutching the CBS award for Frederica von Stade's "French Opera Arias" is congratulated by Greenfield.



commendable); by the Tashi recording of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time* (except for me; the first time I heard the interminable work the only reason I didn't walk out was because the composer was sitting next to me); the Marian Migdal (he's a he) performance of the startlingly mid-nineteenth-century-sounding piano sonatas by the eighteenth-century composer Baldassare Galuppi; by Abbado's recording of Verdi's *Macbeth*; and by Federico Mompou's touching performances of his Fauré-like piano music.

But there was no question as to what the biggies were. We could hardly praise the recording of Shostakovich's comic opera *The Nose* enough. While some of the judges had seen live performances, my first encounter was via the Melodiya recording at hand. The work, the performance, and the production are of the highest quality, from the opening orchestral sneeze (my thirteen-year-old son, the very opposite of an opera buff, for whom the highest art is represented by the Rolling Stones, still laughs when he thinks of it) to the musically integrated snores of the singer/actors—and the recording, at least in our Eurodisc pressing, was as clear and brilliant as anything we had ever heard come out of Russia. (A review by Conrad L. Osborne appears in this issue.)

After spending the day listening and discussing, we relaxed in the evening at the Deutsche Oper: *Don Giovanni* with José van Dam, better known for his Leporello, in the title role. Edda Moser, as Donna Anna, provided the most consistently fine singing of the evening, but Van Dam, a splendid actor, captured the audience with his nasty bastard of a Giovanni. This being an age of antisupeanatural psychological drama, no statue of the Commendatore showed up in the final act, nor were there any fires of hell. Instead, our antihero got drunk, imagined his victim's voice, and dropped dead of a heart attack. If the producer wanted it to work, he should have had Mozart write different music, and without the trombones. He didn't. It didn't.

The next morning *The Nose* won on the first ballot. Thank God for Ingo Harden. Shostakovich's comic masterpiece had not yet been released in enough countries to garner sufficient votes to make the final list by sheer numbers. To anticipate such a contingency, each judge is allowed to add one nominee regardless of how many other votes it receives. *The Nose* was Ingo's personal nomination.

We voted to give the two other grand prizes to Von Stade's French recital disc and to Giulini's controversial (we must have spent a good ten minutes just on the way he handles the final pianissimo) but spiritually convincing performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony. And finally we voted to pay special tribute to the Spanish label Ensayo for its enterprise in recording the Mompou (pronounced, by the way, Mom-poh, not Mom-poo).

The whole voting session was over by noon; after lunch we spent the day studying scores and listening to the recorded candidates for the Koussevitzky prize. Among the works on the list were the Virgil Thomson/Gertrude Stein *The Mother of Us All*, apparently eligible because it was, incredibly, the first commercial recording of the work and Thomson is still alive. But was it really eligible as a "sym-

phonic" work? True, we had accepted works in the past that had had voices and that could even have staging. At any rate, *Mother* bills itself as a "pageant," not really an "opera." We decided to let it stay. Another American work, Yehudi Wyner's *Intermedio*, on CRI, also made a good impression on the judges.

Henze's *Tristan*, with its perhaps overobvious depiction of the struggle between Brahms and Wagner, brought into discussion the strange word "sincerity." Sir Michael Tippett's First Symphony was pronounced "prophetic," which is as stimulating a recommendation as one describing a girl as "nice." One work was eliminated because, although it required the necessary sixteen instruments to "assemble," it could only be played by one—a tape recorder—and most of us felt it was not consistent with the spirit of Koussevitzky's desire to encourage music played for an audience by a symphonic ensemble. José-Luis, a self-described "avant-gardist," was furious, and we decided to ask Mme. Koussevitzky for a clarification of the rules.

As if we had not had our fill of contemporary music, that evening we heard the LaSalle Quartet play a concert of music from the "new Viennese school" as well as from the old Viennese school: the last, coincidentally, the same Beethoven C sharp minor Quartet I had heard Bernstein conduct in Salzburg. Frankly, Bernstein was better.

The next morning we gave the Koussevitzky International Recording Award to Luciano Berio for the RCA recording of his *Concerto for Two Pianos*. We had all been struck by the originality and power of this work with its yard-high score. Not only does it transform itself into everything from a violin concerto to a clarinet concerto, but who, writing a concerto for two pianos, would think of including a very active piano part in the orchestra itself—and be able to make it work?

Time to organize the awards ceremony. Originally scheduled for the garden at the Kongresshalle, we relocated to the Kempinski Hotel. Over to the Festival office where Paul Otto Schulz and his staff put out press releases in English, German, and French. Phone calls to the winning companies, cables to the American branches, and finally the shindig itself. Frederica von Stade couldn't make it—she had a rehearsal at the Paris Opera—so CBS sent its German representative, Jürgen Vorlauf, instead. Günther Breest, who had produced the Giulini/Mahler as his last effort before he was elevated to the position of a&r director for DG, arrived to collect his award. Dr. Klaus Jürgen Seidel of Melodiya/Eurodisc picked up the award for *The Nose*. And Spanish Consul-General Emilio de Motta accepted the tribute for Mompou. The only hitch involved the television crew that had been assigned to cover the ceremony. Terrorists had just kidnapped noted industrialist Hanns-Martin Schleyer, and the cameramen were suddenly shunted to Cologne, while a second TV crew was assigned to cover us. But nobody told the second crew that there had been a change of site, so while we were giving out the awards at the Kempinski, they were wandering around the Kongresshalle wondering where we were.

I can't wait to see what happens next year. ■

by Norman Eisenberg

# High Fidelity Pathfinders

The Men Who Made an Industry



**JOSEPH BENJAMIN**

*Eighteenth in a series*

AS A STUDENT at the College of the City of New York, Joseph Benjamin spent many hours listening to the New York Philharmonic, which often performed at nearby Lewisohn Stadium. His love of music and a yen for tinkering led him into the field that eventually developed into the high fidelity industry. After receiving his degree in electrical engineering, Benjamin went to work for United Transformer Company, which specialized in making high-quality transformers for use in public-address equipment. An important product of his employer in those days—just before the outbreak of World War II—was the “linear series” output transformers used in Class A amplifiers, precursor of high fidelity amplifiers.

During the war, Benjamin served as an inspector for the Signal Corps, responsible for a major portion of circuit parts and finished units purchased by the Army. As he learned more about radio, audio, phonographs, test equipment, and wiring and cables, he rose to a supervisory level. He emerged with the rank of major and an almost encyclopedic knowledge of what went on inside the sound industry.

One of the companies he had worked with as an inspector was Pilot Radio, and in 1946 he became its production manager. Pilot had been founded in 1918 by Isidore Goldberg of Lawrence, Massachusetts, simply

to make batteries. By the mid-1920s it was the country's largest manufacturer of radio parts and by 1930 was marketing the first kits for building receiving sets. Like so many others, the company suffered in the economic crash of 1929, but Goldberg managed to salvage it. He moved the operations to Long Island City, New York, and—most important from the standpoint of the young Benjamin—decided to concentrate only on manufacturing high-quality radio sets.

In the twelve years he was with Pilot, Benjamin worked in every department, including purchasing and sales, and rose to executive vice president. These were the seminal years of component high fidelity, of which Pilot was an unconscious part with an inexpensive FM adapter designed to add the new receiving capability to existing AM radios. During this period, Pilot added television sets to its line of merchandise and went heavily into combination radio/TV sets. In 1953 the market for this type of home product collapsed, leaving the company with the makings for some 4,000 AM/FM tuner sections that it didn't know what to do with.

When Adolph Gross, longtime sales representative for Pilot, reported a rising demand for radio tuner sections that could be marketed as separate components, Goldberg was skeptical. But, with Goldberg's okay, Gross went to four prominent dealers—Ter-

minal, Hudson, Sun, and Leonard—and came back with orders for no fewer than 4,000 AM/FM tuners. Pilot found itself squarely in the separates business.

As more new orders for these Pilotuners came in, the company took the next logical step into the high fidelity field: producing separate amplifiers. Its first model, AA-901, designed by Dr. Werner Auerbacher, appeared in 1954. It was rated at 30 watts and intended for use with the PA-912 preamplifier. In short order there were also the AA-902 10-watt amp and the AA-903, an integrated-amp version of the AA-902.

Benjamin decided that he had gone as far as he could at Pilot. In 1958 he stepped into the presidency of Bogen, which had been building separate amplifiers for ten years. [See “Pathfinder: Sidney Harman,” HF, October 1976.] While Bogen was building a growing line of electronics, it also carried a series of turntables built by Lenco in Switzerland.

Within two years Benjamin felt ready to start his own company. When Benjamin Electronics was founded, its principal business was the distribution of the German-made Elac line of record-playing equipment that included Miracord record changers and Elac phono pickups, previously handled in the U.S. by Audiogersh. The Miracord soon became the only serious competitor for the Garrard turntables and remained so until the Dual 1009 was introduced in 1963. In recent years, of course, the Big Three in “automatic turntables” have been challenged by many others.

Benjamin Electronics' first venture into manufacturing was a product of little concern to audiophiles: a battery charger for portable TV sets. But it soon started making receivers as well and took on another imported line, the EMI speaker systems made in England.

Also, in 1964, the company began manufacturing compact systems built around its own circuits. The idea, Benjamin recalls, was spurred by KLH's interest in using Miracords in its then-new portable stereo compacts. As it turned out, the Miracord was too heavy and costly for this format, but Benjamin decided to build a stereo compact that was not portable. The compacts did well for six years. A major reason for their subsequent decline, Benjamin says, was opposition to the format by retailers—they preferred to sell separates, which afforded greater sales leverage as well as higher profits. “Yet,” he adds, “everyone who ever bought a quality compact system still loves it.”

# Why Micro-Acoustics 2002-e owners enjoy music more than you do.

If you're listening to music with any of the other high-quality stereo phono cartridges on the market today, there's a very good chance you're missing something. Something that's earned us unanimous praise from 2002-e owners: a significant improvement in sound quality which can only come from major advances in cartridge design.

**Twin-pivots/dual-bearings.** Perhaps the most unique feature of the 2002-e is its direct-coupled transducing system, which was granted U.S. Patent No. 3952171. Unlike conventional single-pivot cartridges, which can only be optimized for tracking or transient ability, our unique twin-pivot, dual-bearing design is optimized for both characteristics — which are equally vital for precise reproduction.

Twin pivots insure superior transient ability, enabling the 2002-e to accurately follow even the most complex waveforms. And dual bearings maximize tracking ability so that even difficult high-level passages can be accurately tracked at very low stylus forces.

**Beryllium cantilever.** The 2002-e's precisely-formed cantilever is made of beryllium — an exotic space-age substance that is 35% lower in mass than conventional stylus bars. As a result, the cartridge boasts far lower moving mass, contributing further to its superior transient ability and unusually 'transparent' sound. By dramatically reducing moving mass, the 2002-e also reduces record wear to vanishingly low levels.

**Low cartridge body weight.** More and more tone arm designers are discovering the importance of cartridge weight, especially in tracking warped

records. Since over 95% of today's records are warped to some degree, a lighter cartridge means more effective tracking at lower stylus forces. At less than half the weight of most high-end cartridges, the 2002-e enables you to enjoy records that couldn't be tracked by other cartridges.

**The mismatch problem: solved.** Until now, an exact match between phono cartridge and preamp (or receiver) input impedance was required for flat frequency response. The 2002-e's built-in passive microcircuit eliminates mismatch problems by automatically controlling output impedance. This microcircuit also makes the cartridge immune from the effects of cable capacitance, so the 2002-e may be used with all types of tone arms — even those lacking low-capacitance cables.

**Critical acclaim/popular acceptance.** Few contemporary high-fidelity products have received such unanimous critical acclaim. And no other stereo phono cartridge has been so successful in satisfying the critical demands of today's sophisticated, dedicated music lovers.

But don't take our word about why 2002-e owners enjoy music more than you do: the proof is waiting at your Micro-Acoustics dealer. Or contact us for more information.

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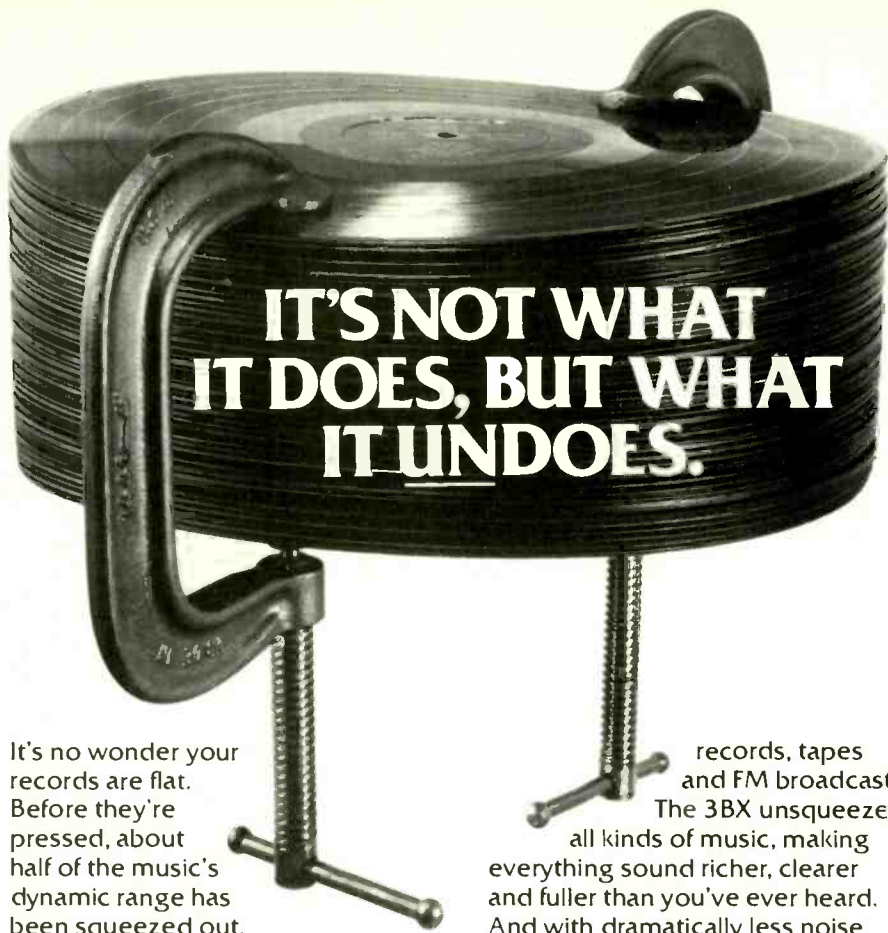
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CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Benjamin allowed himself to be caught in the wave of conglomerates buying up smaller enterprises and, in 1966, sold his business to Instrument Systems Corporation. In this period he signed a contract that moved the Lenco turntable line over from Bogen—which had begun retreating from the high fidelity market under pressure from overseas competitors. By the early 1970s, ISC had also acquired the Concord name, which was well known in home tape equipment, among other things. But Benjamin felt that the unique nature of high fidelity was not mixing well with other ISC interests, and he resigned as president of his division after six years, continuing as a consultant at the request of Elac.

In 1975 he formed Neosonic Corporation of America, which has been marketing speakers made by Audax of France. Apropos of that line, Benjamin has said, "We are still in the formative stage. We are exploring the whole speaker field, and we intend to expand the niche we have already made for ourselves by offering big sound for small spaces, using new speaker technology." Recently that expansion has moved in the direction of turntables and cassette equipment—once again, those of Lenco.

Besides his professional activities, Benjamin has a home workshop, where he loves to take things apart and put them together again. He has personally tested every product he ever made or marketed. He encourages his employees to take a similar interest, in the belief that those who sell something must be thoroughly familiar with its workings and with how it appears to the consumer.

This concern with "audience reaction" goes back years. Benjamin was one of the prime movers in founding the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers in 1954. The IHFM (now IHF) was formed mainly to take over and improve the then very popular "hi-fi shows" in major cities. He was one of its original directors, and when he became its second president, the Institute broadened its scope and launched its equipment standards activities, which resulted in the first standard for amplifier testing.

Benjamin, who enjoys all kinds of music (except acid rock), admits to being something of a frustrated musician himself. "I have played around with the guitar and the electric organ," he says, "but never developed any real proficiency with either." And at the age of fifty-nine, he maintains his enthusiasm for fine sound, something his wife, Ronnie, shares with him.

# B-I-C VENTURI.

## The art of being way ahead without being way out.

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We refer here to the not-uncommon practice of being elaborately different without being basically advanced.

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This year, the addition of new Formula 3 and Formula 6 models underscores that approach. Now there are seven B-I-C VENTURI Formulas, from a 2-way bookshelf to 4-way, monitor-equipped tower.

We offer them as the best examples of the art.



Our new Formula 6 Spec II, shown here without grille. It fills a size and design (and price) slot between the 5 and 7.

The patented B-I-C VENTURI coupled path. Its multiplier effect produces bass energy 140 times greater (and substantially purer) than the same signal measured directly at the woofer cone.

The brains of the system; the monitor control panel with Amplifier Clipping Indicator, Speaker Overload section and Dynamic Tonal Balance Compensation (automatic and manual).

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You know how  
much power you want.  
What's next in

## Sorting out

WHETHER AN AMPLIFIER is part of a receiver, an integrated amp, or a combination of separate preamp and power amp, the parameters that characterize it are the same. The most traditional of amplifier specs include frequency response, distortion, sensitivity, and signal-to-noise ratio. The overload point of the phono input is also important and is being spelled out on more and more spec sheets. And, since the preamp provides the ability to modify the tonal balance of the system via tone controls and filters, a specification of their control range and action is also important. The preamp is your switching control center, so some description of the number of inputs available, the provision for tape-to-tape dubbing, etc., is necessary if you are to ascertain the degree of flexibility afforded by the device.

Frequency response, one of the parameters common to all high fidelity components, describes the ability of the device to amplify signals of any frequency within the audio band to the same degree. Since the range of adult human hearing extends from about 30 Hz to 15 kHz, this is the *minimum* bandwidth over which a high fidelity component must remain "flat." It is generally thought that a 1-dB variation in signal level is the minimum discrepancy that can be detected by an average listener, so a response from 30 Hz to 15 kHz  $\pm \frac{1}{2}$  dB should be adequate for the typical situation.

Preamps and power amps are generally much better than this, and that is all to the good, for critical listeners can frequently distinguish between amplifiers that differ by a spread of less than 1 dB. Some manufacturers strive for an extremely wide-band response—say from 10 Hz to 100 kHz within a dB or so—on the premise that doing so provides better performance *within* the audio band. Indeed this may be, but it is not necessarily so. (Technically, whether a very wide-band amp is better within the audio band than an amp of more limited bandwidth depends on how the bandwidth of the latter is limited.)

The basic frequency response of a preamp or an integrated amp is customarily measured from one of the "high level" inputs (usually AUX). It is normally representative of the response of the other high-level inputs (TUNER, TAPE, etc.) as well. To reproduce a record properly, however, a specific



by Edward J. Foster

# Amp and Preamp Specs

equalization known as the RIAA curve must be incorporated into the magnetic PHONO preamplifier to compensate for the recording characteristic used in making the disc; perfect phono response, therefore, is not flat. Usually the actual response of the preamp in the PHONO mode is not given by the manufacturer; rather, it specifies the error tolerance of the response's deviation from the theoretical curve. Thus, this frequency-response information is interpreted in precisely the same manner as that from a high-level input, and you should look for accuracy of  $\pm \frac{1}{2}$  dB (or less) from 30 Hz to 15 kHz. This level of perfection is more difficult to achieve in the phono preamp, and spreads of  $\pm 1$  dB (or greater) are common. Although the RIAA equalization is tabulated in the standard only from 30 Hz to 15 kHz, it is possible to extrapolate the data out to 20 Hz and 20 kHz. HF, as well as many manufacturers, specifies the accuracy over this wider range.

For our test reports, the output signal level at which the frequency response is measured normally corresponds to a 2-volt output from a preamp or a 0-dBW (1-watt) output from a power amp or integrated amp.

Two types of distortion are typically measured on amplifiers: total harmonic distortion (THD) and intermodulation (IM). (A new characteristic called transient intermodulation distortion, or TIM, has been suggested as an explanation of the differences in sound quality between amplifiers that have similar steady state—THD and IM—specifications. To date, this new concept has not found wide acceptance by the audio community, but the jury is still out.) THD is a measure of all harmonics that are generated by the amplifier when handling a pure tone. (It also includes any residual noise as part of the "distortion.") IM is a measure of the "cross products" introduced by the amplifier when handling two pure tones simultaneously. Cross products are signals whose frequencies are equal to the sum and difference of the frequencies of the two pure tones. Intermodulation distortion is thought to be more audible than harmonic distortion because the extraneous signals are not musically related to the desired signals.

HF's test reports are based upon THD measurements taken at a variety of frequencies from 20 Hz

to 20 kHz and are generally presented in graphic form. On stand-alone preamps, the distortion represents the values measured at rated output level or, where no rating is stated, at 2 volts—about the maximum a preamp will be called upon to deliver. On integrated amps and power amps, the measurements are made at three different output levels: at the manufacturer's rated power, at 10 dBW (10 watts), and at 1% of (that is, 20 dB below) the manufacturer's rating. The data appear as six curves corresponding to the three sets of measurements made separately on the left and right channels.

It is not unusual to see the curves tilt upward, representing higher distortion, at the frequency extremes. (This is usually indicative of reduced feedback correction at the band edges.) Nor is it uncommon to find the distortion level at 1% of rated power greater than that at 10 dBW. This may be due to crossover distortion, but it is also possible that this merely reflects the residual noise level of the amplifier. (The latter explanation is especially likely if the low-power distortion curves are much more uniform with frequency than the higher-power curves.)

IM distortion is measured using two frequencies (60 Hz and 7 kHz) with a specific level ratio (4:1). On preamps it is checked at rated (or 2-volt) output level, while on power amps and integrated amps it is measured at various output power levels from below 0 dBW (1 watt) up to the maximum capability of the amplifier. The resulting curves plotted in HF's test reports indicate performance of the amplifier with 4-ohm, 8-ohm, and 16-ohm loads. Usually, at low power levels, the IM using a 16-ohm load is lowest and that with a 4-ohm load is highest. However, the maximum output capability of the amplifier (indicated by a sharp upward trend in the curves) is usually least with a 16-ohm load and greatest with a 4-ohm load, though internal protective circuitry may alter these relationships. As a final test of the absolute maximum output capability of a preamp or power amp, HF reports the power (or voltage) output (into a standard load) that the amplifier can deliver at its clipping point—the level at which the output can no longer reproduce accurately the extreme swings of a sine-wave input.

The sensitivity of an amplifier or preamplifier is

the minimum input signal level that can achieve a specified output level with the volume control set at maximum. (HF follows the custom of most manufacturers and specifies the sensitivity based upon the signal level required to achieve its rated output; preamp sensitivity is specified for a 2-volt output where no unequivocal rating is provided.) This figure is useful in establishing the compatibility of an amplifier with the various components supplying signals to it. Usually compatibility is assured if the rated output level of the source—be it a phono cartridge, tuner, or tape deck—exceeds the input sensitivity of the preamp or integrated amp; under these conditions you can be confident that the amplifier can deliver its full rated output if called upon to do so. Similarly, when mating a power amp to a preamp, the output capability of the preamp should be greater than the input sensitivity of the power amp.

High-level input sensitivities (AUX, TAPE, etc.) generally lie in the range of 100 to 250 millivolts, 150 millivolts being a favored figure. For any given amplifier, the sensitivity of all high-level inputs is usually the same or nearly so. Phono-input sensitivities ordinarily fall within the range between 1 and 3 millivolts, with 2.5 millivolts a common figure. These numbers are more difficult to relate to those for cartridge output because records may vary considerably in the maximum levels to which they are cut. Because of that variable—which is always subject to change as cutters improve—some manufacturers in their specs (and HF in its test reports) show output as so many millivolts per centimeter per second. If you multiply these figures by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  you will have the approximate output for a "standard level." (RIAA nominal 0 VU is a velocity of 3.54 centimeters per second in each groove wall, or 5 measured laterally, but most records contain at least some levels considerably above this reference.) The standard level can then be used as a rough guide in matching pickup output to phono-input sensitivity.

In establishing the compatibility of a preamp with a phono cartridge, one should check the phono-input overload point. With discs recorded at extremely high levels, the phono cartridge will produce a very high output—possibly sufficient to overload a very sensitive preamp. An overload point of 100 millivolts or greater *should* be adequate to handle most normal cartridges, although a higher overload point doesn't hurt. A preamp to be used with a moving-coil cartridge need not have this high an overload point since such cartridges have relatively low output voltages.

One of the most important specifications of a high fidelity component is its signal-to-noise ratio. S/N is a measure of the amount of noise introduced by the device, referred to some assumed signal level, and expressed in dB. Unfortunately, different manufacturers specify this important characteristic in different ways. Some "weight"

the noise to reflect its audibility (so-called A weighting being fairly common). Some refer the noise to a specific input (or output) level, and others (more commonly) refer it to the maximum output capability of the device. Most manufacturers measure the noise with the input shorted; some reduce the volume-control setting (often to minimum). So it is difficult to compare specs.

HF tabulates the noise characteristic of each input of an amplifier in two ways: as the S/N ratio expressed in dB and referred to the rated output, and as the residual output noise power itself, expressed in dBW. In either case, our data are based upon a broadband, unweighted noise measurement made with the input shorted and the volume at maximum.

Most preamps, integrated amps, and receivers offer some form of tone control with which you can alter the tonal balance of the system to your taste. Frequently a LOUDNESS switch also is provided. The action of these controls is difficult to characterize on a specification sheet because their effect varies with their settings. Some manufacturers display graphically the response curves that can be achieved at various settings; others specify only the maximum boost and cut that can be attained at certain frequencies (e.g.,  $\pm 10$  dB at 10 kHz for a treble control). Perhaps the best way to get an idea of what the tone controls or loudness contour of an unfamiliar amplifier will actually do for you is to use them in a dealer's showroom.

Most control sections contain high and/or low filters, also known as scratch and rumble filters. These circuits respectively reduce the response of the amplifier at the upper and lower ends of the band and so reduce the audible effects of hiss or record scratches and turntable rumble or record warps. Of course, they reduce the level of whatever music signals exist in their active region as well.

Filters are characterized by their cutoff frequency (the frequency above or below which they reduce response by more than 3 dB) and by their slope (expressed as so many dB per octave, a measure of how rapidly they reduce the response in their cutoff region). Usually slopes of 6 dB per octave are too gentle to do a very effective job; 12 and 18 dB per octave are preferred. A low-cut filter with a 12-dB slope below 15 to 30 Hz will eliminate record warp signals, which might cause an increase in loudspeaker distortion, with a negligible effect on the program content. Such a filter, whose effect is confined primarily to the range below audibility (below 20 Hz), generally is called a subsonic (or infrasonic) filter. The appropriate cutoff frequency for a high-cut filter depends upon what sort of noise you want to reduce. Again, audition is a good idea.

Damping factor is a specification applicable only to power amps (or to the power-amp section of an integrated amp or receiver). A measure of

output impedance, it indicates how well the amplifier will control the loudspeaker cone motion after the signal has ceased. Most modern amplifiers—including those in receivers—have damping factors of 40 or more, meaning that their output impedances are for practical purposes negligible. Lower damping factors may compromise speaker performance, though a few speakers may work satisfactorily with amps having damping factors as low as 10. When in doubt about the compatibility of your choices, it's best to audition the combination in advance.

Most amplifier measurements are made with pure tone signals. The square-wave photos that HF publishes give you an idea of the dynamic response of the component to a more complex signal. Theoretically, a square wave is composed of an infinite number of pure tones, each in a specific

amplitude and phase relationship with the fundamental. The 50-Hz square-wave photo usually shows some "droop" in the flat-topped portion. This indicates the limited low-frequency response and attendant phase shifts in the amplifier. An amplifier with a limited high-frequency response will usually tilt the verticals on the 10-kHz square-wave photo.

In addition to studying the numerical specifications that characterize an amplifier, and before committing to any model, carefully study the input, output, and switching specifications. If you expect to do tape-to-tape dubbing, for example, make sure there are adequate provisions for doing so. How easy is it to patch in an external equalizer, ambience simulator, or the like? Think through what real demands you will be placing on the amp, and do not buy on the basis of power alone. ●

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## Amp and Preamp Specs: A Quick Guide to the Numbers

**Frequency Response.** Within a fraction of a dB from 20 Hz to 20 kHz is "standard" these days. Greater deviation from flat (say, to -2 dB) can be tolerated below 40 Hz and/or above 10 kHz, particularly when you're shopping on a tight budget, but wider tolerance suggests corner-cutting.

**Total Harmonic Distortion.** The rule used to be: If it's above 1%, it's not high fidelity. Ratings today generally run well below 1%—0.1% is not uncommon in top equipment—and actual distortion levels in music reproduction are much lower still. Lower always is better, but not necessarily audibly better.

**Intermodulation Distortion.** This, too, is so far below the 1% "magic number" in today's equipment that it's questionable whether you'll hear it from the amp. Ratings often are 0.5% and below, actual distortion in reproducing music well below that and approaching it only on brief peaks.

**Sensitivity.** In general, the lower the number, the better; but in some circuits greater sensitivity (that is, lower numbers) also implies greater noise, so it's not advisable to go overboard here. Power-amp sensitivity should (and usually does) run about 1 volt. Something around 150 millivolts (0.15 volt) represents similar respectability in high-level (aux, tuner, tape) preamp inputs. "Ideal" sensitivity of a magnetic phono input depends on the pickup, but the range around 2.5 millivolts is good for moving-magnet types; moving-coil pickups usually need even lower figures and vary over a wider range.

**Phono overload.** High is better, perhaps, but anything above 100 millivolts can be considered adequate for all but oddball combinations.

**Signal-to-Noise Ratio.** Although differences in measurement make the numbers problematic (see text), 60 dB or more can be insisted upon as "true high fidelity." Actual numbers in some equipment may run over 100, and higher is better in this respect; but it means that a greater range of level settings can be accommodated without audible noise—not that the noise will become "even more inaudible" with the larger numbers. Because of their high gain and small input signals, phono preamp stages generally do not have as favorable S/N ratios as other circuitry.

**Filters.** Slope characteristics of 12 or 18 dB per octave are most desirable, though you'll generally find only 6 dB per octave. Turnover frequencies will depend on intended use: around 20 Hz for subsonics, around 60 Hz for rumble, anywhere from 5 to 10 kHz for hiss and scratch, depending on the filter slope. (A sharp cutoff allows a higher turnover with good noise suppression.)

**Damping Factor.** Most power-amp outputs deliver damping factors of 40 (very good) or higher; higher is better, but not much.

**Square-Wave Response.** The "squarer" the waveform looks, the better, though the factors that affect the appearance are complex and quantification of the implied performance sometimes difficult.



# Those Limited-Edition Superdiscs

Can your playback equipment measure up?

by Harold A. Rodgers

FROM TIME TO TIME certain audiophiles have lamented bitterly that the limiting factor in home music reproduction is the quality of phonograph records. Some have gone as far as to say it is a waste of money to upgrade a music system if the best one can hope to hear is accurate playback of recorded rumble, hiss, and distortion. Whatever the merits of these complaints (and in my own experience they are not without foundation), they seem to have sparked a good deal of recent fresh thinking and activity in recording studios. Specifically, they may be credited with the gestation and birth of a new kind of disc: the limited-edition audiophile record.

Certainly the fact that most discs are played back on less than optimum equipment has not been lost on the major record companies. Owners of "cheapie" systems are all too ready to label "distorted" those discs cut to levels their cartridges cannot begin to track properly. On Leonard Bernstein's recording of the Berlioz Requiem, for instance, Columbia Records' engineers had let the cutting levels run just a bit wild in order to reproduce a truly mind-shattering brass passage in the

*Tuba Mirum*. The record turned out to be playable by just a few of the most expensive phono cartridges. Sadly, it was withdrawn almost at once.

But cutting levels are not the only problem. A carefully made disc can have a signal-to-noise ratio of 65 dB or better, at least when new. The average stereo system is hard-pressed to handle the dynamic range that this permits. Most often, the soft signals are lost in the noise of playback *electronics* and loud signals are clipped to the point where the output resembles an irregular series of square waves.

Since the number of discs that could be sold to music lovers with first-class playback equipment represents a market too small for a major company (classical sales in toto run only around 4% of overall sales), signal processing—compression, peak limiting, and the like—is applied not to fit the dynamic range of the disc to the recording process, as is commonly supposed, but to tailor it to average playback equipment. It is, of course, frustrating to someone who has spent every dollar he could afford in assembling a music system with a dynamic range approaching 80 dB to find that the best pro-

gram material available will use barely half that.

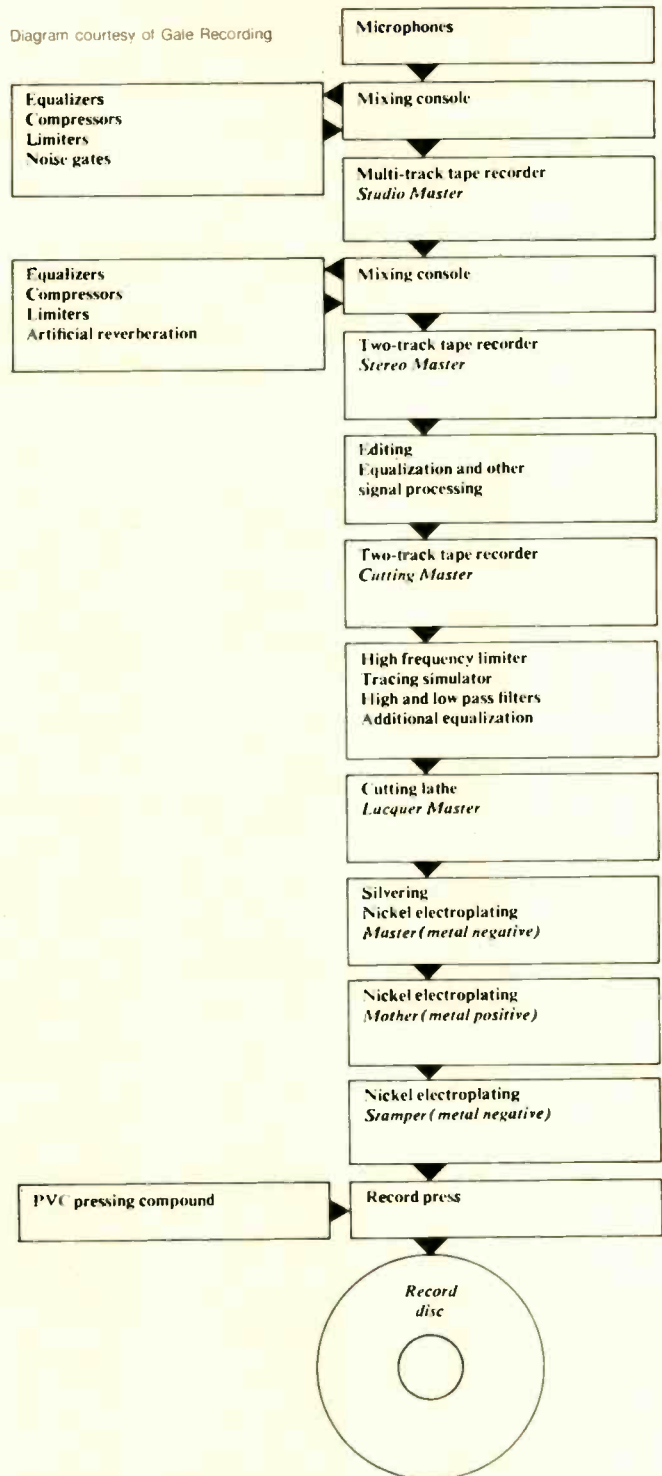
Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum apparently applies to the record market as much as to anywhere else, and so in the last couple of years a number of small independent companies, some formed especially for the purpose, have begun to offer discs with the maximum achievable dynamic range and minimum noise and distortion, leaving the playback equipment to fend for itself. Such records are obviously not mass-market items, so they are usually sold through audio salons and specialty record stores—and for premium prices, usually ranging from \$12 to \$15. In many cases, the process used in making them limits the number that can be produced, which tends to make them true collector's items.

As John Eargle pointed out in his book *Sound Recording*, the noise level of a lacquer master disc is between -75 and -83 dB, re a cutting velocity of 5.5 centimeters per second, from 1 to 20 kHz, a good deal better than most audio tape recorders can manage. Thus it is not too surprising that the tape stage used in mass record manufacture was one of the first areas to come under attack.

A normal stereo recording begins as a multi-track master tape. It is mixed down to a two-channel master that is in turn used to cut a master lacquer disc. This original is coated with a thin layer of silver and plated with nickel. The plating is stripped away and after suitable reinforcement becomes what is known as a metal master. It contains a negative image of the original; that is, it has ridges where the original has grooves. The negative master is then plated to make positive (grooved) mothers, and finally the mothers are plated to yield the stampers (with a negative, ridged image) that are used to press polyvinyl chloride discs.

The number of replications—master to mothers, mothers to stampers, stampers to pressings—is limited at every stage. If a high standard of quality is to be maintained, 50,000 discs are about all that can be produced from a single lacquer master. This is hardly a problem when there exists a master tape from which more lacquers can be cut, but it imposes limited-edition status on recordings made directly to disc.

In eliminating tape, a direct-cut disc bypasses one or more generations of hiss, modulation noise, and nonuniform group delay (phase shift, if you prefer), not to mention signal processing and conditioning, and the final product reflects this by being audibly superior. These advantages do not come free; in fact, they exact stringent demands from those making the recording—performers, producer, and engineers alike. Since discs cannot be spliced, the recorded performance will be no better than the musicians can make it in a single continuous pass; in effect, they are performing



This diagram represents the stages of a normal commercial recording as it goes from sonic source to final disc. The steps from the cutting lathe onward are essential to manufacturing and cannot be bypassed. In the purest form of direct cutting, all the stages between the first mixing console and the cutting lathe are skipped, although some direct-cut popular selections use artificial reverb and equalization. When tape is used in making audiophile discs the recorder will have four tracks at most, in which case they are mixed down to two on a tape master. The tape is edited, but signal processing is avoided (some noise reduction may be used). Most commercial classical recordings use little equalization and no reverb.

live. Also, since without tape there is no way for a computer to "know" in advance how loud the music will be and thus adjust the groove pitch (the number of grooves per inch), an engineer must perform this task manually. There is not much room for error here, as overcutting (running adjacent grooves together) irreparably ruins the entire disc and overgenerous safety margins may cause a selection to run beyond the usable part of the lacquer. Normally the musicians must assist the cutting-lathe operator by remaining consistent with their rehearsal dynamics.

If a multichannel mike pickup is used, the operator of the mixing board is under the same pressure as the performers to "do it right the first time." Musicians, of course, are used to performing live and often respond to the stress with a certain extra excitement in the music-making.

Right now direct cutting is considered the charismatic way to record. Discs are available from companies such as Crystal Clear Records, Inc. (which, to reduce distortion yet further, records twelve-inch discs at 45 rpm). Direct Disk Company (which has avoided the use of conventional pan pots by close-miking instruments with a stereo pickup for each), M&K Sound, Nautilus Recordings, Sheffield Records (which helped to pioneer the present direct process), Telarc Records (makers of the first modern direct recording of a symphony), Umbrella, and Direkt to Disk. And new sources are appearing all the time.

But direct cutting is not universally acknowledged as the best way to make a quality disc. Gale Records of England uses a high-quality two-channel tape machine for the original recording and adheres to rigorous quality control in the ensuing manufacture. Founder Ira Gale feels that tape is advantageous in that the classical recordings he stresses in his catalog can be edited to give letter-perfect performances. Seeking the most natural sense of ambience, the company confines itself to as limited a number of mike clusters as possible in the original pickup; there is no panning and no mixdown.

Reference Recordings, an Oakland company headed by Edward M. Long, for many years a respected figure in audio circles, also uses tape but cuts the lacquer master within hours of the original taping and similarly plates the lacquer master as soon as possible, retiring both from further use. This is to circumvent the rapid degradation Long and his associates feel occurs as the tape and lacquer age.

Denon Records of Japan uses a digitally encoded tape to record the original performance, thus eliminating the nonlinearities of tape and giving a prodigious signal-to-noise ratio. To prevent spurious frequencies ("alias" signals) from being generated, an extremely sharp high-cut filter must be used to eliminate any frequencies beyond 20 kHz. None-

theless, Denon's Pulse Code Modulation process is a close rival to the direct-cut method in resulting quality.

Not all audiophile-disc makers eschew signal processing. Audiophile Records and Celia Records, a German company, are using Burwen noise-reduction equipment to process tapes, which are said to have a resulting dynamic range of more than 100 dB. Noise performance should approach that of a direct cut. Some labels—notably Klavier Records—have experimented with DBX encoding of the disc's signals. Since such an approach requires specialized decoding equipment for playback, however, these discs fall somewhat beyond the scope of this discussion. Audio Labs and Three Blind Mice, two Japanese specialty labels, also use DBX processing, but only to ensure quiet tapes. The encoding is reversed prior to cutting of the disc, making a consumer decoder unnecessary. Both of these outfits take special care in microphone placement and mixing in order to produce a realistic acoustic image. Three Blind Mice, incidentally, is devoted solely to jazz.

Golden Crest has experimented with processed and unprocessed recording and is willing to give the adventurous audiophile the opportunity to compare the results for himself. Two discs of the same program, a piano recital by Grant Johanne- sen, are available together. The first has been directly cut all the way; the second uses a tape made with the Telefunken c4 noise-reduction system for Side 1 and a Dolby-A processed tape for Side 2.

It is possible, then, to find discs that match or even exceed the capabilities of fine playback equipment. The number is small as yet and the choice of music and artists limited, but the field is expanding rapidly. At the moment, many audiophiles are buying premium discs not primarily for the music on them, but as test records. Certainly, whatever music the discs contain, dealers are selling as many as they can get.

Will the existence of specialty audiophile records have any effect on the major companies? To the extent that the body of a dog reacts to the wagging of his tail, the answer is yes—but the effects will probably be indirect. Insofar as state-of-the-art records encourage the public to upgrade playback equipment, the majors are likely to (cautiously) introduce more demanding discs. After all, superior sound is to their commercial advantage too, as long as the market is reasonably large. The majors still are committed to multitracking and the flexibility it offers in recording and editing. Yet, already, at least one major domestic company—long associated with multiple miking, pan-pot mixdowns, and the like—is negotiating for the right to press and release an independently made dual-mike recording. That is a surprise—and a big one. ●

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Kovalyov with and without: scenes from the Moscow Chamber Opera's 1974 staging, with Akimov and Ukolova.

THIS INGENUOUS PIECE of stylized music theater, which can fairly be said to assault the listener with the thrust of its invention and imaginative content, has experienced an even longer languishment than Shostakovich's other completed opera, *Katerin a Ismailova*, and at least in part for similar reasons.

The composer began work on *The Nose* in 1926, when he was just twenty, and a score was published in lithograph in 1928. He drew his libretto from the story of the same name by Gogol, but his vision seems to have derived on the musical side from contemporaneous German excitements, and on the theatrical from the work of Meyerhold's company. Operas of Berg and the youthful Krenek, as well as other music of the Germanic avant-garde, had been heard in Leningrad in the '20s, and while it is always over-easy for a latter-day ear to dictate ascriptions of cause, we must at the least acknowledge correlations: Harmonies, structures, and colors associated with Berg, Krenek, Hindemith, and Schoenberg have been remarked by previous discoverers of *The Nose*—Weill, even Varèse, could be added to the lineup if we are looking for descriptive associations rather than stylistic genealogies.

As for Meyerhold, Shostakovich was working directly with him at this period. By the time *The Nose* was produced, the composer had already contributed the incidental score for Meyerhold's production of Mayakovsky's *The Bedbug*. More important, he had had the opportunity of repeatedly examining the famous Meyerhold adaptation of Gogol's *The Government Inspector*, with its sharply stylized acting techniques, its montagelike scenic sequence and lighting design, and its elaborate musical scoring that painstakingly related the instrumental interludes and underscoring with the vocal usages of the principals.

Shostakovich's *Bedbug* music had aroused a good deal of hostile reaction, much of it based on consideration of Revolutionary political aesthetic. *The Nose*, finally premiered in 1930 after a number of test

## The New Releases



Arzola-Eurodisc

## The Nose: Explosively Imaginative Music Theater

Gennady Rozhdestvensky  
and the Moscow Chamber Opera  
mount "a brilliant ensemble  
effort" for Shostakovich's  
trailblazing opera.

by Conrad L. Osborne

readings, previews, explanations, and debates, created a more serious furor. It was withdrawn under fire after fourteen performances, prefiguring the fate of *Lady Macbeth of the Mzensk District* (the first version of *Katerina*) a few years later. It did not resurface in the Soviet Union until 1974, when the Moscow Chamber Opera mounted the production, directed by Boris Pokrovsky, on which the current recording is based.

Meanwhile, the piece has shown life, in fits and starts, in the West. Universal Edition, Vienna, issued a German-language vocal score in 1962 and a libretto in 1963, and presumably furnished the parts for the productions that popped up in a number of Western opera houses in the ensuing years (the leaflet that accompanies the Eurodisc package mentions Düsseldorf and Frankfurt; the work has also been staged in Antwerp, Santa Fe, Florence, and Rome). Though the piece has succeeded with both audience and critics on several of these occasions, these productions have remained special events rather than introductions into repertory.



Boris Pokrovsky and Gennady Rozhdestvensky

*The Nose* was one of the last of Gogol's Petersburg stories, and shares its tone and much of its subject matter with such pieces as *The Carriage* and *Nevsky Prospekt* (the latter, in fact, even includes a brief contemplation on the matter of nose removal). It deals with a certain Kovalyov, civil servant of moderate rank and self-styled major, who discovers one morning that his nose is missing. At first, the nose is merely an inconvenience by way of not remaining in its proper place—it is found by Kovalyov's loutish barber in his breakfast breadloaf, and the barber guiltily disposes of it by throwing it off a bridge. Soon, however, the nose becomes *The Nose*, a humanoid who apparently also belongs to the civil service and who avails himself of the privileges and airs that attach to the station. In a scene that was suppressed by censor when the story first appeared (in *The Contemporary Review*, Pushkin's literary quarterly, in 1836), Kovalyov actually confronts *The Nose* in the Kazan Cathedral. Rumor soon has it that *The Nose* is seen in

various public settings in Petersburg, creating a considerable turmoil among the populace. Meanwhile, Kovalyov, increasingly humiliated and desperate, seeks first to involve the police, then to place a classified ad for return of the nose and correct public understanding of the circumstances. But the police cannot be bothered, and the advertising clerk cannot accept the propriety of running a notice for a nose amongst his help-wanted and lost-and-found items.

*The Nose* is at last apprehended, quite fortuitously, while attempting to leave the capital by stagecoach. Only the nose will not adhere to the smooth, flat surface now in the center of Kovalyov's face. Having solicited the constabulary and the press, Kovalyov now turns to medicine, in the form of a doctor who lives downstairs. But the doctor can do nothing but mumble silly platitudes and moralities, though he does make Kovalyov a considered offer for the nose to add to his specimen collection. Kovalyov exhausts the possibilities of his limited world view by attempting to blame the Widow Podtochina, who wishes to marry her daughter to Kovalyov—her witchcraft must be responsible. This rationale also fails, whereupon the nose returns to Kovalyov's face as suddenly and senselessly as it had left.

Shostakovich's libretto sets this brief narrative quite straightforwardly, the opera's happenings being virtually identical with those of the story. The dialogue is for the most part transferred directly from Gogol's, or from some of the story's narrative into the mouths of the stage characters. A few of the incidents related at second hand in the story are brought on-stage in the opera (such as the viewing of *The Nose* in a garden by the Persian Khan Chirson Mirza), but the only extended instance is the scene of the downfall of *The Nose*. In Gogol, this is described in barest terms by the arresting police officer: *The Nose* is boarding the coach for Riga, dressed as a gentleman and furnished with a civil servant's passport. Happily, the nearsighted police officer is wearing his glasses at the time, and upon inspection recognizes the gentleman as a nose. But in Shostakovich, the scene at the post-station on the Petersburg outskirts becomes one of the longest and most complex in the work, involving a platoon of cartoon police and their hysterical commander, a sleeping coachman, a pretzel vendor who is virtually gang-raped by the police, a kvetching old matron and her charges, and various travelers and passersby. Everyone is on the alert for brigands who are presumed to be about, and when *The Nose* makes an obtrusive effort to board the departing coach, he is taken for a cutthroat. A riotous panic ensues. *The Nose* is severely beaten, and escapes only by reverting to his natural-born nosedom.

The addition of this scene, plus the sequence showing the foolish crowd reactions to the shifting nonappearances of *The Nose*, enabled Shostakovich to arrive at a different, hopefully more stageworthy balance than that of the story—while he loses nothing of Gogol's satirical comment on individual character, he is able to compound in a theatrically visible way the sort of social background Gogol slipped in with a twist of phrase here, a parenthetical note there. The piece thus suggests the sort of satirical perception that has always landed Russian operawrights, playwrights, and authors in trouble,

for the reality they often attempt to show embraces not only the sadistic and corrupt uses of authority, the preening conceits and pomposities of the upper, not-quite-upper, and nouveau-upper classes, but the ignorance, boorishness, and led-by-the-nose slavishness of the common folk.

The sociopolitical problem is seen as an interaction, almost a collusion, between ruler and subject, upper and lower class. Even seeming reversals in power structures do not have much impact—they only put new institutional labels on the old bottles, new individual faces on the old mannequins. Such a stance is apparent in the satiric elements of the operatic Rimsky-Korsakov and in the more "serious" crowd scenes of Mussorgsky's *Boris* and *Khovanshchina* (and even there, ironic touches are not altogether absent). For the artist with this perception (it is one shared by a high proportion of Russia's important literary, theatrical, and musical figures and when they palliate it they cripple their work), it is a no-win situation, for the viewpoint is acceptable to neither the reactionary nor the revolutionary authoritarian mentality.

Considering the minimum of rearrangement from Gogol's own sequence, the scenario developed by Shostakovich is remarkably well adapted to the sort of music theater he sought to create. The scenes, mostly short ones, move rapidly. Early in the piece, very brief scenes are connected musically by fairly extended orchestral interludes; as the work proceeds, the scenes grow longer and the interludes shorter, and musical demarcations are replaced by visual ones. Some scenes overlap, others pile on one another with not so much as a beat's rest. Supporting characters (there are upwards of forty roles) appear and disappear without preparation and are intended to establish themselves immediately and definitively through the highly physical techniques studied by performers of the Meyerholdian persuasion, supported by the precise alignments of the music and the elements of physical production (costume, set, and light design and execution). It is through studying Meyerhold that we can best grasp the sort of experience Shostakovich was trying to create—and it is through listening to the Shostakovich of *The Nose* that we can gain our sharpest insight into the flavor, the tone, of the Meyerholdian theater.

The score is a most astonishing creation. The aspect of the writing that will strike new listeners most immediately is the instrumentation, including the vocal distribution. The orchestra called for is basically a chamber ensemble, but with an expanded percussion and percussive-string aggregation that includes harp, piano, xylophone, timpani, bass drum, side drums including snares and tom-toms, tam-tam, tambourine, castanets, ratchet, balalaikas, musical saw or some close relative—and no doubt I've missed a few. The brass and woodwind complements include the extreme high and low instrumental variations. There are also some strings, which even lay in a bowed phrase here and there, a fantastical effect in this context. The writing is soloistic almost throughout, and mutes do not get much of a workout.

An incredible range of teeth-rattling effects is secured by the composer's use of this array, especially in the orchestral interludes; in the first act, the or-

chestra sweeps the listener from one grotesque aural tableau to the next without a pause for breath, and before there is a moment to consider, the fracturing of reality necessary to acceptance has been accomplished.

The vocal setting plays a strong accomplice role in the creation of this particular theatrical reality. Basically, Shostakovich's handling of the singing line rests within the Russian tradition initiated by Dargomizhsky's *Stone Guest* and extended through much of Mussorgsky's writing, rather than that upheld by Glinka, Tchaikovsky, and the bulk of Rimsky—that is, it is musicalized speech-setting, not song. The catch is that where Dargomizhsky and Mussorgsky sought a species of operatic realism, Shostakovich screws up his settings to a level of rather ghastly distortion, and more or less leaves it there. Almost without exception, his singers are driven repeatedly to the tops of their respective compasses; only the low-voiced characters representative of passivity, indifference, routinization, or self-pitying decrepitude (the Advertising Clerk, the Doc-



The composer at a Moscow Chamber Opera performance

tor, the Matron) escape this treatment. The Police Officer hardly descends below the break, carrying quite often beyond the top C (to E natural, in fact) and employing a tasty selection of falsetto usages, both reinforced and detached (these are not indicated in the Universal vocal score, but since Shostakovich participated in preparation of the recording, we must assume them part of his intent); among tenor settings of my acquaintance, only the Captain in *Wozzeck* is comparable, for this writing is not related to the more integrated sort of extreme high tenor indicated by such a role as the Astrologer in Rimsky's *Golden Cockerel*, to say nothing of hoarier bel canto practice.

Shostakovich, when assailed on this point by prole critics, defended himself on the realistic premise—the Police Officer, fevered authoritarian that he is, habitually yells at the top of his voice. A plausible argument, until we consider that *The Nose* ("nasal tenor") conducts affectedly dignified conversation at

comparable altitude, that Kovalyov's servant Ivan screams his silly folk-love-song largely on B flat and B natural, that minor female characters (the barber's horrid wife, the Pretzel Vendor—even the nubile Podtochin daughter, who otherwise indulges in mock-Tatiana-isms) find themselves making exclamatory noises on or about high C. A bit more consideration is granted the singer of Kovalyov, which is by far the most extended role, but even his writing inclines toward extension at the top end, and it's hardly cantabile.

The message conveyed by this sort of treatment is that there is little valid distinction to be made between the normal and the abnormal, between the everyday and the miraculous, between the foible we can indulge and the compulsion that can destroy. Perfectly everyday exchanges and observations are recited calmly at the absolute limit of physical capacity (and it is one of the triumphs of the Moscow performers that they convey this sense of acceptance of the near-impossible): a visit to the barber, the placing of a routine ad, a stroll on the Nevsky Prospekt, are at once perfectly recognizable, ordinary events and happenings of the most bizarre, traumatic nature—as continues to be true of, for instance, a walk around Times Square, a period of waiting at the hospital emergency room, or correspondence with the IRS.

The harmonic language of *The Nose* is considerably more adventurous than that of most of the composer's succeeding works, and more than any other single element reflects the Western influences that no doubt fueled the criticisms of the work's detractors. Melodic leading in the traditional sense is of course distinctly subsidiary in the fabric of the score, but formal development of motivic materials, without illustrative reference to stage events, is prominent. "Constructivist" is the damning construal of the time. All these musical elements combine with the quasi-montage elements of the scenario to create in theatrical terms the disorientation of time apprehension so important to the story's structure: The audience experiences the discovery of the nose before Kovalyov misses it and realizes it has been recaptured while Kovalyov is still bemoaning his fate; the populace scurries hither and yon for a glimpse of the wonder that has already vanished, if it was ever there; Kovalyov celebrates the nose's return while the crowd continues its search.

Altogether, *The Nose* impresses me as a most extraordinary achievement, a complete and unified exploration not only of its subject, but of a still only hinted-at music-theater genre, composed of what we would usually consider disparate and even contradictory elements. Because of its performance demands and the absence in the entire Western operatic world of the sort of company that might prove adaptable to the piece (the Minnesota Opera is the only American company that would seem at all qualified to tackle it), the work will probably continue to be a special-occasion, festival item—but this argues against reigning performance conditions, not against the work.

In this regard, I have nothing but admiration (and, as a Western commentator, envy) for the performance represented on the Melodiya recording. In an

era when the bulk of the more traditional Russian repertoire has been recorded in bad stereo by the most august Soviet institutions in studio-ish performances that are artistically slovenly and exhausted-sounding (there are a few exceptions, like the Melodiya/Angel *Khovanshchina*), the young Moscow Chamber Opera has produced a brilliant ensemble effort that carries an in-house urgency right into the living room (though this is a studio, not a "live," recording). "Ensemble" in that the company shares a vivid and exact vision of the piece and, obviously, a relevant rehearsal technique: "brilliant" in that the individual roles have been exactly cast and are executed with artistic commitment and technical aplomb.

We have a major conductor, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, operating at the top of his form in an idiom he thoroughly comprehends, with an orchestra that does not commit a false or indifferent move. The role of Kovalyov—by far the most extended in the work—is magnificently rendered by dramatic baritone Eduard Akimov. In purely aural terms, he captures the full measure of the character's social and sexual compensations (the sexual undertones of all this are rampant, but that's a whole separate essay), his pathetic preening and sentimentalities, his ugly but impotent rantings. He is truly funny, at moments actually touching, and his potent, wide-ranged voice is a major instrument put entirely and spontaneously at the service of this very demanding part—a rare achievement.

Among the others, no voices are disclosed that one would fancy hearing in an *Igor* or an *Onegin*, but all of them, down to the two- and three-line bits and spoken parts, produce the required effects with vocal energy and no-nonsense musical exactitude. I trust they are all participating in multitudinous repeat performances, with suitable periods of paid Black Sea vacation and such surgery as may be from time to time deemed prudent. It is true that Aleksandr Lomonosov, who sings *The Nose*, does not observe some of the quieter dynamics marked or inject much nasality into his almost heroic tone, and that Boris Tarkhov, the Police Officer, sometimes uses weaker falsetto coordinations than seem intended. But the

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### And now the bad news. . . .

As Mr. Osborne indicates, his review of the Melodiya recording of *The Nose* is based on the edition issued by Eurodisc, the West German Melodiya licensee. As we go to press, the hoped-for domestic release by Columbia, the U.S. Melodiya licensee, is stalled by a dispute over U.S. publishing rights to the libretto. While Columbia itself has no part in that dispute, it is unable to proceed until the copyright question is resolved.

Pending domestic release, it is the German edition—copies of which have been imported by German News Company—that is most accessible here. Collectors with good import sources, however, have alternatives: the French edition (*Chant du Monde* LDX 78 609/10) or, especially desirable for its English-language package, the British one (HMV/Melodiya SLS 5088).

K.F.

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demands are almost inhuman, and in any case the composer evidently concurred in the results.

The engineering is less than ideal, but is a good, straightforward job of better-than-average Soviet standard. Everything is recorded with a close-to immediacy that is quite exciting in the interludes and, God knows, never dim. It is free from distortion or fuzziness, and the editing has been good. But there is little use of stereo space, and no staging to speak of—the theatricality has been created by the performers, not the producers (far better this, I rush to note, than the more familiar reverse situation).

The Eurodisc pressings are excellent, but in this regard I must enter a caveat: This package includes a libretto in German only, and a leaflet whose only English-language material is a competent translation of a historical note on the opera by Fred K. Prieberg. This last is satisfactory so far as it goes, but includes no synopsis or other guide to the piece itself. This is a work that absolutely requires detailed comprehen-

sion of the text for its appreciation; pending release of Columbia's domestic package, therefore, I must regretfully recommend this fascinating work and splendid performance only to those collectors whose German (seconded, I would suggest, by a reading of the Gogol, which is available in several paperback collections) is at an at least reasonably advanced level.

**SHOSTAKOVICH: The Nose, Op. 15.**

Aleksandra Grigorievna Podtochina	The Nose	Aleksandr Lomonosov (t)
Ludmila Sapegina (ms)	Ivan	Boris Drushinin (t)
Her Daughter	Ludmila Ukolova (s)	Platon Kuzmich Kovalyov
Praskovya Ossipovna	Nina Sasulova (s)	Eduard Akimov (b)
	Ludmila Sokolenko (s)	Ivan Yakovievich
Pretzel Vendor	Lilyana Gavriluk (a)	An Advertising Clerk
An Elegant Matron	Boris Tarkhov (t)	Valery Solovyanov (bs)
A Police Officer		Ashchot Sarkisov (bs)

Other soloists; Moscow Chamber Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. [Severin Pazukhin, prod.] MELODIYA/EURODISC 89 502 XFR (two discs, manual sequence, see note).

by Harris Goldsmith

## Dvořák Plain vs. Dvořák Fancified

*Sviatoslav Richter's recordings  
of the Dvořák piano concerto argue  
persuasively for the composer's  
unadorned original solo part.*



DVOŘÁK'S PIANO CONCERTO, composed in 1876, is one of the first mature works to come from his pen. At age thirty-five, he had already written five of his nine symphonies and had even tried his hand at a concerted work—an early Cello Concerto in A, composed eleven years before (and not to be confused with) the magnificent B minor Concerto of 1895.

The piano concerto was written on commission for Karel Slavkovský, pupil of Dreyschock and himself an influential virtuoso. Some have expressed surprise that Dvořák, a serviceable pianist but primarily a violinist and violist, devised the bravura keyboard part without consulting Slavkovský, and indeed the gestation process was evidently an arduous one: The Artia published score contains a fascinating appendix documenting some of the many revisions the composer made in his own piano part.

The work has had a decidedly mixed press. Alec Robertson has written that Dvořák "weighed out his ingredients fairly accurately, but mixed them with the heavy hand of an inexperienced cook." Others, capti-

vated by the lovely melodies and cogent formal dimensions, have expressed disappointment in the piano writing, which—in the words of one wag—"calls for a pianist with two right hands." Actually, there is a great kinship between the keyboard part of the concerto and those in Dvořák's chamber works. (Unison passages for two hands, incidentally, are also to be found in Schubert's trios and *Trout Quintet*.) Critics of the work have claimed that Dvořák had intended to thoroughly revise it, but I have found no evidence of this.

Granted, there are a few passages in the solo part that don't project over the orchestration as they might have with a composer of the Chopin, Schumann, or Liszt persuasion. Yet Dvořák's piano writing here is thoroughly capable—the few gaucheries notwithstanding—and certainly there is little justification for the full-scale revision undertaken in 1919 by Vilém Kurz. Kurz thickened textures, harmonized single melody notes, turned tiny decorations into garish ones, redistributed passagework, added inter-

locking octaves, and in sum introduced an element of sophisticated virtuosity that clashes with the folkish purity of the original. This is the Dvořák piano concerto as Scharwenka or Anton Rubinstein might have written it—certainly “effective,” but decidedly anachronistic.

The concerto is finally coming into the active repertory, thanks in large measure to two pianists, Rudolf Firkusny and Sviatoslav Richter. Pride of place, in fairness, must go to Firkusny, who has been crusading for the work at least since he played it at his 1941 American debut, with the New York Philharmonic under Sir Thomas Beecham; he has recorded it no fewer than three times. Richter too played the concerto on his first U.S. visit (with Ormandy), and also with Kondrashin and the London Symphony when he went to Great Britain and at the Prague Spring Festival in the late 1960s. I have been hoping for a Richter recording since I heard a broadcast of the enchanting London performance, and now suddenly there are two of them: an Angel studio recording with the Bavarian State Orchestra under Carlos Kleiber and a Rococo air check of the Kondrashin/LSO performance.

In one important way, textual authenticity, Richter's advocacy has furthered the music's cause even more than did Firkusny's. Even so, Richter's Angel recording is not, as the annotation claims, the first to offer the concerto unrevised; the very first LP version—by Friedrich Wührer and Rudolf Moralt, for Vox—also did. In his early years with the work Firkusny, a onetime Kurz pupil, not only employed the rewritten solo part, but made substantial cuts in the outer movements. Richter has consistently performed the uncut and unadorned original. Over the years Firkusny has dispensed with the cuts and has increasingly reverted to Dvořák's own text, and his most recent recording (with Walter Susskind and the St. Louis Symphony, in Vox QSVBX 5135, May 1976) is to all intents and purposes the original, lapsing into Kurz only once or twice—e.g., in the first-movement cadenza and in the lead-in to the same movement's recapitulation. His first recording (with Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, for Columbia) was almost wholly Kurz, and his first remake (with László Somogyi and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, now on Westminster Gold WGS 8165) still contained a fair amount of Kurz.

Ironically, those “impurists” who want “pure Kurz” will have to track down a Czech recording, the long unavailable Supraphon by František Maxian and Václav Talich, Michael Ponti's Turnabout performance (TV-S 34539) comes pretty close but—like the Firkusny/Szell—knocks itself out of this contest with a few reversions to the original and, more seriously, with the same huge cut in the first movement. (The Turnabout finale, however, is complete.) Justus Frantz's two recordings (Musical Heritage MHS 3025 and Columbia M 33889), like the differently blended Firkusny/Somogyi, offer a half-and-half synthesis of Kurz and Dvořák. Frantz's performances sound particularly gaudy because, in addition to using some of Kurz's harmonic “enrichments,” he cavalierly disregards many dynamic and tempo markings—both Dvořák's and Kurz's. He simply mauls the first movement's second theme on its recapitulation.

One reason I have dealt at length with the problem of texts is the likelihood that many listeners, critics among them, have unwittingly accepted the inappropriately amplified sounds of the Kurz reworking as their norm. In May 1976, for instance, Abram Chipman found the Ponti record “idiomatically played, transparently and spaciously recorded” and noted that Frantz (in the Columbia performance) “articulates every run, every cadenzalike bit of Lisztian note-spinning with brittle clarity,” but he found the Firkusny/Susskind disappointing, for all its “mastery of the work's expressive content and formal contours.”

I find Richter's studio recording a bit disappointing, but for a quite different reason: the ready availability of the earlier broadcast for comparison. In the far superior-sounding new performance Richter does retain his impressive crystalline, prismatically colored sonority and—for the most part—his unpretentious simplicity of outlook. Moreover, he has in Kleiber, as he had in Kondrashin, a sympathetic partner. The orchestral framework has warmth, temperament, aristocratic purity of sound, and rhythmic control.

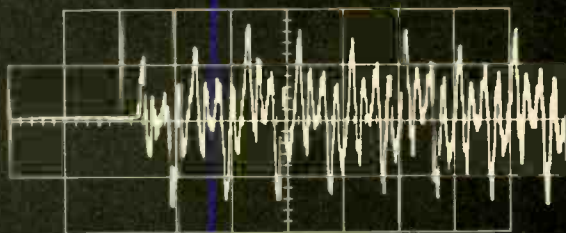
And yet the result is less impressive. I detect, as I did in Richter's recent recordings of the Schumann and Grieg concertos (Angel S 36899, December 1975), a certain calcification of phrase-shaping, an unwelcome metrical constraint that prevents the music from flowing as freely as it formerly did. Such problems are bound to show up in a work like this one, since there are sections, particularly in the outer movements, where Dvořák settles into some rather foursquare sequential development. In the Kondrashin version Richter allowed the tempo to accelerate slightly, and the problem was eliminated with total success: in the new performance, the tempo remains impeccably steady, and the effect is a bit dogged. Nor is the pianist as commanding as before in the passage at bars 41–46 of the slow movement: The older performance's fabulously graded diminuendos and sharp acuity of phrasing are replaced by a blander, stouter kind of emphasis that seems commonplace by comparison.

The Rococo issue, given its run-of-the-mill sound (not even the best obtainable from the on-location source material), is less a rival than a supplement to the “official” Richter recording and the Firkusny/Susskind, though it does make one regret that Richter waited so long to make his studio recording. Between those two competitors, the new Angel has a slim edge in performance and engineering over the Vox, which lacks only that last degree of tonal distinction that Richter conveys even when he is at less than his inspired best. The Vox, however, is at least as spaciously reproduced and actually more impressively mastered—and a good deal less expensive.

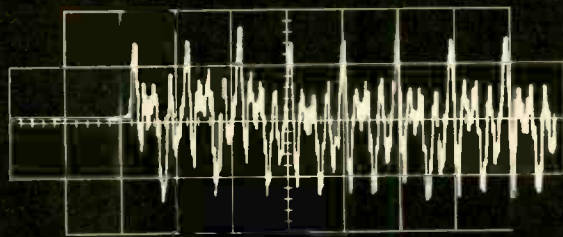
**DVOŘÁK:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 33. Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Bavarian State Orchestra, Carlos Kleiber, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL S 37239, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

**DVOŘÁK:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 33. Sviatoslav Richter, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. ROCOCO 2118, \$7.95 (mono) [recorded in concert, c. 1961] (Rococo Records, Box 3275, Station D, Willowdale, Ont. M2R 3G6, Canada).

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CIRCLE 9 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**BACH:** Brandenburg Concertos (6), S. 1046-51. Leonhardt Consort, Gustav Leonhardt, cond. ABC CLASSICS/SEON AB 67020/2, \$19.95 (two discs plus facsimile scores).

*Comparison:*  
Harnoncourt/Vienna Concentus Musicus Tel. 26.35043

It's like comparing apples and oranges to set this newcomer against any *Brandenburg* edition except that by Harnoncourt and his Vienna Concentus Musicus. Even the Collegium Aureum set (Victrola VICS 6023), though roughly categorizable as an "original instrument" version, falls short of using all baroque strings. The difference in the sound produced by those baroque violins and violas and violones is instantaneously apparent, though hard to describe in words other than "quaint." Moreover, the instruments are tuned to baroque pitch, something like a half step lower than the current norm.

I have always felt that Harnoncourt's group, at the dawn of its recording career when the *Brandenburgs* were done, had only partly mastered the old instruments, in particular the brasses: technically and expressively it has come a long way since. Leonhardt, another authentic-instrument pioneer, has also grown over the years, happily moving away from the "sewing machine" school of Bach interpretation. Here he leads his fine Dutch ensemble in performances that are vibrantly taut in both rhythm and articulation, yet also flexibly phrased, richly detailed, and executed with patrician assurance.

In the two F major Concertos (well, make that E major if you're listening with "modern ears"), Nos. 1 and 2, the brass-and-wind mix in the scoring evidently demands all of Leonhardt's energies at the podium, so Bob van Asperen is at the keyboard. (Leonhardt directs from the harpsichord in the four remaining works.) No. 1 gets a bracing reading, with crisply dotted rhythm wherever appropriate, so different from Harnoncourt's prevalent flaccidity. Oboist Paul Dombrecht shades his dynamics most creatively in the Adagio, the sublimely tragic quality of which is realized as well as it ever has been on discs. The same intensity of expression keeps the recurrent Menuet from outlasting its welcome. Though I prefer Leonhardt by a hairsbreadth in No. 2, I am drawn even more to the Collegium Aureum version for its wonderful recorder/trumpet team of Hans-Martin Linde and Edward Tarr. (And, in truth, this is one work where the higher modern pitch changes the character notably toward the requisite brilliance.)

None of the original-instrument en-

#### Explanation of symbols

##### Classical:

- B** Budget
- H** Historical
- R** Reissue

##### Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- ◐ 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

# Classical

reviewed by ROYAL S. BROWN

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 SHIRLEY FLEMING  
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 SUSAN THIEMANN SOMMER

Mrs. H. H. A. Beach  
*Her music rescued from  
 undeserved oblivion*



sembles inserts a "conjectural" slow movement into No. 3; they all offer a few measures of violin cadenza with the Phrygian chords. Leonhardt's strings maintain proudly surging momentum, transparent textures, and crisply articulated sixteenth-note runs in the closing Allegro, next to which the Concentus Musicus' are smooth and muddy.

In No. 4 the primary difference occurs in the slow movement. Harnoncourt elongates the first note of phrases and nearly obliterates the rests later in the measure, creating a rocking siciliano-like rhythm. Leonhardt is more strict about written note values.

Neither group adds a string bass instrument to the continuo in the middle movement of No. 5. Again, Leonhardt has the edge in drive and vitality, his playing of the first-movement cadenza having gained in excitement since his performance with the Collegium Aureum. In that same movement, flutist Frans Brügger (who is heard on first-recorder parts elsewhere in the set) may startle many listeners by omitting the customary trills on the modulating whole notes from measures 95 to 100. In fact, there are no trills in the autograph score.

No. 6 loses none of its deeply melancholy beauty with baroque violas substituted for modern instruments. Sigiswald Kuijken and Lucy van Dael are Leonhardt's outstanding violists. Note the slow-starting (but increasing in velocity) manner of doing trills in the slow movement.

In performance terms, then, the balance sheet plainly favors the Leonhardt *Brandenburgs*. To clinch matters, the ABC/Seon sonics are warm, clean, and firmly focused, without the slight stridency and overloading I find on the Concentus Musicus set. Furthermore, Telefunken clumsily lays out the works so that the two longest concertos, Nos. 1 and 5, have side breaks—easily avoided on the ABC and many other versions. While the bargain price of the Collegium Aureum adds to that set's attractiveness to people not insistent on completely authentic sonority, I should point out that ABC's hefty premium price is justified by nothing less than bonus provision of a complete reproduction of the autograph score. A.C.

**B** **BEACH:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 45. **D. G. MASON:** Prelude and Fugue for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 20. Mary Louise Boehm, piano; Westphalian Symphony Orchestra, Siegfried Landau, cond. TURNABOUT QTV-S 34665, \$3.98 (QS-encoded disc).

There seems to be a minor Beach boom in the making. The fact of the matter is that her C sharp minor Piano Concerto, composed in 1900 and dedicated to Teresa Carreño, is a very impressive piece in the romantic idiom that can easily stand comparison with any of the grandiose solo vehicles of the day. It was an immediate

success when the composer played it with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1900, and she later performed it with orchestras in Chicago, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Berlin, Leipzig, and Hamburg. Its vogue ended in 1917, when it appeared on a Boston Symphony program, and to the best of my knowledge it was not heard again until 1976, when it was reintroduced by Mary Louise Boehm with the American Symphony in New York in a performance conducted by Morton Gould.

One wonders why so effective a concerto fell into oblivion and, for that matter, why all of Amy Beach's music disappeared from sight. Mrs. Beach was an extraordinary individual and a very skillful and (at times) inspired composer. Born in 1867 in Henniker, New Hampshire, she was a precocious youngster. She began composing music when she was only four years old. She was essentially an autodidact and taught herself theory and orchestration from the treatises by Gevaert and Berlioz (translating them into English in the process), and she began performing publicly at the age of seven. When she was sixteen, she appeared with the BSO as soloist in the Moscheles E flat major Piano Concerto. Unlike many of the "Boston classicists," she did not feel that it was essential for her to go to Europe to complete her musical education—she stayed right here.

Then, at the age of eighteen, she married a prominent Boston surgeon and, from that moment on, insisted on being called Mrs. H. H. A. Beach. Amy M. Cheney disappeared.

*spurlös versenkt*. I have a hunch that, in the long run, that unfortunate name—in my college days everybody referred to her as Mrs. "Haha" Beach—did very little to help her reputation as a serious composer, and after she disappeared from the scene as a performer it hastened the speed with which her music was forgotten.

Since Mrs. Beach brought Carreño into the picture, comparison with Edward MacDowell's two piano concertos is almost inevitable. I would say that in many ways her concerto is a finer work than MacDowell's early A minor Concerto, which so astonished Liszt, and is at least as impressive as his D minor Concerto, upon which most of his reputation as the best American composer of his time was based.

The thirty-five-minute Beach concerto is excellently performed on this disc by Boehm, and the Westphalian Symphony Orchestra under Siegfried Landau gives her solid support. Altogether, the piece is one that deserves some attention from venturesome pianists looking for a big, pleasing virtuosic vehicle.

The filler, which occupies a little more than eleven minutes on the second side, is Daniel Gregory Mason's 1921 Prelude and Fugue for Piano and Orchestra. It was dedicated to John Powell, who included it in his repertoire and performed it not infrequently. It strikes me, however, as a pretty dry academic exercise. Unlike the Beach, time has faded its pastel colors and caused its tenuous virtues to evaporate. But it is useful to have it on record, and it en-

larges Mason's available recorded works, as listed in SCHWANN, by one-third. I.L.

**BEETHOVEN:** Sonatas for Cello and Piano (5). Lynn Harrell, cello; James Levine, piano. [Peter Dellheim, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 2-2241, \$15.98 (two discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● ARK 2-2241, \$15.95; ●● ARS 2-2241, \$15.95.

Sonatas: No. 1, In F, Op. 5, No. 1, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2, No. 3, in A, Op. 69; No. 4, In C, Op. 102, No. 1; No. 5, In D, Op. 102, No. 2.

An attractive set, whose appeal is nicely summed up by Lynn Harrell on the album back: "It's a matter of thousands of conversations about music and as many hours playing it. Our kind of coordination comes only when two musicians have worked together for a long time and have an almost subconscious rapport; in our case it took place over the most formative period of our lives. And Jim and I have a similar vocal orientation. We believe in the direct emotive impact of music through a most perceptive, detailed rendering of the composer's intentions. It must hit the listener as directly as if we were speaking—or singing."

There really isn't much to add to that; it's gratifying to report that Harrell and Levine have accomplished what they set out to. The singing quality noted by Harrell is indeed much in evidence—even more in Levine's pianism than in Harrell's rather vaguely focused cello-playing—and very much to the point in this music, in which Beethoven's lyrical and theatrical gifts are given such strong voice. That theatricality is more imaginatively projected by Rostropovich and Richter (Philips 835 182/3), whose rich and bold performances stop well short of the flamboyant eccentricity of the Shafran/Ginzburg set recently issued on Odyssey/Melodiya (Y2 34645), and for a more solidly classical approach that still respects the lyrical and dramatic elements I would turn to Chuchro and Panenka (Supraphon 1 11 1091/3) or Fournier and Kempff (DG, deleted—though the European reissue sometimes turns up here). Both of the latter sets, by the way, include the variations as well as the sonatas.

Harrell and Levine take a fairly standard approach to repeats, omitting those in the longer movements. Recommended. K.F.

## Critics' Choice

The best classical records reviewed in recent months

- ALBINONI:** Concertos (12), Op. 7. Negri. PHILIPS 6747 138 (2), Oct.  
**BACH, J.C.:** Sinfonias. Zinman. PHILIPS 6780 025 (2), Nov.  
**BACH:** English Suites. Gould. COLUMBIA M2 34578 (2), Oct.  
**BACH:** Flute Sonatas. Stasny, Tachezi, et al. TELEFUNKEN 26.35339 (2), Oct.  
**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Sonatas Nos. 1, 7. Richter. ANGEL S 37266, Oct.  
**BEETHOVEN:** Symphonies Nos. 2, 4. Ferencsik. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11891, 11894, Oct.  
**BERLIOZ:** Symphonie fantastique. Munch. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11842, Oct.  
**BRAHMS:** Orchestral Works. Abravanel. VANGUARD CARDINAL VCS 10117/20 (4), Oct.  
**BRUCKNER:** Symphonies Nos. 4, 7. Masur. EURODISC 27 913 XGK (3). Symphonies Nos. 7, 8. Böhm. DG 2709 068 (3), Nov.  
**CHOPIN:** Piano Works. Zimmerman. DG 2530 826, Oct.  
**CIMAROSA:** Il Matrimonio segreto. Varady et al., Barenboim. DG 2709 069 (3), Nov.  
**DAQUIN:** Noëls. MARCHAND: Organ Works. Wills. SAGA 5433/4 (2), Oct.  
**DVOŘÁK:** Quartets, Opp. 27/80, 51. Prague Qt. DG 2530 719, Nov.  
**ELGAR:** Cello Concerto; Enigma Variations. Du Pré, Barenboim. COLUMBIA M 34530, Nov.  
**GRANADOS:** Goyescas. De Larrocha. LONDON CS 7009. Piano Works, Vol. 1. Dosse. Vox SVBX 5484 (3), Oct.  
**HANDEL:** Oboe Sonatas. Roseman et al. NONESUCH H 71339, Nov.  
**HAYDN:** Piano Works, Vol. 4. Ránki. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11625/7 (3), Oct.  
**HAYDN:** Symphonies Nos. 44, 49. Barenboim. DG 2530 708. Symphonies Nos. 82–87. Barenboim. EMI/CAPITOL SLS 5065 (3), Oct.  
**KHACHATURIAN:** Gayane Suites. Tjeknavorian. RCA RED SEAL CRL 2-2263 (2), Oct.  
**MOZART:** Oboe Quartet; Clarinet Quintet. Koch, De Peyer, Amadeus Qt. DG 2530 720, Nov.  
**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 8. HAYDN: Symphony No. 104. Karajan. ANGEL S 37058, Oct.  
**STRAUSS, R.:** Burleske; Violin Concerto. Frager, Hoelscher, Kempe. ANGEL S 37267, Oct.  
**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Symphony No. 4. Abbado. DG 2530 651, Oct.  
**HEINZ HOLLIGER, AURÈLE NICOLET:** Works with Oboe, Flute. PHILIPS 9500 070, Oct.  
**PETER HURFORD:** Chorale Variations for Organ. ARGO ZRG 835, Oct.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphonies (9); Fidelio Overture, Op. 72c. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, cond. PHILIPS 6767 003, \$71.84 (eight discs, mono, manual sequence) [all except No. 3 recorded in concert, 1940].

Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 (*Eroica*); No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 6, in F, Op. 68 (*Pastoral*); No. 7, in A, Op. 92; No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 (with To van der Sluys, soprano; Suze Luger, mezzo; Louis van Tulder, tenor; Willem Ravelli, bass; Amsterdam Toonkunstkoor, Koninklijke Oratorium-Vereniging).

Even in his heyday Mengelberg was a controversial figure. As early as 1930 Lawrence Gilman was writing, "His lapses try one sorely, but his virtues are magnificent." Eventually his manipulatory rubatos and increasingly numerous score tamperings, his pompous behavior and rigorous drill-



Willem Mengelberg—logical, if never entirely natural, Beethoven

master rehearsal techniques, and the apparent wartime collaborationist leanings that ended his career in 1945 deafened many to his obvious greatness. Philips' release of this Beethoven cycle may help put his art into better perspective.

For his time, Mengelberg was a prolific recording artist. In the Twenties, he recorded two Beethoven symphonies (Nos. 1 and 3) with the New York Philharmonic for Victor; in later years he recorded Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 for Telefunken with his own Concertgebouw Orchestra. The Philips set, however, draws on actual performances taken down by the Algemene Vereniging Radio Omroep, Hilversum, during a Beethoven cycle in April and May of 1940. The glass transcription discs of the *Eroica* are presumably lost or technically defective; for that symphony Philips has borrowed the Telefunken recording.

The source material is presented "as is": There are some bloopers in the mostly extraordinary orchestral playing; there is prolonged applause and between-movement tuning; there are a few ticks and thumps (defects, obviously, on the original discs); and often one can hear the sharp double rap of Mengelberg's baton as he summons his forces to attention. For me these extras give the feeling of an occasion and resurrect Mengelberg as a real-life personality in all his irritating splendor, and the AVRO's sound, though rather raw-toned and over-bright, has remarkable presence and dynamic range for its era. By comparison, the studio-recorded Telefunken *Eroica* sounds muffled and remote—definitely a dim, unconvincing historical curio, giving little sense of the conductor as a musical force.

I found Mengelberg's interpretations absorbing. Once one accepts some of the ground rules of his game—his tendency, for example, to characterize various phrases and instrumental groups with ritards and tempo rubato—his readings seem more logical, if never entirely natural. Unlike Furtwängler, whose modifications of speed and pulse appeared to be largely improvisational and introspective, Mengelberg's seem

meticulously premeditated and extroverted. Save for a few incursions of supreme bad taste, most of Mengelberg's exaggerations are based on a thorough knowledge of—and imaginative response to—phrase structure and orchestral timbre; like it or not, a lively mind is operating at all times, giving the performances character and vitality.

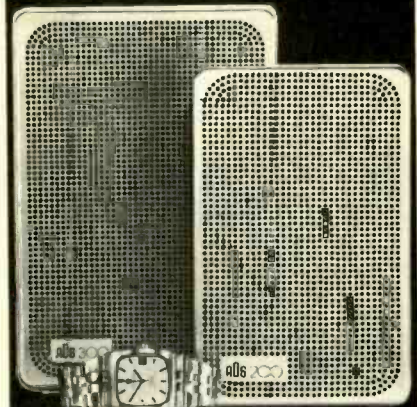
There are some outlandish mannerisms here (not, incidentally, the norm even in Mengelberg's epoch: the Beethoven records of Weingartner, Schalk, and Strauss, all older contemporaries, are quite direct and unfussy), but there are also qualities and virtues—e.g., granitic rhythm, compact, hard-hitting tone quality, biting accents—that are part of good Beethoven playing regardless of era. My enthusiasm for the strengths of these performances should not be taken as a blanket endorsement of Mengelberg's egotistical (and pretty thoroughly discredited) interpretive style. Any would-be imitators might also compare these late-period recordings with the earlier New York versions of the First and *Eroica*: It will be almost immediately evident that in his earlier years he was considerably more direct in his musical approach. The conductor so admired by Mahler in the first decade of the century might well have been quite different from the erratic one who emerges from the riveting Philips set.

Symphony No. 1's first movement, done with exaggerated sectionalization and tedious ritards, sounds like an animated cartoon. The remaining movements, though, are impressive in their alternation of delicacy and heft. No. 2 is done on a huge scale. The brisk introduction and measured Allegro make for an unorthodox tempo relationship in the first movement. The Larghetto, slow and self-consciously phrased, sounds as if Mengelberg were embarrassed by its effusive lyricism. The scherzo is slowish but vigorous, the finale suitably rollicking. It is ironic that Mengelberg, whose early New York *Eroica* observed even the rarely heard first-movement repeat, more than a decade later omitted even

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the necessary repeats in the scherzo. The New York version, incidentally, has a brighter, solid sound: it ought to be reissued.

No. 4 begins with beautiful, expressive mystery but becomes sadistically Prussian in the Allegro. The second theme group is hauled about, and there is a particularly tasteless prolongation of the horn solo at the end of the scherzo. But the finale is marvelously done—pure quicksilver. No. 5 is effectively dramatic but rather too theatrical. There is, however, some effective clarification of brass writing in the last movement's development section.

The annotations tell us that Mengelberg had the manuscript of the *Pastoral* in his possession for a long while before persuading its owner to donate it to the Beethovenhaus in Bonn. That didn't deter him from directing his violins repeatedly to enter a sixteenth note early in the "Scene by the Brookside," or from inserting an original drum roll, all sorts of *Luftpausen*, and octave-higher trumpet transpositions in the "Thunderstorm." The traditional bassoon ritards in the first-movement development are stressed with a vengeance, and the horns are having a bad night in this performance. No matter: The interpretation has a wonderful, generous sentiment with absolutely no sentimentality. I am particularly intrigued with Mengelberg's punchy, angular treatment of the final "Thanksgiving"—he sees that movement as *Sturm und Drang* instead of the usual flowing lyricism and makes his unorthodox conception convincing.

No. 7 is maddeningly perplexing: The *Vivace* is rhythmically alive; the *Allegretto* is justly paced, but with gesturesome tenutos on every downbeat of the main theme (the conductor is intent upon reminding you that the meter is *alla breve*). The scherzo has spring (but with a tediously dragged trio), and the effectively measured finale gathers imposing momentum until Mengelberg brings his players to a dead halt at bar 435 and sends them home whimpering. My memories of his Telefunken No. 8, which omitted the first-movement repeat, left me unprepared for a spectacular Mengelberg effect: a huge, emphatic ritard at the first ending. There is some idiosyncratic pointing of the first movement's second theme that gets to be distasteful on greater acquaintance, but for the most part this is a stronger performance than the one I remember from the old record. The finicky purity of Mengelberg's string sound is ideally suited to the humor of the *Allegretto scherzando* and to the mocking irony of the finale.

No. 9 opens with a fierce, brisk first movement. There is some hanky-panky in the second theme group, but momentum carries through. The scherzo is rather slow, sober, and angular, with the civilized woodwinds in the trio a strong plus. The *Adagio* is magnificent: For once Mengelberg seems totally spontaneous and spiritually immersed in a movement calling for deep lyricism. The choral finale too is most impressive. The opening recitative for cellos and basses is phrased with an almost operatic quality, the choral forces are admirable in the incisive, staccato portions, and the solo quartet, while not outstanding, is adequate. Mengelberg saves his most out-

rageous touch for the very end: an absolutely horrific slowdown on the last four notes. The *Fidelio* Overture (following the Second Symphony) is heard in a tautly insistent, communicative reading with no eccentricities whatsoever. H.G.

**BERLIOZ:** *Te Deum*, Op. 22. Jean Dupouy, tenor; Jean Guillou, organ; Paris Children's Chorus, Maitrise de la Resurrection, Chorus of the Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre de Paris, Daniel Barenboim, cond. COLUMBIA M 34536, \$7.98. Tape: ●● MT 34536, \$7.98.

Comparison:  
Davis/London Sym.

Phi. 839 790

Writing to a friend after the 1855 premiere of the *Te Deum*, Berlioz allowed that "the 'Tibi omnes' and 'Judex' would have even more effect in a less large and resonant building than the church of St. Eustache." We now have, thanks to Columbia Records, recorded evidence for that assertion—for this new *Te Deum* was recorded in St. Eustache, and the entire piece (not merely the movements Berlioz singles out) sounds much better in Colin Davis' Philips recording than it does here.

Part of the problem is, as Berlioz noted, sheer resonance. In long pauses, one hears distinct echoes; short pauses, on the other hand, are simply swallowed up, and even some phrase-beginnings are lost in the billowing haze. For all that, however, there isn't an enormous sense of space; the perspective is amorphous and muddled, although fairly persistent mild difficulties of coordination do suggest that the performers were in fact spread over rather a large floor space. St. Eustache is doubtless an acoustical disaster area, but this doesn't even sound like a good recording of a disaster area.

Nor is the performance one to overcome these difficulties. It plods along: Compare this timid voicing of the string melody at the start of "*Te ergo quæsumus*" with the gently swinging one in the Davis recording, the logy stride of the "Judex" with the fierce march that Davis makes of it. One minor textual point: At "*Ad liberandum*" in the "*Christe Rex gloriæ*," Barenboim assigns the tenor line to a soloist, although the evidence cited by Denis McCaldin, who prepared the *Te Deum* for the New Berlioz Edition, is unequivocal on this point—the indication "*sol*" means a small chorus. (Jean Dupouy sings neatly enough, but without the rhythmic thrust of Franco Tagliavini, the Philips soloist.)

But details hardly matter when you cannot, in some real sense, hear the music. What good is a recording of the *Te Deum* where you can't hear the wonderful pizzicatos at "*sedes in gloria*" in the "*Christe*," or really feel the bite of the descending bass line under one of the climactic statements of the "Judex"? Had Columbia included the March for the Presentation of the Colors, so far omitted from all recordings (and with some justification, for Berlioz intended it as a ceremonial postlude to the service, rather than as part of the *Te Deum* proper), there would have been a reason to attend to this recording—but they didn't. D.H.

**BRIDGE:** Phantasm.\* **MOERAN:** Rhapsody

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No. 3, in F sharp.† Peter Wallfisch°, and John McCabe°, piano; London Philharmonic Orchestra° and New Philharmonia Orchestra†, Nicholas Braithwaite, cond. HNH 4042, \$7.98.

It is hard to believe that until recently composers such as Frank Bridge (1879-1941) and E. J. Moeran (1894-1950) were virtually ignored by record companies, even in Britain. Now the listings of twentieth-century British works are expanding in the *Gramophone Catalogue*, but few of those records have made it into SCHWANN. EMI's numerous offerings have gone unreleased by Angel, but at least the enterprising HNH label is now offering a number of recordings by the equally adventuresome Lyrita label (many of whose releases have previously been issued by Musical Heritage Society). This particular disc presents what I consider a major discovery in the Bridge piece and a delightful find in the Moeran.

Some months ago EMI released a magnificent disc of early (1910-27) Bridge compositions, performed by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic under Sir Charles Groves (ASD 3190). Those sunny Romantic-Impressionist works hardly prepare one for the intense style of *Phantasm* (1931), which represents a tremendous change from such a work as *Summer* (1914). Critics have attributed this dramatic change in English music in general to World War I, and, while composers of the stature of Bridge, Moeran, and Vaughan Williams would have evolved in any case, there is no doubt that the devastating global conflict wrenched thoughts in new, and mostly unpleasant, directions. *Phantasm* is as troubled a work as its shadowy title suggests. It is cast in ternary form, with the solo piano used more as an obbligato instrument than in the traditional concerto role. It is powerful stuff, bound to alter an American listener's opinion not only of Bridge, but of English music as a whole.

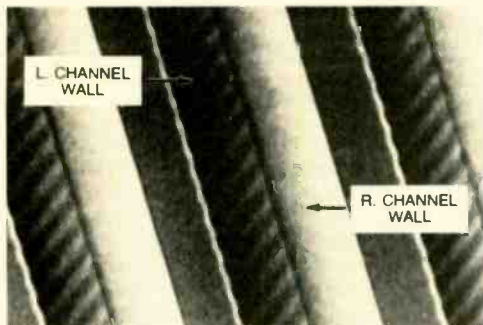
The Moeran Rhapsody (1943) is happier material and makes a refreshing, though far from trivial, second side. The composer uses the piano as more of a concerto instrument, and there are many typical question-and-answer passages between the soloist and orchestra. As usual with his music, one can hear overtones of other composers, notably Sibelius; yet in spite of this strong referencing Moeran's style remains uniquely his own and immediately recognizable.

The performances are outstanding. Peter Wallfisch plays solidly yet without clangor, an approach ideal for the Bridge; and John McCabe's more percussive approach works brilliantly in the Moeran. Conductor Nicholas Braithwaite secures excellent response from both orchestras and obtains the last ounce of proper color and shading from each expertly orchestrated score. The Lyrita engineering is to my mind of demonstration caliber. The handling of percussion in the Moeran is the best I've heard in any recent recording of a large orchestra: crisp and clean, with a lot of impact, yet heard at the back of the orchestra where it belongs and not up front as is too often the case. HNH has obviously made the transfer successfully, and the pressing was as quiet as any I've heard.

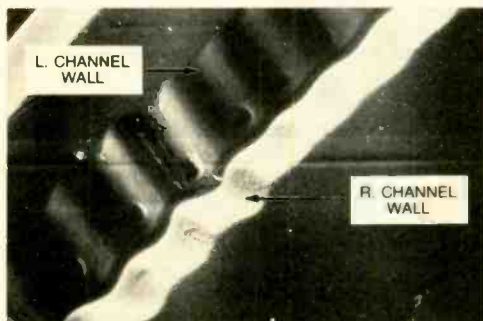
A totally successful venture for all concerned.

W.R.-B

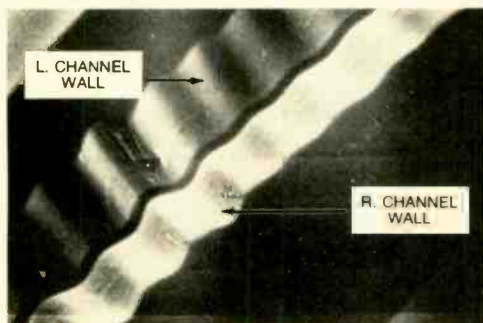
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## The Optimist's View:

The cartridge that tracked the grooves shown in the top photomicrograph caused no PERCEIVABLE wear after 75 plays. But because these grooves are cut at relatively low velocities and have a continuous 20 kHz signal (only on one channel), they don't present a very challenging test. As a matter of fact, any reasonably good cartridge should produce the same results. However, under greater magnification these same grooves would probably reveal some amount of record wear (although not enough to alter sound quality). That's because record wear is a gradual but constant phenomenon . . . like tire wear every time you drive.

## The Terrible Truth:

The middle photomicrograph shows a record of musical material cut at today's "hotter" velocities after only one play with a well-known competitive cartridge at its rated tracking force. This cartridge mistracked the record. Clearly, critical damage resulted. Notice the deep gouge marks on the groove walls.

A single mistrack can result in MORE damage than 25, 50 or even 100 plays of a record! Continuing our tire analogy, a mistrack is like a blowout. Once your cartridge mistracks a record passage, the damage has been done and that passage will never sound the same. TRACKABILITY is the single most meaningful yardstick by which to measure cartridge performance. That's because TRACKABILITY encompasses virtually every performance factor by which a cartridge is judged . . . including velocity of the recorded signal, frequency, compliance, and effective mass.

The bottom photo shows the same groove played 50 times with a V15 Type III at a record- and stylus-saving force of only one gram. Clearly, there is no cartridge you can buy — for any amount of money — that will protect your record collection more from the damage of mistracking than the Shure V15 Type III.



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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**B** **CHAMBONNIÈRES:** Pièces de clavecin, Book I. Lionel Party, harpsichord. MUSICAL HERITAGE MHS3557, \$4.95 (\$3.75 to members). Tape: ●● MHC 5557, \$6.95 (\$4.95 to members). (Add \$1.25 postage; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

Suites: in A minor; in D minor; in C; in F; in G.

Jacques Champion de Chambonnières (c.1602-72) came from one of those long French musical dynasties, his own going back as far as the fifteenth century. He served notably as court harpsichordist to Louis XIV and, even after falling out of favor at court, maintained an enviable reputation as a performer, teacher, and composer. Among his notable pupils were Louis

Couperin and Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, and thus the entire French harpsichord "school" can be traced back to him.

The published works of Chambonnières—evidently representing only a small portion of his total output—comprise two books of harpsichord pieces published in 1670, and it is to the first of these books that the present recording is devoted. The music is engaging, rather less cerebral than that of Louis Couperin, and it is performed with commitment by the Chilean-born harpsichordist Lionel Party. Party has a solid technique and a good sense of style, so his performances constitute an important addition to the recorded catalog of French harpsichord music. Chambonnières having been but scantily represented so far.

I am less than enthusiastic about Party's choice of instrument, a rather rough-toned 1973 Dowd, but we are at least given authentic meantone temperament and low (A 415) pitch. The recording is quite vivid and full-bodied, although I suspect that a slightly more distant microphone placement would have yielded a more agreeable sound from the harpsichord. S.C.

**COUPERIN, L.:** Suites for Harpsichord: in G minor; in D; in A minor; in F. Alan Curtis, harpsichord. [Heinz Wildhagen and Andreas Holschneider, prod.] ARCHIV 2533 325, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 3310 325, \$7.98.

**MUSIC OF THE COUPERIN FAMILY.** Martin Pearlman, harpsichord. [Ralph Döpmeier, prod.] TITANIC Ti 9, \$7.00 (Titanic Records, 43 Rice St., Cambridge, Mass. 02140).

L. COUPERIN: Suite in C. A.-L. COUPERIN: Pièces de clavecin (selections). F. COUPERIN: 23e Ordre.

As harpsichordist Martin Pearlman observes in the liner notes for his Titanic recital, "Louis, François, and Armand-Louis Couperin represent three successive, though widely spaced, generations of the family, and their lives span nearly the entire period of French harpsichord music." In a sense, though, only two generations of musical sensibilities are represented, since the rather conservative *Pièces de clavecin* (c. 1751) of Armand-Louis scarcely represent a significant stylistic advance beyond the last *ordres* of François.

In any case, a program of music by these three composers makes stimulating and enjoyable fare, and Pearlman's playing is most sympathetic. He has all the technical assurance that one would expect from a protégé of Leonhardt and Kirkpatrick, his discretion with ornamentation and *négalité* is exemplary, and his generous caressing of agogic accents is most expressive. Indeed, if one were to offer any criticism of these performances, it could only be that Pearlman perhaps wears his heart just a bit too much on the sleeve, that his elaborate attention to small agogic details sometimes obscures larger contours of melody, harmony, and rhythm. To make an issue of this, though, is surely to carp unnecessarily; Pearlman is young (b. 1945), and there is every reason to expect that his already outstanding playing will become even more refined.

The instrument Pearlman plays, incidentally, was built in 1971 by Donald Katz of Marlboro, Vermont, and it is said to be modeled on the elegant Ruckers-Blanchet harpsichord at Yale. The sound is pleasant enough, although arguably too robust (at least as recorded here) for absolute authenticity; a more substantial drawback is the use of equal temperament, which has something of an emasculating effect in the Louis Couperin works.

No such complaints can be registered with Alan Curtis' new album of pieces by Louis Couperin. He plays a two-manual harpsichord by an unidentified (probably French) builder of the second half of the seventeenth century. The sound is exquisite—beautifully refined and yet appropriately astringent—with the meantone temperament lending appropriate spice to the dissonances.

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Curtis is truly a consummate harpsichordist—his Vox set of François Couperin *ordres* remains a classic—and his performances here are nothing short of magisterial. As much as I enjoyed the youthful extroversion of Pearlman's playing, I couldn't help noticing Curtis' additional measure of control, subtlety, and elegant understatement, which is precisely what one expects from a more mature and seasoned performer. This is assuredly one of the finest harpsichord records to have been issued lately, not least for the unusually natural recorded sound, and I can hardly say enough to recommend it. S.C.

**B** **DAVIES:** *Dark Angels*.\* **WERNICK:** *Songs of Remembrance*.\* Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; Oscar Ghiglia, guitar\*; Philip West, shawm, English horn, and oboe\*. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH H 71342, \$3.96.

These haunting works, both composed in 1974, make a lovely pair. Besides their common period of conception, the pieces bear striking additional resemblances: Both are extended song cycles (in each case somewhat under twenty minutes) for female voice and a single accompanying instrument, and both are based on texts having to do with the death of children. Yet what is perhaps most striking is how, despite these similarities, each creates an entirely distinctive atmosphere by means of its own highly individual musical language.

Peter Maxwell Davies' *Dark Angels* for soprano and guitar is a setting of two poems by George Mackay Brown that deal with the virtually deserted Orkney Islands, where the composer now lives. The first poem concerns the drowning in the 1950s of two brothers, the only children left after a continuous exodus of inhabitants of the islands throughout this century. The second describes the deserted crofts after the remaining islanders, taking this tragedy as a sign, had all departed.

The setting is a brooding, melancholy litany of poignant beauty and great subtlety. Maxwell Davies makes his points with the most delicate means; and the two performers interact with one another in an intimate dialogue that evokes a quality of both desolation and transfiguration. Particularly telling is the brief movement for guitar solo—entitled, as is the piece as a whole, *Dark Angels*—that serves as a subdued and reflective interlude between the two extended vocal movements.

Richard Wernick's *Songs of Remembrance* for mezzo-soprano and double-reed instruments (shawm, English horn, and oboe, all performed by a single player) is more dramatic in conception. Wernick has set four texts (two in Latin and one each in Greek and English), chosen in response to the death of a nine-year-old child. The two Latin texts (from Horace and Virgil) together form the extended central section of the work, which is separated from the brief outer movements (the opening on Pythagoras and the closing on Robert Herrick) by instrumental interludes.

Each of the three main vocal subgroups is accompanied by a different instrument: the Greek text by shawm, the Latin

by English horn, and the English by oboe. The gradual lightening of timbre that ensues from this arrangement reflects the lightening sonic quality of the text in its progression from Greek through Latin to English. Moreover, the quality of the music reveals a similar progression from the highly incantatory quality of the opening through the melismatic lyricism of the Latin settings to the remarkable simplicity of the closing song.

Wernick, who is now establishing himself as one of our major composers (he was the recipient of the 1977 Pulitzer Prize for Music for his *Visions of Terror and Wonder*), handles the compositional problems inherent in this complex conception with disarming ease. The piece as a whole seems

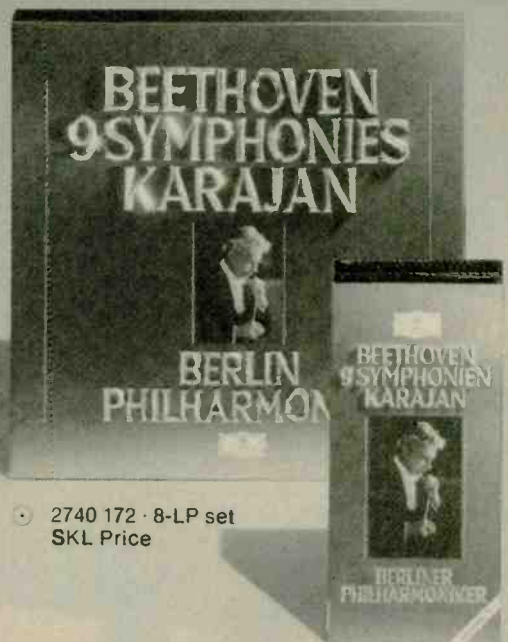
to unfold in one long breath, a profoundly felt exhalation that is at once tragic and affirmative. Among many beautiful moments I might mention especially the way the oboe interlude that introduces the last song is dovetailed with the long, deeply expressive unaccompanied vocal melisma that closes the middle section.

The performances could hardly be bettered. Jan DeGaetani sings both pieces with such warmth and assurance that one finds it difficult to imagine them being done with equal effect by any other singer. Although the tessitura of the Maxwell Davies lies somewhat above her best range, there is little sense of strain. Above all, DeGaetani seems to penetrate to the heart of the music in each work. Guitarist Oscar Ghiglia and

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R.P.M.

**B DELIBES:** *Coppélia* (complete ballet). Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON TREASURY STS 15371/2. \$7.96 (two discs, automatic sequence) [from LONDON CSA 2201, 1959].

**R DELIBES:** *Coppélia* (complete ballet). Paris Opera Orchestra, Jean-Baptiste Mari, cond. [Gréco Casadesus, prod.] ANGEL SB 3843.

\$15.98 (two SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● 4X2S 3843, \$15.98.

Comparison:  
Bonyngé / Suisse Romande

Lon. CSA 2229

So rarely does one find any references to *Coppélia* that do not remind us of its influence on Tchaikovsky's full-length ballets that one wonders if Delibes's work has yet received proper acknowledgment as a masterpiece in its own right. That it is, indeed, a masterpiece of wit and charm comparable to the best of Johann Strauss and Offenbach (and also a superb piece of dramatic craftsmanship) is in my opinion affirmed by the reissue in improved sound of Ansermet's performance, an affectionate, grace-

ful account that does full justice to the work's manifold virtues: its easy melodiousness, skillful orchestration, and perfectly judged variety of mood and feeling.

What is so attractive about Ansermet's reading is its appropriateness of scale. The music that depicts the quasi-necromantic activities of Doctor Coppélius (a figure derived from E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*, but in Charles Nutter's scenario more eccentric than macabre) is not blown up, as so often happens in the theater, to demon size. The character dances that enliven Act I are weighty without being ponderous. The masque of Discord and War that forms part of the wedding celebrations in the last act has just the right playful touch, and the final Galop is properly joyous. There also are many incidental felicities, such as the beautifully judged ritard in the final section of the Act II Bolero.

In all these respects I find Jean-Baptiste Mari's performance wanting. Though the Paris Opera Orchestra plays very well for him, his reading of the score strikes me as rather coarse and heavy-handed. The recording, too, is less satisfactory than Ansermet's; despite the age of the latter, its mellowness is far more agreeable than the overbrilliance of Mari's.

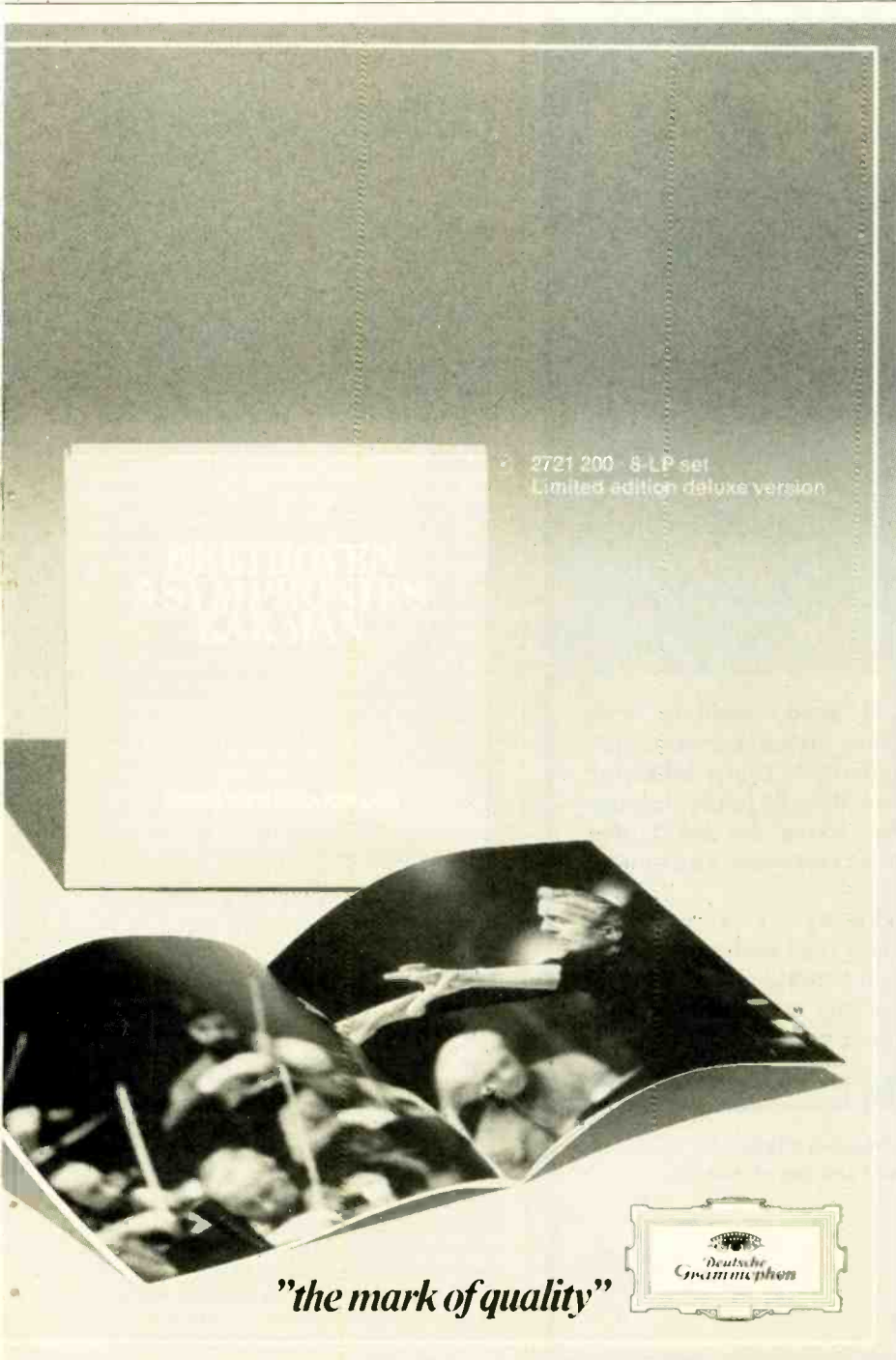
Richard Bonyngé, in the newer London set, has the advantage of superb sound and, like Ansermet, shows a perfect understanding of the nature of this music, though there is not to be heard there the ultimate distinction of phrasing and orchestral control that one finds in Ansermet's performance. The Ansermet set includes a full synopsis; so does the Mari, together with very good notes and several historically important photographs—the latter so poorly reproduced as to be virtually useless. The Bonyngé album contains an important essay on the creation of *Coppélia* by the distinguished dance scholar Ivor Guest. D.S.H.

**DVOŘÁK:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. For an essay review, see page 73.

**DVOŘÁK:** Symphony No. 8, in G, Op. 88; The Wood Dove, Op. 110. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. [Ray Minshull, prod.] LONDON CS 6979, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS5 6979, \$7.95.

This disc is a credit both to Mehta and to the level of expertise the Los Angeles Philharmonic has attained under his stewardship. The orchestra is executionally strong in every department here—its playing responsive in attack, blended in tone, sweet and true of intonation. If none of the solo playing (which this kind of music so exposes) has remarkable individuality or personality, all of it reflects technical poise and—more importantly—an obvious pride in striving for, and attaining, so impressive a level.

Mehta's way with the most songful of Dvořák's symphonies is of like kind. He leads an impeccably well-groomed performance, convincing and "traditional" (in the best sense) in details of phrasing and choice of tempo. (The coda to the third movement, a partial exception, is unusually brisk—the most rapid performance of that



"the mark of quality"



passage since the old Szell/Concertgebouw, available crudely rechanneled on Turnabout TV-S 34525.) Everything moves, flows, and sings logically, and my only reservation is that the folklorish aspects of the scoring are a bit submerged in a slightly bland, straitlaced, and generalized reading. Better this than the contrived portamento slides and other effects often inflicted on "ethnic" music by conductors intent upon making their interpretations "idiomatic."

In *The Wood Dove*—a surprisingly Mahlerian late tone poem that deals with a woman driven to suicide by the cooing of a wood dove in a tree growing over her poisoned first husband's grave—Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic have more lung power and smoother strings than Kubelik's

probably smaller Bavarian Radio Symphony on DG 2530 713, and they are recorded with a less extreme dynamic range. But if the pianissimos are a bit under-recorded and the violins a bit scrawny on the DG disc, Kubelik brings out more of the sinister programmatic narrative. Both of these estimable performances, however, must cede pride of place to the wonderful account by Neumann and the Czech Philharmonic in Telefunken 36.35075, a three-disc set that also contains the *Slavonic Dances*, the *Czech Suite*, and the three *Slavonic Rhapsodies*. In that version, solid symphonic power, local color, and magnificent orchestral reproduction merge to draw an incomparably vivid, grotesque picture: Note the edge of vibrato on the Czech trum-

pets and the hollow plangency of the low winds (depicting the bird's cooing). Good as the London and DG discs are, the Telefunken set is one of the glories of the catalog. H.G.

**FINZI:** Concerto for Clarinet and Strings, Op. 31; Grand Fantasia and Toccata for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 39; Eclogue for Piano and Strings, Op. 10. John Denman, clarinet; Peter Katin, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Vernon Handley, cond. HNH 4031, \$7.98.

This excellent Lyrita-derived recording expands our view of the English composer Gerald Finzi (1901-56), who has been known on disc primarily through his vocal works: the superb *Dies Natalis* for tenor and strings was issued in the U.S. several years ago by Everest, though it has disappeared from SCHWANN.

I imagine that most listeners will find this disc of purely instrumental works tough going if played straight through, not because Finzi's music is wild or avant-garde, but because of the basic scoring. His music, like Delius' in his larger works, reminds me of an oversize Persian carpet: There is a lot of over-all texture, almost too much, yet by focusing on a particular portion one can find exquisite and concise design. It seems to me that both Finzi and Delius needed words to hang their material on, and thus their vocal works were more successful than those without voice.

The 1949 clarinet concerto is the find here: Finzi at his uninhibited lyrical best, his heart into the singing line and his thinking somewhat subjugated to guided emotionalism. Though the solo instrument is treated basically like a vocalist, the movements are tight enough to sustain interest and short enough to insure that any rambles the composer takes do not have time to lose us completely. When the soloist is given a high-ranging singing line the results are exquisite, and the work surely warrants an occasional hearing in the concert hall.

But what to make of the 1953 *Grand Fantasia and Toccata*? Apparently Finzi's answer to a Bach fantasia and fugue, and as such a quite interesting effort, it strikes me as the sort of work in which a composer tries to show his detractors that he can write in different forms even if his heart really isn't in it. The *Eclogue* (written in 1910, revised in 1956) is an extremely quiet piece, so personal that it must surely mean much more to the soloist than to anyone hearing it.


Unfortunately the clarinet concerto receives the least successful performance here. Though John Denman plays with great style and feeling for Finzi's lyrical lines, his sound in the lower and middle registers is raucous and downright unpleasant. He is at his best in the upper register, where many clarinetists fail, and the effect is like a soprano with lovely top notes resorting to ugly chest tones to cover the lack of a bottom. Peter Katin plays the piano works with alternating glitter and sensitivity, as required, and again proves himself to stand at the forefront of English pianists. Vernon Handley secures luscious sounds from the New Philharmonia strings and keeps things paced properly.

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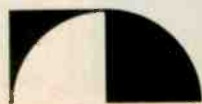
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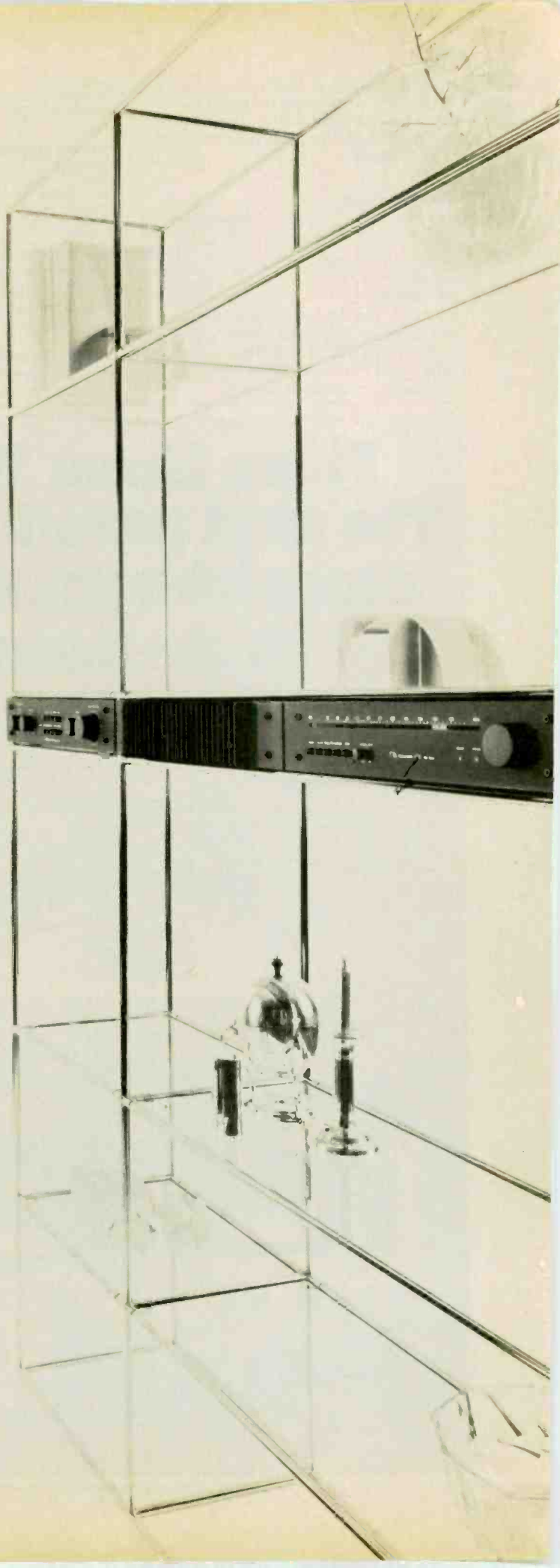
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The recording, at least as heard in the HNH transfer, seemed to me below Lyrita's usual high standard. Lower strings are not well defined, and the piano tends to buzz in some passages.  
W.R.-B.

**GOUNOD: Faust.**

Marguerite  
Siebel  
Marthe  
Faust  
Valentin  
Wagner  
Méphistophélès

Montserrat Caballé (s)  
Anita Terzian (ms)  
Jocelyne Taillon (ms)  
Giacomo Aragall (t)  
Philippe Huttenlocher (b)  
Jean Brun (b)  
Paul Plishka (bs)

Chorus of the Opéra du Rhin, Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra, Alain Lombard, cond. [Pierre Lavoix and Peter Willemoës, prod.] RCA RED SEAL FRL 4-2493, \$31.98 (four discs, automatic sequence).

**Comparisons:**

Sutherland, Corelli, Ghiaurov, Bonyngé Lon. OSA 1433  
Los Angeles, Gedda, Christoff, Cluytens Ang. SDL 3622

**PUCCINI: Madama Butterfly.**

Cio-Cio-San  
Suzuki  
Kate Pinkerton  
Pinkerton  
Goro  
Sharpless

Montserrat Caballé (s)  
Silvana Mazzieri (ms)  
Maria Uriz (ms)  
Bernabé Martí (t)  
Piero de Palma (t)  
Franco Bordonni (b)

Chorus of the Gran Teatro del Liceo, Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, Armando Gatto, cond. LONDON OSA 13121, \$23.94 (three discs, automatic sequence). Tape: OSA5 13121, \$23.95.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Faust is the tenacious toehold it retains in the repertory, despite the often blatant contempt

displayed by many of the people, in particular directors and conductors, responsible for performing it.

Alain Lombard, conductor of the new Erato/RCA recording, shows no such contempt, but he may have respected the opera to death. It is hard to fault his sense of proportion and balance, and even his almost uniformly slow tempos may reflect respect for Gounod, for he comes closer to the printed metronome markings (which in fact are nearly all slower still) than any Faust conductor on recordings. Unfortunately those tempos are not projected with any real pulse, and most numbers limp to their relentless conclusions; the Kermesse, for example, sprawls aimlessly.

This might matter less if the cast could shoulder its burden, but like most recent Faust performers Erato's appear to be working in a contextual vacuum. In the days when Marguerite, Faust, and Méphisto were touchstones of the soprano, tenor, and bass repertoires, each new assumption could draw on a rich and active performing tradition. Whether the performer adopted received values or struck out on his or her own, there was a context to serve as a point of departure. The loss can be heard, I think, in the work of Giacomo Aragall and Paul Plishka, both of whom bring unassailable vocal credentials to their parts and yet fail to make contact.

Although Gounod did not draw his characters in completely fleshed form, he surely didn't mean performers to limit themselves to the specifics of the action. It is their job to create characters that encompass the general features revealed by the plot: Faust's existential anguish, Marguerite's lonely melancholy and romantic yearning. Aragall's robust, dark, relatively flexible tenor is a splendid Faust instrument, even granting the constricted quality of the top, but he wanders through the notes without communicating any sense of what the man is about.

Plishka's problem is a bit different, for he does, unhappily, have a tradition of sorts to fall back on: The shadow of Chaliapin hangs heavily over the recorded Méphistos of both Christoff, in which histrionic "effects" regularly take precedence over vocal continuity, and Ghiaurov, whose over-weighted legato is used almost aggressively. Plishka and other current Méphistos might profitably turn to a different model: Pinza. I have just been listening, electrified, to his 1940 Met broadcast performance, which offers a vivid demonstration of the power of directness and simplicity. Last year in these pages Conrad L. Osborne used the phrase "dignity and grace" to describe Gounod's vocal writing, and I know of no better illustration of this than Pinza's Méphisto—a devil of such musicality and self-confidence that he doesn't need to rant. Best of all, it's the kind of performance, built on careful musicianship and a thorough understanding of the singer's own vocal strengths and weaknesses, that could be profitably studied. Plishka sings the music well enough—better, indeed, than he did in last season's Met performances (which followed the recording)—but he doesn't seem headed anywhere in the role.

I think Erato missed an opportunity in the casting of Marguerite: Did the company

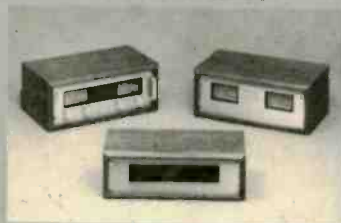
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that gave us Jeannette Pilon's first recording of a major role (Micaela in *Carmen*, Erato STU 70900/2, December 1975) consider that she is perhaps the finest Marguerite of the day? The presence of Montserrat Caballé in the cast may make Erato feel more "big league" and may sell some records, but it doesn't do much for *Faust*. This is one of her more indulgent performances, and while there are naturally many beautiful moments her Marguerite is a languishing bore. The rest of the cast is weak, with only Jocelyne Taillon as Marthe even minimally qualified for her role.

The text performed is the complete standard published edition: Marguerite's Act IV spinning song ("Il ne revient pas") is included (but not Siebel's second song,

which is a later addition—though much of the final score is too), and the *Walpurgisnacht* is heard in its uncut form with the ballet. On these and all the other complex problems of *Faust* RCA's booklet is silent, offering instead three pages of Francis Robinson chitchat with pictures. This represents a dramatic step backward from the painstaking preparation and fastidious presentation of the last recording. London's, I consider the latter essential to anyone who cares about the opera, if only for its remarkable annotations and its textual completeness (at least as far as is presently possible). The performance too has its strengths, chief among them the engrossing *Faust* of Franco Corelli. The solidly orthodox Angel recording, more heavily cut than

the Erato, boasts the lovely Marguerite of Victoria de los Angeles and the vocally brilliant Valentin of Ernest Blanc.

If Caballé is one of the lesser attractions of the Erato *Faust*, she is the only one of London's newly released *Butterfly*, recorded by Spanish Columbia. It finds her in good voice and on relatively good behavior. There is far less mooning than one might have expected, and she works hard to achieve lightness and point. An appealing piece of work, even if it sheds no new light on a role that has been often recorded by sopranos more naturally suited to it.

There's little more to report. The most complete assumption seems to me Piero de Palma's—by my count this invaluable veteran's fifth recorded Goro, but as freshly conceived and skillfully executed as ever. Silvana Mazzieri's Suzuki and Franco Bordon's Sharpless are presentable, and both singers may be capable of more than present circumstances permit. Bernabé Martí, however, is dismal—even without reference to the distinguished line of recorded predecessors (Gigli, Di Stefano, Gedda, Bjoerling, Bergonzi, Tucker, Pavarotti). Spanish Columbia could have increased the interest of this recording by casting Aragall as Pinkerton. He has recorded for the company: a recital of standard Italian arias has also been released by London, as OS 26499. Armando Gatto keeps the performance moving, but he seems to have no particular views on how it should move.

There are half a dozen or more *Butterfly* recordings with strong attractions: my over-all first choice would be Scotti, Bergonzi, and Barbirolli (Angel SCL 3702). K.F.

**HAYDN:** Orlando paladino. For a featurette, see page 107.

**LISZT:** Orchestral Arrangements. Philharmonia Hungarica, Willi Boskovsky, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL S 37277, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

Hungarian Rhapsodies (orch. Doppler): No. 1, in F; No. 4, in D minor; No. 6, in D. Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15 (Rakóczy March). Hungarian Battle March.

If you're habituated to the long-orthodox grimly portentous and bombastically blatant treatment of some of the best-known Hungarian Rhapsodies in Franz Doppler's orchestral dress, stick with your favorite recorded versions by Karajan, Dorati, Stokowski, et al. Boskovsky, departing widely from his usual dance-music repertory, takes a different, lighter, more balletic than melodramatic approach—one that is much less spectacular but may be, at least for some listeners, freshly stimulating. Novel too is the inclusion of not only Liszt's Rakóczy March (the Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15), more rambling and long-winded than Berlioz', but also the rarely heard, disarmingly tuneful and festive Hungarian Battle March, which the composer himself transcribed for orchestra in 1875 from his 1843-44 piano original.

The lilting grace and generally bright coloring of the Boskovsky/Philharmonia Hungarica performances are attractively enhanced by notably vivid and transparent recording. And while the back channels

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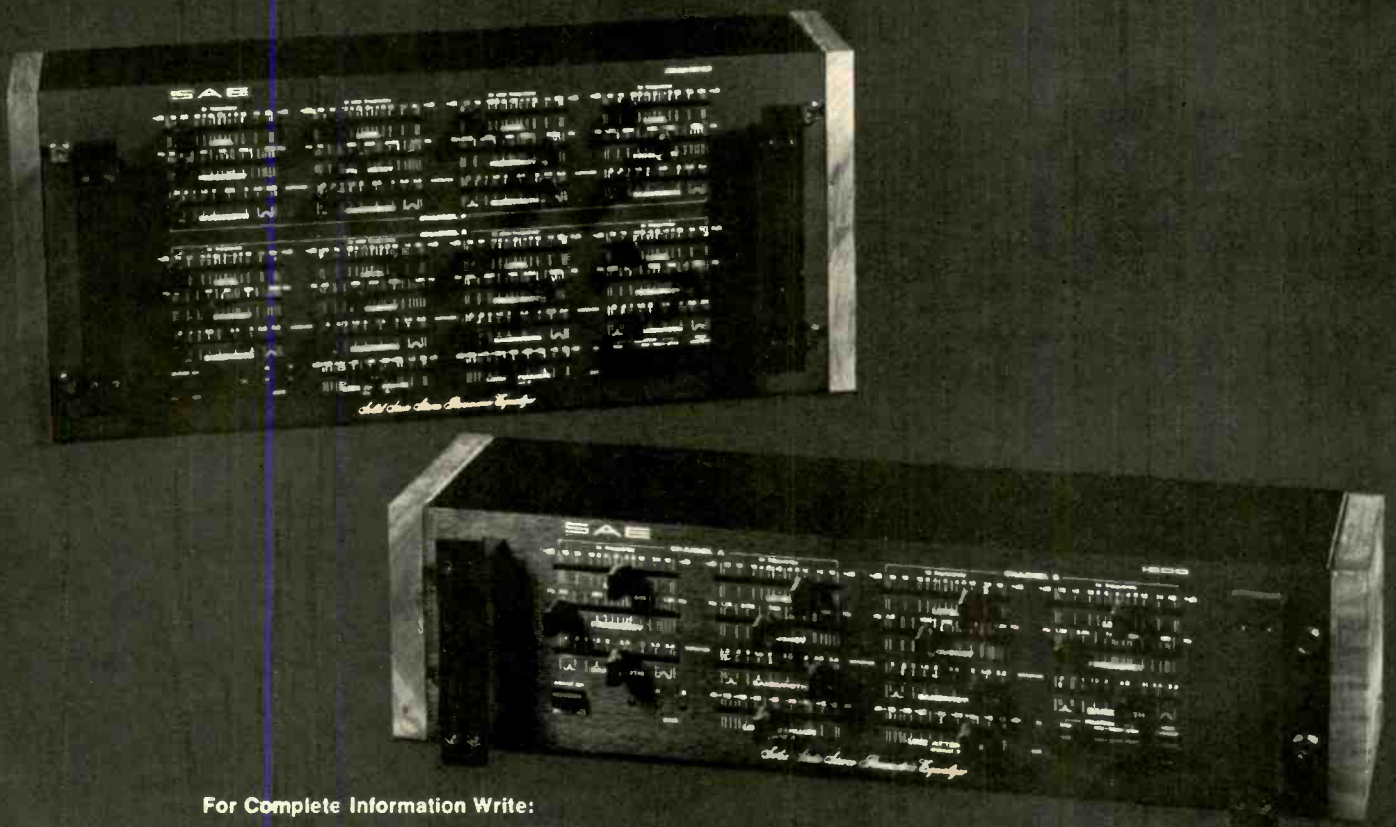
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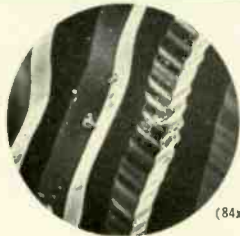
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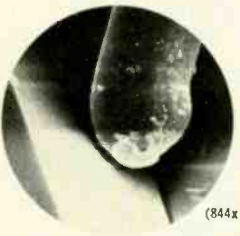
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**MAHLER:** Des Knaben Wunderhorn. Jessye Norman, soprano; John Shirley-Quirk, bass-baritone; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS 9500 316, \$8.98. Tape: 7 7300 572, \$8.95.

**Comparisons:**  
Baker, Evans, Morris OP (see text)  
Ludwig, Berry, Bernstein Col. KS 7395  
Schwarzkopf, Fischer-Dieskau, Szell Ang. S 36547  
Forrester, Rehfuss, Prohaska Van. Ev. SRV 285 SD

This latest issue of the orchestral-accompanied songs based on Arnim's and Brentano's folk-poetry anthology, *The Youth's Magic Horn*, is the first to follow the order in which they are printed in the Philharmonia score. Side 1 contains the five songs of Vol. 1, followed by the later-published "Revelge": on Side 2, five songs from Vol. 2 are filled out by the separately composed "Der Tambour'sell." (As is frequently done, "Urlicht," which Mahler transplanted intact to the Second Symphony, is omitted.) The presumably "official" order adequately juxtaposes romantic, sarcastic, and grimly spectral pieces, though this is done with even more dramatically effective point in the sequence used in Felix Prohaska's two Vanguard recordings (the later one, in stereo, still available in the Everyman Classics series).

Philips follows the conventional wisdom (Prohaska/Vanguard excepted) of having the soloists share those songs that textually invite duets. Of the solo numbers, I question the assignment of "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" to John Shirley-Quirk, whose vocal abilities it ill suits. (It was also given to Fischer-Dieskau on the Szell recording, and he fared little better with it.) Indeed, very little of this music suits Shirley-Quirk. Dark the voice certainly is, but also grainy and disfigured by a chronic wobble. In "Revelge," for example, one imagines the troops to be fleeing nothing more than an outbreak of dysentery.

Shirley-Quirk doesn't sound at home with the German texts, and his attention to mood shifts and word meanings is perfunctory; he is the least interesting of the baritones who have recorded this music. Fischer-Dieskau barks and hams things up in many places, but he surely appreciates irony and ambience. Walter Berry (in the Bernstein/Columbia set that includes both piano- and orchestral-accompanied performances) may emphasize the comical high spirits at the expense of deeper tragic sentiments, but he offers a voice in prime condition and a solid grounding in the German art-song tradition. Geraint Evans (in the Wyn Morris version formerly available on Angel) is not without vocal hardship but also displays musical and character-painting perception. In the extant Vanguard edition, Heinz Rehfuss' light, smoothly floated bass-baritone is deployed with considerable insight into psychological nuance.

I am nearly as disappointed with the Philips soprano. Jessye Norman certainly has the warmest and most richly vibrant sound of any of the ladies who have recorded this cycle. Even her occasional breaking of lines for breath is less disturbing than the continuous icy vibrato of Maureen Forrester (Vanguard) or the dry, disparate cackling of Schwarzkopf (Szell/An-

gel) on one of her most embarrassingly off days. Yet Norman does less dazzling things with the voice—and the style—than Christa Ludwig (Columbia), for all the latter's scoopy mannerisms. Nor can she begin to command the subtle shadings and simple eloquence of Janet Baker (Morris/Angel), for all the latter's vocal restrictions.

Norman's problems, like Shirley-Quirk's, include a less than natural affinity with German texts. She also passes over such musical niceties as the grace notes at "Gelt! Komm!" in "Verlorne Mühe" and fails to characterize individually the narrator, mother, and child in "Das irdische Leben" (compare Baker here). That she has already grown in this respect is evidenced in "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen," where she makes much more of the word "weinen" (to weep) than she did in her earlier, piano-accompanied recording (Philips 6500 412, with other Mahler and Schubert Lieder).

Whatever one's reservations about his singers, Haitink's nonvocal soloists in the Concertgebouw first chairs—and indeed the whole orchestra—sing with easy eloquence, realizing every textural and textual detail in flawless balance. The conductor's organization of the varying speeds in "Der Schildwache Nachtlid" is well-nigh perfect, though I wish he had been equally scrupulous in not slowing down for the maiden's lyrical plaint in the "Lied des Verfolgtten im Turm." That ringing defense of freedom of conscience thereby loses some momentum, and I wouldn't bring this particular recording along to a Civil Liberties Union fund-raiser. Nor would Haitink's amblingly paced "Revelge" do well at an antiwar rally. (Morris would suit both purposes perfectly.) "Der Tambour'sell," however, is splendid for its sustained intensity: the Concertgebouw musters the somber weight Shirley-Quirk fails to. The lilting songs (e.g., "Rheinlegendchen") find Haitink at his straightforward best.

As indicated, I admire Morris' conducting, and he gets good response from the London Philharmonic. (That recording, made by the small British Delyse company, is currently available on British Decca's Ace of Diamonds label, as SDD-R 326.) Szell's more detached but wryly urbane conception is also well realized by the London Symphony—but those soloists! It should be noted that Philips' sonics are the warmest and most immediate the work has had. Columbia's aren't bad, and the piano-accompanied bonus disc enhances the other attractions: the vivid and exciting work of Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, and the Ludwig/Berry collaboration. The Columbia performances are somewhat souped-up in their exaggerated romanticisms, but better this, I suppose, than the stodgy work of Prohaska, despite Vanguard's attractive budget price. A.C.

**MOERAN:** Rhapsody No. 3, in F sharp—See Bridge: Phantasm.

**POWELL:** Sonata Teutonica, Op. 24. Roy Hamlin Johnson, piano. [Carter Harman, prod.] COMPOSERS RECORDINGS SD 368, \$6.95.

The Virginia-born composer/pianist John Powell worked on his *Sonata Teutonica* for eight years and finally completed the gargantuan work, which runs more than an



Alice Berman/CRJ

Roy Hamlin Johnson  
Powell's behemoth successfully tamed

hour uncut, in 1913, when he was living in London. Benno Moiseiwitsch introduced it in that city in 1914, and it was greeted with enthusiasm by the English critics, one of whom called it "a powerful piece, extremely well constructed, intensely vigorous and—in its last movement—concise, straightforward, and virile."

After World War I broke out, Powell returned to this country, embarking on a successful concert career (he was a Leschetizky pupil) and establishing himself as one of the more gifted American composers of the period. He performed the *Sonata Teutonica* in New York in 1917 and several times thereafter, but only one other pianist, Aline van Barentzen, is known to have programmed it, and that was in 1967, some four years after Powell's death.

Powell was a rather strange individual who was particularly interested in racial matters. It was his strong belief that American folk music derived from Anglo-Celtic sources was at the heart of our musical tradition and that the ethnic and cultural forces derived from this corpus of our musical heritage should be maintained in their purest form for the benefit of present and future generations. To that end, he organized the Virginia State Choral Festival and was very active in the annual White Top Mountain Folk Music Festival. Somewhere along the line, he picked up the reputation of being something of a racist because of his belief that black spirituals were essentially an outgrowth of the white spirituals first identified by the late George Pullen Jackson of Vanderbilt University, and the fact that his best-known composition bore the title *Rapsodie nègre* was no help to him. Actually, the work was inspired by Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

The *Sonata Teutonica* proved to be another unfortunate title. Powell explained (in quasi-mystical fashion) that the word "teutonica" was not intended to refer to a race so much as to a type of mind and character that had in common "a sense of Oneness" and cited Leonardo, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Goethe, and Beethoven as individuals who embodied this slippery concept. The epigraph Powell used on the title-page of the sonata read: "The Ocean is in the

Drop as the Drop is in the Ocean," which is a reasonable variant of transcendentalism as expressed by Emerson and Thoreau.

Roy Hamlin Johnson, a member of the extraordinarily gifted piano faculty at the University of Maryland, became interested in this behemoth, and with some assistance from the University, the John Powell Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts set about to see if it could be cut down to a reasonable length without damaging its integrity. It is good to be able to report that he has succeeded in his editing task admirably. His performance of the work (which in his edition runs a bit less than forty-five minutes) is superb and totally convincing. There is a grandeur and an almost orchestral scope and sound to the sonata reminiscent of Liszt in his more effective moments.

It is not surprising, of course, that Powell was very much a musical conservative and that the freshest colors in his harmonic palette are essentially modal. This is something we can live with today peacefully. Johnson's redaction of the *Sonata Teutonica* should do much to resuscitate John Powell as a significant figure in American musical life, and his brilliant performance of it deserves loud applause. I.L.

**PUCCINI: Gianni Schicchi.**

Lauretta  
Nella  
Zita  
La Ciesca  
Gherardino  
Rinuccio  
Gherardo  
Gianni Schicchi  
Marco  
Ser Amantio di Nicolao  
Guccio  
Simone  
Betto di Signa  
Maestro Spinelloccio  
Pinellino

Ileana Cotrubas (s)  
Scilly Fortunato (s)  
Anna di Stasio (ms)  
Stefania Malagu (ms)  
Alvaro Domingo (boy a)  
Plácido Domingo (t)  
Florindo Andreoli (t)  
Tito Gobbi (b)  
Carlo del Bosco (b)  
Guido Mazzini (b)  
Bruno Grella (b)  
Giancarlo Luccardi (bs)  
Alfredo Mariotti (bs)  
Leo Pudis (bs)  
Nicola Troisi (bs)

London Symphony Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond. [David Harvey, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34534, \$7.98.

**Comparisons:**  
Gobbi, De los Angeles, Del Monte, Santini Ang. SL 35473  
Corena, Tebaldi, Lazzari, Gardelli Lon OSA 1153

Having listened intensively during the past few days to all three current recordings of *Gianni Schicchi*, I am inclined to agree with those who consider this one-act opera Puccini's masterpiece. The combination of wit and feeling here, the abundance and freshness of Puccini's melodic ideas, the brilliance of his musical craftsmanship—these are a cause of never-failing admiration and delight. Luckily, the latest recording is first-rate (in my opinion, the best now available) and therefore likely to win new adherents for the opera. There are flaws in this performance, to be sure—including one major piece of miscasting—but the total effect, from the bustling orchestral opening to Schicchi's spoken address to the audience at the end, is thoroughly engaging.

Lorin Maazel, more effervescent than Santini on Angel, more subtle and fine-textured than Gardelli on London, keeps the music appropriately buoyant and sparkling. His only fault (apart from an odd vavary or two, like the distractingly exaggerated ritard he introduces into the middle of Rinuccio's aria) is a tendency to get bogged down in passages that call for lyrical and tender feeling. Thus the music in which Lauretta and Rinuccio express their love for one another meanders uninspiringly

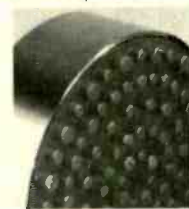
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and Lauretta's aria makes a fitful and uncertain effect.

All in all, the latter is the weakest part of the performance. Ileana Cotrubas must have remarkable gifts to hold so elevated a position in the European operatic world, but they are impossible to discover in this recording, where one looks in vain for evenness of scale, steadiness of tone, or beauty of timbre. Nor do I hear in her husky rendition of "O mio bambino caro" anything compensatory in the way of either charm or individuality.

The other principals, however, are in an entirely different class, especially Tilo Gobbli, whose Schicchi is a memorable achievement. Without ever sacrificing musical phrasing to histrionic emphasis he brings before us a fully developed charac-

ter, wily, resourceful, and lovable. The voice—never, even in this singer's heyday, a particularly outstanding instrument—is astonishingly well preserved, though nowadays it naturally enough sounds a little rougher and less pliant than it did when Gobbli recorded the role under Santini.

During the past decade or so, Gobbli has become ever more adept and resourceful as a vocal actor. Good as his earlier performance was, this new one is even better. The toothless dotard he now creates when impersonating the dying Buoso is both arresting in itself and part of a richly conceived, wide-ranging characterization. No less admirable is the air of sly petulance he adopts when, interrupted during his dictation of the will in his own favor, he asserts, "I know what Gianni Schicchi wants!" But

this assumption is full of striking insights, like the bitter irony that comes into Gobbli's voice when he rounds on Zita for putting greed before her nephew's happiness ("Brava la vecchia! Brava!"). No less evident an example of Gobbli's mastery is the eloquence with which he delivers the spoken plea for extenuation that closes the opera: How beautiful the Italian language sounds in his mouth! Fernando Corena on the Gardelli set, strained by the role's high tessitura and a far less resourceful actor, is simply no match for Gobbli.

Plácido Domingo, in fine voice, generous in manner, warm in tone, like Gobbli eclipses his competition. The rest of Columbia's cast goes about its business in a lively, thoroughly professional manner. The recording is clear and, apart from one or two moments of excessively close miking, spacious. A bilingual libretto is supplied. Highly recommended. D.S.H.

**Puccini:** *Madama Butterfly*—See Gounod: *Faust*.

**Saint-Saëns:** Works for Piano and Orchestra. Gabriel Tacchino, piano; Luxemburg Radio Orchestra, Louis de Froment, cond. [Heinz Jansen, prod.] Vox QSVBX 5143, \$10.98 (three QS-encoded discs, manual sequence).

Concertos: No. 1, in D, Op. 17; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 22; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 29; No. 4, in C minor, Op. 44; No. 5, in F, Op. 103; Rapsodie d'Auvergne, Op. 73; Wedding Cake, Op. 76; Africa, Op. 89. [\* from *CANDIDE* CE 31080, 1975.]

**Saint-Saëns:** Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in D, Op. 17; No. 5, in F, Op. 103. Philippe Entremont, piano; Orchestra of the Théâtre du Capitole (Toulouse), Michel Plasson, cond. [Roy Emerson, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34512, \$7.98. Tape: ●● MT 34512, \$7.98.

Comparison—concertos: Ciccolini, Baudo/Orch. de Paris Sera SIC 6081

Reviewing the Ciccolini/Seraphim Saint-Saëns concertos (April 1973), I noted that the popular Nos. 2 and 4 are the strongest musically, although the exoticisms of No. 5 (which earn it the subtitle *Egyptian*) are not without interest. I also expressed surprise that the Ciccolini set excluded the short concerted works in favor of the Op. 65 Septet, a charming composition but a less appropriate coupling.

The new Vox set, then, has logic on its side, and the logic carries over into Gabriel Tacchino's interpretations, which present Saint-Saëns strictly as a classicist. You will find none of the splashy bravura that others (Rubinstein in No. 2, Cortot in No. 4, and—to a lesser degree—Ciccolini in the whole cycle) have brought to this music. Those expecting such a treatment will be disappointed, but the every-note-in-place symmetry, the judicious balance of solo instrument against strings, woodwinds, and timpani, the limpid, singing fleetness of Tacchino's elegant passagework have their own artistic validity. The short pieces are played with similar urbane grace.

Entremont recorded the Second and Fourth Concertos with Ormandy some years ago (still listed as Columbia MS 6778), but apparently the new disc heralds an integral version from Toulouse. His performances are good ones, somewhat more extro-



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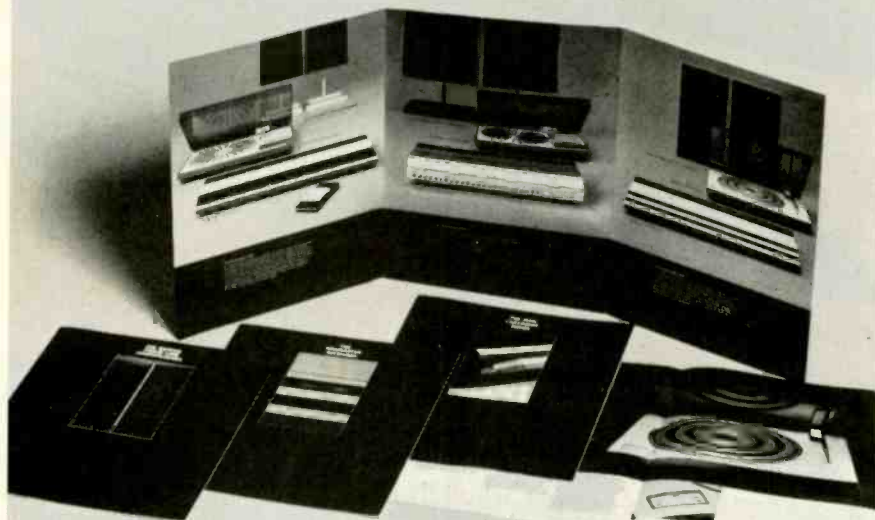
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verted than Tacchino's and also cleanly reproduced. Many listeners, however, will be disturbed by Entremont's glassy, percussive tone: "This is the karate-chop stereotype of "French" pianism, a cliché that Tacchino, Cortot, Nat. and many others, past and present, have belied. H.G.

**R SCHMELZER:** Sonatas. Vienna Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. TELEFUNKEN 6.42100, \$7.98 [from SAWT 9563/4, 1971].

This program first appeared in 1971 as half of a two-disc Schmelzer/Fux set entitled "Music at the Vienna Hapsburg Court in the Time of Leopold I" (1658-1705); the companion Fux disc, 6.41271, appeared singly in 1974. While I concede that the Schmelzer program's appeal to nonbaroqueans may be limited, I'm firmly convinced not only that it is of considerable historical significance (representing a highly individualistic Central European composer's distinctive contributions, outside the French and Italian mainstreams, to the development of the sonata form), but that present-day audiophiles can find it exciting for its strikingly imaginative exploitations of pungent mid-baroque timbre and sonority potentials.

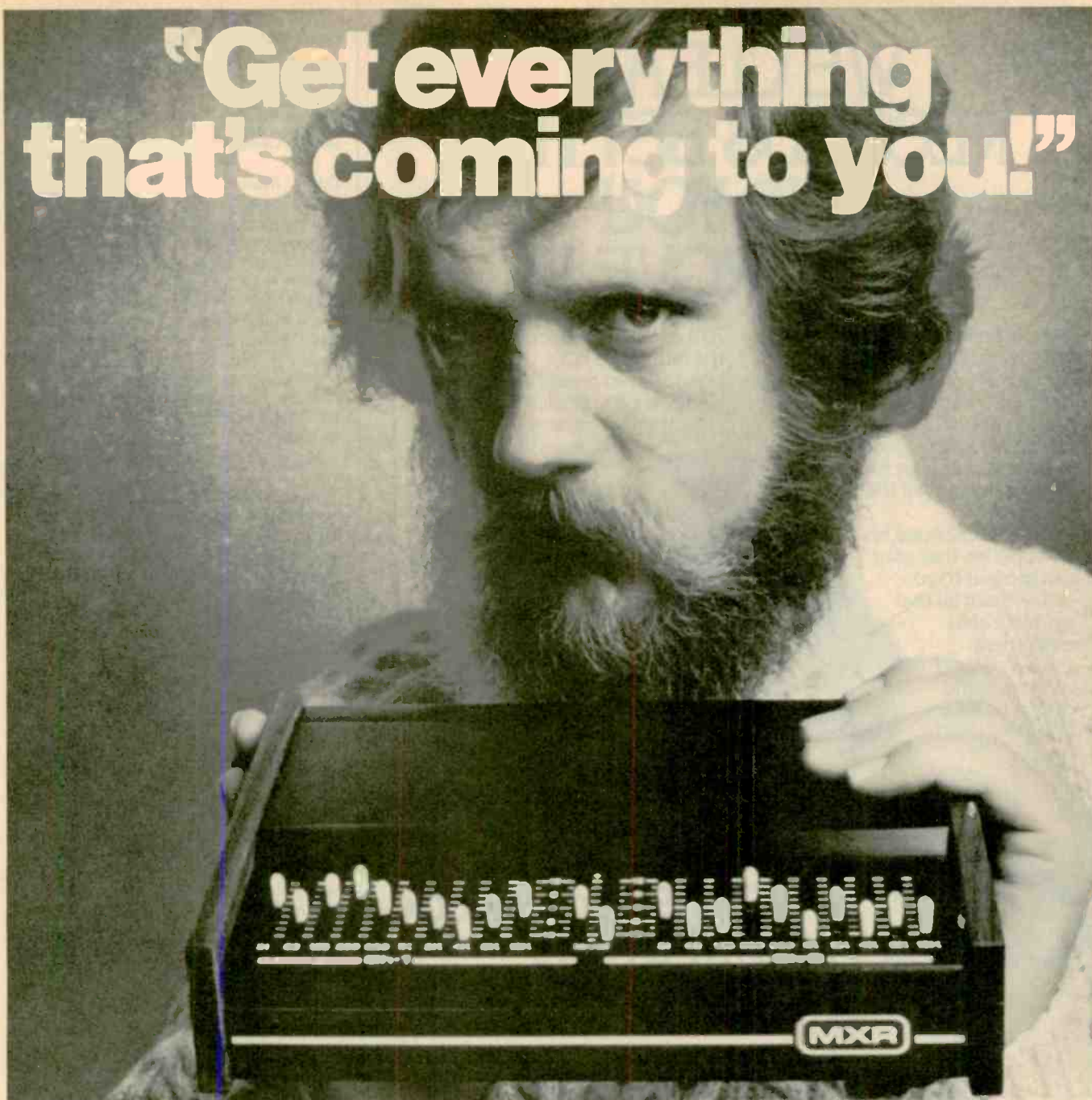
For example, the three sonatas drawn from the 1662 published collection *Sacroprofanus concentus musicus fidium* are scored for the following combinations: No. 1, for two violins, four viols, two trumpets, and organ; No. 2, for violin, three viols, cornettino, three trombones, and organ; No. 4, for two violins, two viols, and harpsichord. The six other sonatas, drawn from manuscripts preserved in the archives of Kromeriz, Czechoslovakia, show comparable resourcefulness, as in the program-opening *Sonata Natalia* of 1675 for three choirs consisting, respectively, of five viols, three oboes, and a bassoon, and two flutes with three trombones and organ. Of all the works included, the only one I know to be otherwise available is the magnificently exuberant *Sonata a 5* for two violins, gamba, trumpet, bassoon, and harpsichord, which Don Smithers—who plays the cornetto (Zink) parts here—apparently liked well enough to include in his later program with Neville Marriner (Philips 6500 110), in which he plays the bravura high-trumpet part.

Just listing the instruments Schmelzer calls for, and writes for so idiomatically, should whet the appetite of all audiophiles, and they—unlike baroque-phobes—are not likely to worry too much about the highly episodic, mosaiclike nature of the individual sonatas' formal construction. Broken up as the continuity of each work may be, the sheer prodigal flow of musical ideas and the piquancy with which they are voiced are exceptional in the music of any time or any composer. Harnoncourt and his period-instrument players certainly relish these incomparable works, and they are cleanly and brightly recorded. R.I.D.

**SHOSTAKOVICH:** The Nose. For an essay review, see page 69.

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

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Boston Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. PHILIPS 9500 141, \$8.98. Tape: ●● 7300 518, \$8.95.

Comparisons:  
Barbiroli/Royal Phil.  
Szell/Concertgebouw  
Monteux/London Sym.

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Davis' Sibelius Second is well removed from the ultra-emotional tradition: a dignified and noble performance that rises to moments of real poetry, as in the quieter parts of the finale, held back in a rapt, dreamy way. The quiet Philips pressing allows us to savor the Boston Symphony's wonderfully warm, polished sonority, and I have no hesitation in ranking this among the most uplifting recordings the work has received—in which number 1 would also include the more passionately Mediterranean Barbiroli/RPO performance of 1962, recently issued on Quintessence.

Not to be left out of serious consideration are two more "Nordic" views of the symphony. Philips fortunately still carries the propulsive, taut, demonically driven, yet highly objective (if less beautifully recorded) Szell version with the Concertgebouw, marginally more energetic in its virtuosity than the Davis/BSO. The Monteux recording—like the Barbiroli/RPO, bargain-priced—is somewhat similar to Szell's in its blunt, bleakly angular rhythmic outlines, its coolness of tone, and the pointillistic starkness of its phrases. It is, however, like Davis' in its brooding gravity and may well make the best case of all for the symphony's tragic grandeur. All four of these recordings deserve Sibelians' close attention.

A.C.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Symphonies (6); Manfred, Op. 58. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Mstislav Rostropovich, cond. [David Mottley, prod.] ANGEL SGE 3847, \$39.98 (seven SQ-encoded discs, manual sequence).

Symphonies: No. 1, in G minor, Op. 13 (*Winter Dreams*); No. 2, in C minor, Op. 17 (*Little Russian*); No. 3, in D, Op. 29 (*Polish*); No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36; No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64; No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 (*Pathétique*).

In an essay in the booklet that accompanies Rostropovich's Tchaikovsky cycle (made in conjunction with a series of live performances in October 1976), the conductor writes rather defensively of his effort "to match my personality with the personality of the music." Yet it seems to me that the set actually lacks a strong interpretive profile. While there is no integral recording of these symphonies that I would recommend on strictly musical grounds (on economic grounds I might recommend the Abravanel/Vox cycle for its consistent musicality at a low price), other conductors who have recorded Tchaikovsky extensively have projected their personal involvement with the music much more consistently than Rostropovich has. His comments on the *Pathétique* and its place in the composer's oeuvre, for example, led me to expect an especially sympathetic performance: instead I heard an eloquent presentation of some high points and chilly underplaying of others—the finale was over before it had said anything to me or moved me as any performance must.

On the other hand, Rostropovich's is one of the best all-around recordings of the Second (*Little Russian*) Symphony, and I see

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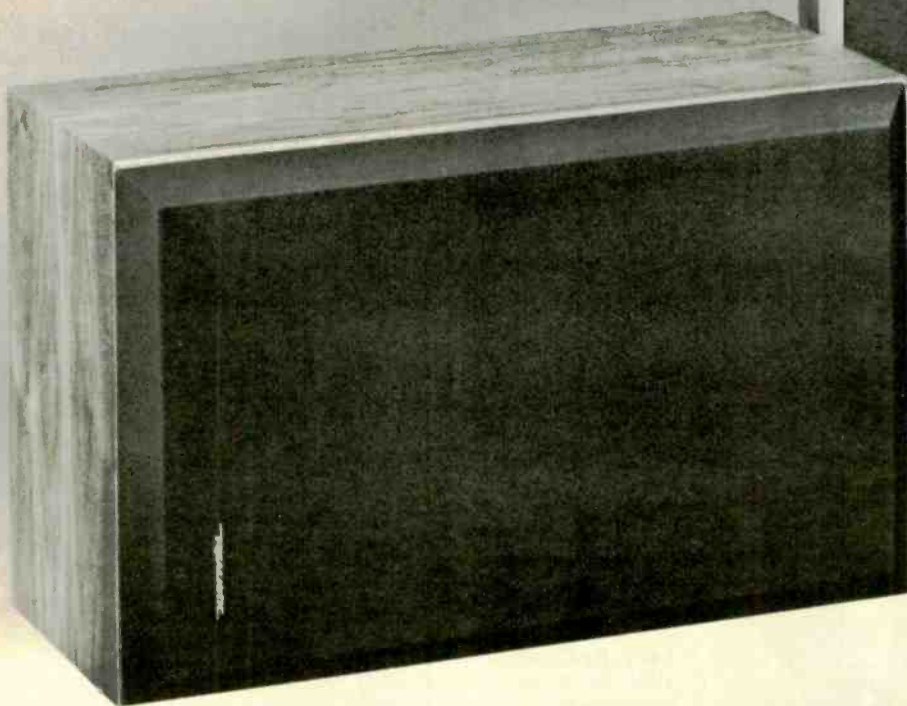
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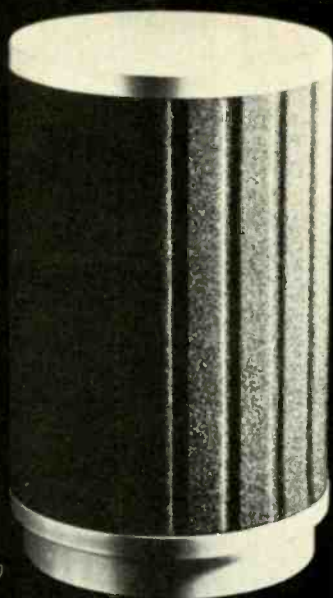
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no reason for his extended defense of the rather mild tempo liberties he takes in the First. I suspect, in fact, that it is to these two performances that I shall most likely return in the future. In the Third, always for me the most problematic of Tchaikovsky's symphonies, Rostropovich did nothing to make my listening other than an effort of concentration. Similarly, in *Manfred*, which I consider one of the composer's most compelling scores, he fails to generate the excitement of such performances as Abravanel's (in Vox QSVBX 5131 or, singly, *Candide* QCE 31079) and Rozhdstvensky's (Melodiya/Angel SR 40267). For me, *Manfred* performances tend to extremes—either good or bad—and the bad ones can be pretty dull.

In the last three symphonies, I find Rostropovich at his best in the more simply constructed middle movements. In the dramatic climaxes of the outer movements he often pushes the orchestra beyond its power to respond, or perhaps he has failed to show it how to achieve the desired force, which an orchestra of the quality of the London Philharmonic should easily be able to deliver. Yet there can be no question, even in these flawed performances, that we are dealing with a musician of extraordinary personal projection—something that we have long known from his cello-playing. Judging from these records, he has not yet translated that genius to conducting, but I would very much like to hear him conduct this music again in another ten years—assuming that he can cope with the game of musical politics, political music, and international promotion of which he is currently the focus. P.H.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 (*Pathétique*). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. [Michel Glotz, Hans Hirsch, and Magdalene Padberg, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 774, \$8.98. Tape: ●● 3300 774, \$8.98.

Karajan's latest *Pathétique*, his third stereo recording, is a distinct disappointment after his exciting remake of the Tchaikovsky Fifth (DG 2530 699, January 1977). Whereas the Fifth had a dramatic sweep and inner power that overrode so many of the score's banalities, Karajan so drains the incomparably finer Sixth of feeling and power as to render it virtually cadaverous.

The playing of the Berlin Philharmonic is as silkily impeccable as ever. The balances are superb, the colors perfectly controlled, and all of this is vividly captured on records that are manufactured as cleanly as any on the market. (The sound is obviously much better than that of Karajan's earlier—c. 1964—DG *Pathétique*, and I have never cottoned to his 1972 EMI/Angel Tchaikovsky series, which I found harsh in reproduction and rather coarse in style.) Everything here is "state of the art" except the conductor's involvement.

Despite neolithic mono sound, the old Furtwängler *Pathétique* (Seraphim 60231) still weaves a unique spell. Each time I hear Giulini's recording (Seraphim S 60031) I like it more and more—less rhetorical than most readings, it has its own balance of lyric line and dramatic impact. For those who insist on more up-to-date sonics, my current fa-

vorite is Abbado with the Vienna Philharmonic (DG 2530 350). P.H.

**VIVALDI:** Sonatas for Cello and Harpsichord (6), Op. 14. Yehuda Hanani, cello; Lionel Party, harpsichord; Christine Gummere, continuo cello. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] ORION ORS 76249, \$7.98.

Although these sonatas contain some fine music, along with some that is typical baroque *Gebrauchsmusik*, the quality of their presentation makes it difficult to listen to all six with unflagging interest.

The solo cello, a little larger than life, is too much in the foreground (its low C sounds like an organ pipe), dwarfing the harpsichord, which should be a partner but is definitely not in the engineers' good graces. Also, the harpsichord has a somewhat dull tone, and its player, Lionel Party, avoids the bright upper registers, no doubt on instruction from the soloist. This is a mistake, because brightness in the upper reaches is needed when the solo instrument is in the tenor-bass register: proper balance of the sound will preserve the soloist's prerogatives while the vivid sound of the harpsichord lends color to the ensemble.

Yehuda Hanani, a very good cellist, plays these sonatas well, but there is a sameness in his interpretation that tends to blur the listener's attention. This is partly owing to his rather uniform dynamic level, which he mistakenly believes to be a baroque trait, and partly to the very unequal partnership between solo and accompaniment—after all, this is chamber music.

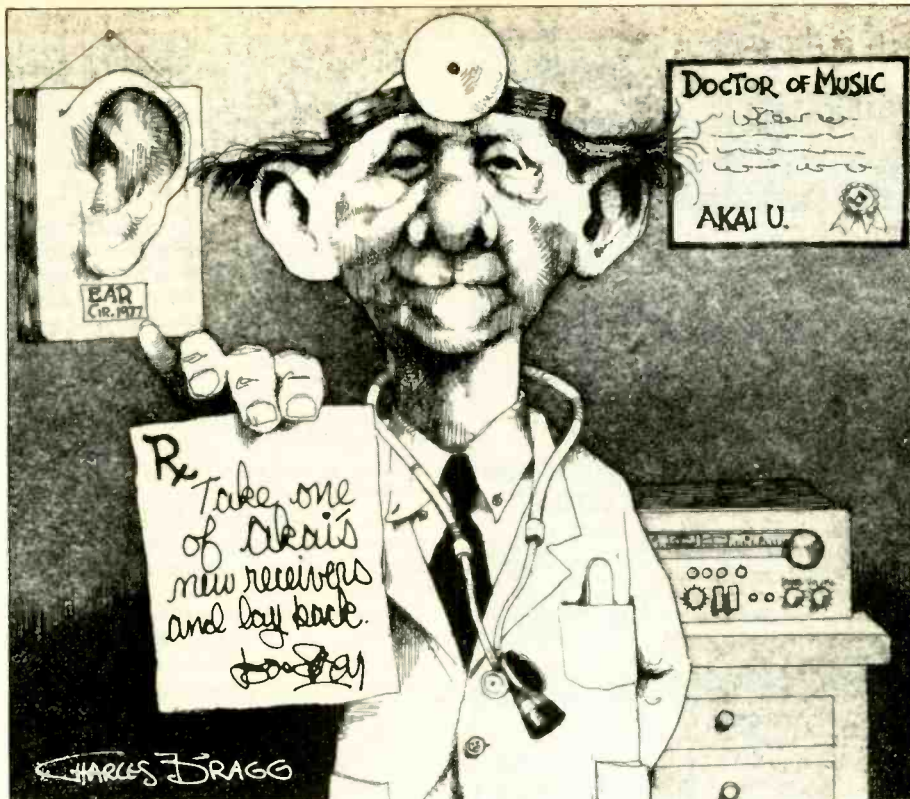
Regrettably, there is another thing that disturbs balance and clarity: the presence of a second cello, which, according to the performer/musicologist, was "undoubtedly" used in Vivaldi's time. Hardly so, because such sonatas *a due* explicitly call for a *cembalo obbligato* or a *cembalo concertato*, not for a continuo: only when more than one solo instrument was involved did they use a continuo cello. This second cello, though discreetly played by Christine Gummere, thickens the texture, and when the solo is in the low register an ambiguity is created as the two cellos become momentarily indistinguishable. Hanani, who wrote his own somewhat naive notes, says that to his knowledge "this is the first recording of the sonatas with the reinforcement of the bass line"; it is hoped that it is also the last, and that instead the harpsichord will get its due. It is too bad that an otherwise good performance should be blemished by conjectural antiquarianism.

P.H.L.

**WERNICK:** Songs of Remembrance—See Davies: Dark Angels.

**WOLF:** Songs, Vol. 3. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Daniel Barenboim, piano. [Cord Garben, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 067, \$23.94 (three discs).

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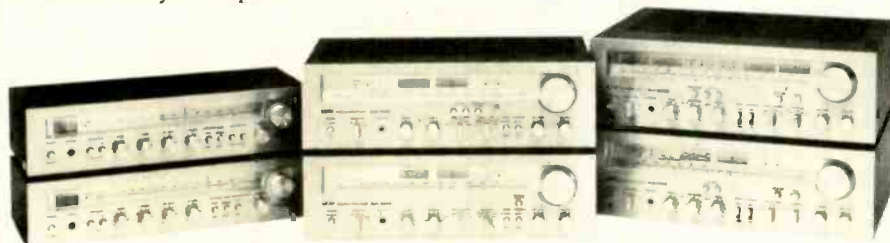
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gelo. Early Songs: Ein Grab; Andenken; Ständchen (Alles wegt die stille Nacht); Der Schwalben Heimkehr; Kna-bentod; Liebestruhling; Auf der Wanderung; Ja, die Schonst! Ich sag' es offen; Nach dem Abschiede; Ueber Nacht; Nachruf; In der Fremde I, II, III; Rückkehr; Wohin mit der Freud'; Liebschen, wo bist du?; Nachtgruss; Früh-lingslocken; Ständchen (Komm in die stille Nacht); Lie-besbotschaft; Frohe Botschaft.

Since this third volume evidently completes the Fischer-Dieskau/Barenboim Wolf survey for Deutsche Grammophon (Vol. 1, DG 2709 053, was reviewed in May 1975; Vol. 2, 2709 066, in June 1977), a few facts about the series and its place in the over-all picture are probably in order. The three volumes (nine discs) include 120 of the canonical 242 songs, plus 32 early songs from the *Nachlass*. Conspicuous by their absence are the *Spanish* and *Italian Song-books*; evidently the singer will stand on his earlier complete sets of these songs made jointly with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Gerald Moore (the *Spanish* set, DG 2726 071, is still available in Germany though it disappeared from Schwann some time ago; the *Italian* songs are on Angel SBL 3703). Also omitted are the *Six Songs* for a Woman's Voice and the six Keller songs, as well as a scattering (twenty songs) from the Mörike, Eichendorff, and Goethe collections, mostly for the obvious reason that they aren't "baritonable"—though one of the missing Goethe songs was included in Dieskau's earlier Wolf series for EMI.

That series, with Gerald Moore at the piano, is available here as an import (Electrola 1C 181 01470/6, seven discs). It comprised 129 of the 242 official songs (including 23 from the *Spanish Songbook*) and 3 from the *Nachlass*—and is thus less comprehensive, particularly in the area of the early songs. The Complete Wolfian will surely require at least Vols. 2 and 3 of the DG series (there are no *Nachlass* songs in Vol. 1), for they include twenty-five first recordings. Though there are no great songs among these, all are competently made and, turn by turn, demonstrate in isolation some of the major influences that went into the composer's eventually unique style. Wolf was a pretty sharp self-critic, however, and it would be difficult to argue that any of these songs is up to the level of those he chose to publish during his lifetime.

This aside, the contents of the two series are substantially comparable, except for Electrola's inclusion of songs from the *Spanish Songbook*, a selection that meshes rather well with Jan DeGaetani's collection for Nonesuch (H 71296), giving you 34 of the 44 songs with only five duplications—and those duplications offering a fascinating contrast of interpretive approach. And either set will have to be supplemented with the *Italian Songbook*, that masterpiece of brevity in wit and sentiment—preferably the now unavailable Berger/Prey set on Electrola or the Ameling/Souzay version on Philips, but the Angel will do if all else fails.

In point of fact, the Wolf discography isn't in very good shape these days, and Fischer-Dieskau's near-monopoly, while certainly broadening our experience of repertory, seems to have scared off serious competition, leaving us to scratch around among reissues, imports, and miscellaneous recitals for alternative performances. A Mathis/Schreier *Italian Songbook* has just appeared in Germany, but there are

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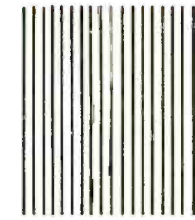
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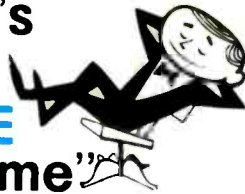


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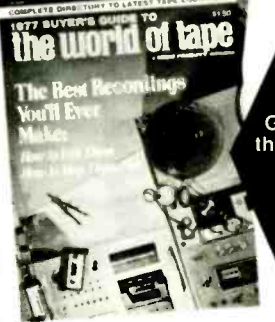
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by Paul Henry Lang

In 1830, Robert Schumann declared Haydn to be "like a familiar and well-liked house-guest: always welcome but of little significance for our times." Thus less than a quarter of a century after his death, the image of the most celebrated and admired composer of the eighteenth century was reduced to that of a jovial, eternally smiling, harmless entertainer.

It is not until almost a hundred years later that we see the beginning of a fundamental revision of this picture of the man who carried out the unparalleled fusion of the old Viennese baroque with the rococo and *Empfindsamkeit*, creating what is known as the classic style. Today we know that Haydn's vision and artistic determination are also unparalleled, but the surprises are still seemingly endless. Now Philips quietly offers a beautiful performance of a Haydn opera, *Orlando paladino*, that is a masterpiece from the capricious overture to the lilting final ensemble.

How could we have been so ignorant of this aspect of Haydn's artistic legacy? We do know that his vocal compositions were as accomplished as his instrumental works, the six great Masses and the two oratorios composed at the end of his life being the crowning achievement of a long artistic career—but the operas, of which he composed nearly a couple of dozen? A great deal of nonsense has been written about them, and this writer would like to eradicate some of his youthful indiscretions. What misled all of us half a century ago, aside from the unavailability of the scores (except for *Lo Speziale*, published in an atrocious "arrangement" and popularized by the Vienna Choir Boys), was the unlikeliness of the situation: Here was Haydn, sequestered for decades at a princely residence in a Hungarian hamlet, almost entirely cut off from the mainstream of musical life, composing in a genre that more than any other in music de-

pendent on the reigning artistic and social tendencies. However, just as he managed to create the classical symphony and quartet without even a nod at Mannheim, he composed idiomatic Italian opera without ever having been in Italy. Nor did he pay any attention to Gluck (with whom Mozart had to settle, in *Idomeneo*, before he could proceed unhampered).

In 1769, when the building of the "little Versailles" was finished in Esterházy, complete with a fine four-hundred-seat opera theater, Haydn's opera production began in earnest. He was acquainted with opera because as the resident maestro he had to conduct performances of other composers' works; he had also composed several "comedies" and operas (half of them now lost) before the splendid new theater prompted him to higher flights. Now opera became his main concern, and between 1775 and 1783 he pursued this activity to the partial neglect of his instrumental composition.

The two outstanding operas of this period are *Orlando paladino* (1782), a "heroic-comic" opera, and *Armida* (1783), an opera seria. The amalgam of the dramaturgy and expressive means of the seria with the buffa, which we usually date from Mozart's *Figaro*, is achieved here with conspicuous success four years ahead of Mozart. The situation comedy of the pure buffa is blended with character delineation, with an attendant emphasis on dramatic orchestral recitatives and animated ensembles. Particularly attractive in *Orlando* is Haydn's slyly sarcastic concept of the heroic element. The tuneful arias and cavatinas are beautifully shaped, the accompanied recitatives follow every hint in the text, and the swiftly moving finales are brilliant. Haydn handles the orchestra, tailored to the small but well-trained court orchestra's capabilities, with eloquence and elegance.

It did not escape Antal Dorati that Or-

lando paladino is a chamber opera, and the scale he maintains throughout the performance admirably re-creates the atmosphere of the little opera house in Esterházy. Everything is shipshape, the balance between stage and pit exemplary, the accompaniment accurate and always at the right dynamic level, the phrasing soigné, and the continuity remarkably constant. The recitatives are loose and fluent, and I particularly liked the delivery of the final corollary, the ensemble of the entire cast. Haydn, after closing the previous two acts with compound finales, now makes a bow toward the *Singspiel* by composing a simple strophic song in which each protagonist sings a solo couplet answered by the "choir."

The only objection I must register concerns the continuo. Dorati, who is his own maestro *al cembalo*, plays nothing but thick arpeggios; a few of these would be proper, but the eternal strumming, the avoidance of the clear high register of the harpsichord, and the too prominent cello (which is really not needed at all, though it is in the "book") rob the secco recitative of the very quality that gave it its name.

The conductor is seconded by a superb cast, a willing orchestra, and first-class sound engineering. Arleen Auger as Angelica, the principal female character, has the ideal voice and temperament for her role. This Californian can "bend" a melody in the best Italian tradition, her voice has many shades of color, and she can take on the coloraturas with ease and spunk. Elly Ameling (Eurilla) keeps her company on equal terms, while Gwendolyn Killebrew (Alcina), though her mezzo is a little heavy, sings well and with dramatic accents.

Some of the sheen is gone from George Shirley's lyric tenor, and his high tones are a little forced, but he performs the title role creditably. Claes H. Ahnsjö (Medoro), the Swede with the impeccable Italian pronunciation, is a bel canto artist, a cultivated tenor who can carry a melody with subtle inflections; Benjamin Luxon (Rodomonte), a Cornishman, deserves similar acclaim in the baritone range, and the one true buffo part (Pasquale) is sung with native relish and agility by Domenico Trimarchi. Curiously enough, instead of the traditional deep bass, Haydn calls for a baritone who is required (perhaps as a takeoff on the castrato) to escalate into the highest falsetto range. The minor roles are handled quite satisfactorily by Gabor Carelli and Maurizio Mazzieri.

*Orlando paladino* is a find, one to be cherished; those attuned to the intimate frame and finesse of the eighteenth-century chamber opera should not miss it.

### HAYDN: *Orlando paladino*.

Angelica	Arleen Auger (s)
Eurilla	Elly Ameling (s)
Alcina	Gwendolyn Killebrew (ms)
Orlando	George Shirley (t)
Medoro	Claes H. Ahnsjö (t)
Licone	Gabor Carelli (t)
Rodomonte	Benjamin Luxon (b)
Pasquale	Domenico Trimarchi (b)
Caronte	Maurizio Mazzieri (bs)

Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Antal Dorati, harpsichord and cond. [Erik Smith, prod.] PHILIPS 6707 029, \$35.92 (four discs, manual sequence).



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no present plans for issuing it here, and even the famous 78-rpm sets of the Hugo Wolf Society have only been partially carried over onto LP: The McCormack, Gerhardt, and Kipnis material has been around at one time or another (only the Kipnis now survives, on Seraphim 60163 and one song, maddeningly, on 60076), but some fine performances by Hüscher, Janssen, Erb, Rethberg, and others still remain untouched—this would be an admirable project for Turnabout. And let's hear more from Ameling, Schreier, DeGaetani, Jessye Norman, William Parker, Brigitte Fassbaender; with so many fine Lieder singers around these days, it should be possible to put together a splendid, really complete Wolf series, every song assigned to the right kind of voice and sung in the original key!

In the meantime, we are still faced with the choice between Fischer-Dieskau and Fischer-Dieskau. There's much that's good in both his series—roughly (but not quite consistently), smoother singing in the Electrola, more imaginative and compelling (and better-recorded) accompaniments in the second. This third volume doesn't differ from the two previous ones in these respects: The singer's tone can become dry, nasal, whiny at times, loud notes barked or strained, bottom notes weak. Within these limits, the standard of musicianship and ensemble is, as always, very high, and the characterization often apt (as in the bluffer Eichendorff songs). Barenboim achieves miracles of rhythmic and contrapuntal definition, and a variety of tonal coloring that never ceases to amaze.

A few failures are worth particular note, for they involve important songs. The Tristanesque Byron setting, "Keine gleich von allen Schönen," is skated over rather lightly; the earlier version dug in a bit more, but the harmonic richness, the lush curve of the lines, has yet to be well realized on records. And Wolf's last works, the three Michelangelo songs, are not well sustained, wanting a greater weight of tone. They're written specifically for bass voice, but an aging baritone does not a bass make. In his earlier version, Dieskau puffed up his tone (sacrificing some security of intonation in the process) and came closer to the point, but another kind of voice is really wanted: Hotter's 1953 recording (in Electrola IC 147 01633/4) is in the right ballpark, and Kipnis (split over the two Seraphim discs mentioned earlier) hits a home run vocally; if only the accompaniments were not so dim!

As before, DG provides full texts and translations (good ones, by Lionel Salter), an introductory essay (fairly well translated—I do wish they would assign that job to Mr. Salter too), and an index of titles and first lines. D.H.

Recitals  
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AMERICAN MUSIC FOR CLARINET. Michael Webster, clarinet; Beveridge Webster, pi-



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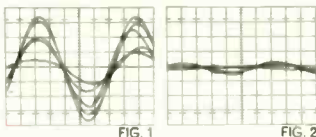



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ano°. [Horace Grenell and Carter Harman, prod.] COMPOSERS RECORDINGS SD 374, \$7.95.

MARTINO: A Set for Clarinet. REYNOLDS: Four Caprices.\* TALMA: Three Duologues.\* WEBSTER: Five Pieces for Clarinet Solo.

Michael and Beveridge Webster are that rare combination, a father-and-son performing team. Beveridge Webster is of course one of the better-known concert pianists of his generation; his son Michael, who was appointed principal clarinetist of the Rochester Philharmonic in 1968 at the age of twenty-four, is clearly following hard in his father's footsteps. The two have performed widely together, a fact reflected in the excellent performances on this new CRI disc.

Included are four American compositions, two for clarinet and piano and two for clarinet alone. Inexplicably, the liner notes tell us nothing about Louise Talma's effective *Three Duologues*, not even its date of composition. My guess is that it is an earlier work, probably written before World War II. The orientation is neoclassical, but the piece is written with a grace and fluidity that betrays no hint of the academic. The other duo, Verne Reynolds' *Four Caprices*, written in 1972, is highly virtuosic but rather loosely structured. It does provide a potent vehicle for the players, however, particularly in the rapidly moving perpetual motion movement, which features some very intricate doubling between the two instruments.

The two solo pieces are Donald Martino's *A Set for Clarinet* and Michael Webster's own *Five Pieces*. Martino is (or rather was) a clarinetist; and both of these works make very effective use of the instrument, particularly exploiting the contrasts of timbre produced by its different registers. The Martino is a very early piece, written in 1954 when he was only twenty-three, but it has become one of the more frequently performed compositions in the modern solo clarinet repertoire. Although much less complex than the composer's later music, it is an extremely attractive showpiece of considerable technical difficulty. The same can also be said of Webster's own score, but here one does not feel the presence of so distinctive a compositional personality. I do not know if he has composed much (again, the liner notes tell us nothing), but a guess would be that he is primarily active as a performer.

As I indicated, the performances are excellent. The recorded sound is also fine.

R.P.M.

### AVANT-GARDE WOODWIND QUINTET IN THE U.S.A. Dorian Quintet. Vox SVB3 5307, \$10.98 (three discs).

BARBER: Summer Music. BERGER: Quartet In C. BERIO: Children's Play. CARTER: Quintet. DAVIDOVSKY: Synchronisms No. 8. DRUCKMAN: Delizze contente che l'alme beate. FINE: Partita. FOSS: The Cave of the Winds. HUSA: Two Preludes for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon. SCHULLER: Quintet. [All except Davidovsky and Fine: Heinz Jansen, prod.; Davidovsky: Mario Davidovsky, prod.]

This excellent collection of music for woodwinds includes (despite what is indicated by the title) an unusually wide range of American works written over the past thirty-five years or so. The three earliest, the Berger Quartet (1941) and the Fine Par-

tita and Carter Quintet (both 1948), are all solid and still effective examples of the American brand of neoclassicism that flourished during the 1930s and '40s. The Berger and Fine are particularly representative: Both are light, witty, and elegant statements in an expanded diatonic tonal style that features clear sectional divisions and traditional formal outlines. The Carter is interesting in that, although it shares certain attributes with the Fine and Berger works, it exhibits a degree of tonal, rhythmic, and textural complexity, as well as a tendency toward more continuously evolving formal processes, that hints strongly at the new direction the composer's music was to take during the next decade.

It seems characteristic of the 1950s that, of the two works included from that decade, one points forward while the other looks backward. The latter is Barber's beautiful *Summer Music* (1957), a highly virtuosic vehicle that is even more traditional in tonal orientation and more sectional in structure than the Fine and Berger. But whereas those earlier works are characterized by a tightly constructed motivic approach in the melodic lines, the Barber is bathed in a warm and intensely lyrical romanticism.

The Schuller Quintet (1958) is quite another matter. Although it is serially organized, its real substance seems to indicate more a concern with color, especially various kinds of transformations of timbre. This is found not only in the constant transference of an ongoing melodic line from one instrument to another (especially prominent in the opening movement), but, above all, in the way different textural formations, contrasting widely in density and rhythmic activity, are played off against one another.

The only piece included from the '60s is Husa's *Two Preludes for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon*. This work also reveals an interest in timbral effects, particularly the contrast of highly active, cadenzalike melodic figurations against more sustained passages. Although the composition lacks the unusual textural variety of the Schuller, it makes a convincing statement.

The remaining four compositions date from the 1970s, although the earliest of these, Berio's *Children's Play of Wind Quintet, Opus Number ZOO* (1970), is really a rewritten version of a piece for woodwind quartet and narrator that dates from 1951 but was never performed. In reworking it, Berio incorporated the narrator's role into the five instrumental parts, so that the players themselves recite the text. Although the music is essentially accompanimental (and thus somewhat inconsequential), the piece is always very clever and, particularly in the last two movements, quite funny. (It should be a natural for children's concerts.)

Lukas Foss's *The Cave of the Winds* (1972), a study in new musical resources, makes heavy use of multiphonic sounds (i.e., more than one note sounding at once in a single instrument), which he manages to put to some musical purpose. Much of the piece is made up of a combination of various ostinato-like figures, giving it something of the quality of an "infernal machine" that, once set in motion, must be allowed to run its inevitable course. (It does so for almost eighteen minutes.) Although the work



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seems to me rather short on substance, it is very long on effects, which seem immanently musical in Foss's case. In any event, it is an unbelievable tour de force for the players. Indeed, even the listener is left somewhat breathless at the end.

Finally, the Davidovsky and Druckman works feature the quintet in conjunction with taped music. In Davidovsky's *Synchronisms No. 8* (1975) the latter is treated as an equal partner with and an extension of the players. Thus the tape interacts with the instruments in an "unexceptional" manner, sharing pitch and rhythmic material to produce a larger textural unity. Druckman's *Delizie contente che l'alme beate* (1973), on the other hand, places the tape part in dramatic opposition to the quintet. Whereas Davidovsky uses only electronic sources, the electronic layer here includes sounds produced by both electronic and live instrumental sources (primarily those of a woodwind quintet), making one much more conscious of the effect of confrontation. The work is based on an aria from Cavalli's opera *Il Giasone* (the aria's opening line gives the composition its title), and much of the musical material in both the tape and live portions is recognizably derived from this source. Yet Druckman transforms the original sufficiently to fashion a very personal musical statement, thus avoiding the production of a mere pastiche.

What is perhaps most remarkable about this collection is that, despite the variety of compositional approaches, the general quality is unusually high. The Dorian Quintet, which makes a specialty of new music (it commissioned the four most recent compositions in the set), deserves great praise for undertaking a project of this scope. The music is unusually difficult, yet the ensemble provides convincing performances in all cases. Not that the results are uniformly ideal: Lapses both in ensemble and in individual execution are occasionally detectable.

My one major disappointment is the liner notes, which seem to have been put together rather haphazardly. In addition to the fact that the amount of information given on the individual pieces is somewhat sparse, there are a couple of glaring (typographical?) errors: The Barber work is dated 1975 (instead of 1957), and the Cavalli opera is dated 1949(!). R.P.M.

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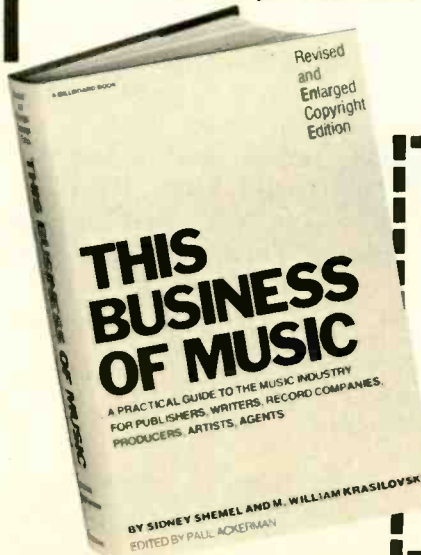
**BERNARD BRAUCHLI:** The Renaissance Clavichord. Bernard Brauchli, clavichord. [Ralph Dopmeyer, prod.] TITANIC Ti 10, \$7.00 (Titanic Records, 43 Rice St., Cambridge, Mass. 02140).

There is surely no greater mark of respectability among harpsichordists today than to have studied under the redoubtable Gustav Leonhardt. Although many players proudly drop Leonhardt's name, few can have learned the master's lessons so thoroughly as the young (b. 1944) Dutchman Ton Koopman. In this program of works by Sweelinck, Frescobaldi, Rossi, and Dome-

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nico Scarlatti, he amply demonstrates his command of the best elements of Leonhardt's style: utterly controlled and polished technique, a strong underlying rhythmic impulse, and an understanding of the great musical power of judicious understatement.

The program is an exceptionally fine one, and it offers a particularly welcome hearing for Michel Angelo Rossi's extraordinary Toccata No. 7 in D minor, a work whose bold chromaticism sounds startling even today. For these performances Koopman plays three modern instruments—each a reproduction of a historical model—by the Utrecht builder Willem Kroesbergen: a virginal "after Andreas Ruckers" and two harpsichords, one "after Andreas Ruckers" and the other "after Bartholomaeus Stephanini." The virginal is most successful, and the Flemish-style harpsichord, although overly "tight" in sound, is also lovely; the other seems a bit charmless, even for an Italian instrument. Each of the instruments produces a noticeably high level of plucking noise, though this may be merely the result of overly close microphone placement; the recorded sound is undeniably vivid, but perhaps larger than life.

For his album of Renaissance keyboard music Bernard Brauchli plays a fretted clavichord built by Peter Kukulka, based on Austrian or South German instruments of the second half of the seventeenth century. The instrument's sound is enchanting, and it has been captured quite well. I'm afraid I found Brauchli's program too cluttered with tiny bits and pieces (ranging from the early fourteenth to the late seventeenth centuries) to be truly satisfying, and sustained listening made it hard to ignore the sometimes slim musical interest of the pieces. But then, much of this literature must have been intended as courtly Muzak anyway.

Brauchli is nothing if not a dynamic and expressive player, yet I can't help feeling that his extreme use of rubato is rather affected and overdone, and that it unnecessarily obliterates the dance character of much of the music. He lacks, for my taste, precisely that quality of elegant understatement that makes the playing of a Leonhardt or a Koopman so persuasive. S.C.

**B** **LENINGRAD CHAMBER ORCHESTRA:** Concerted Works. Soloists; Leningrad Chamber Orchestra, Lazar Gozman, cond. WESTMINSTER GOLD/MELODIYA WGS 8336, \$3.98.

**MILHAUD:** The Four Seasons: Winter, Op. 327 (with Viktor Venglovsky, trombone). **MOZART:** Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, No. 2, in D, K. 314 (with Dmitri Bida, flute). **VILLA-LOBOS:** Dance of Seven Notes (with Lev Pechersky, bassoon).

This mixed concerted-works bag includes two worthy novelties, one of which—the Villa-Lobos *Dance of Seven Notes*—does not even appear in the standard reference sources. His metamorphosis of a seven-note theme, more of a European than a Brazilian neoclassical work, is an extremely effective exploitation of bassoon potentials for expressiveness and agility.

While the overside Mozart D major Flute Concerto has been done better more than once in the past (my preference is Rampal's MHS or RCA version), Dmitri Bida gives a spirited and distinctively individual per-

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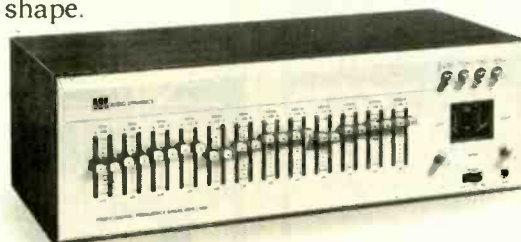
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formance, more frankly heartfelt than most in the slow movement. His account is unfortunately but not fatally handicapped by a somewhat metallic flute tone, un-Mozartean cadenzas, and solo miking so close as to result in occasional piercingly loud notes.

The other two soloists are also closely miked but with less disconcerting consequences and are otherwise effectively recorded. Both trombonist Viktor Venglovsky and bassoonist Lev Pechersky are notable for their striking, very "Russian" personality projections as well as for their bravura virtuosity.

The 1953 Milhaud Concertino d'hiver is the last of the miniature-concerto series of Four Seasons begun with the better-known Concertino de printemps (with solo violin) of 1935. Winter's swaggering first movement and elegiac slow movement are first-rate examples of relatively late Milhaud; Milhaud the too prolific routine is evident only in the hearty but more heavy-handed finale.

R.D.D.

**ELIZABETH MARSHALL:** Circa 1815: The Piano in London: Themes, Variations, Rondos. Elizabeth Marshall, piano. [Mullen Boyd, prod.] SERENUS SRS 12067, \$6.98.

One of the rigid Rules of Reviewing is to stick to the specific work at hand, without digressing into what the reviewer wishes the work had been. I regretfully break that rule only because the present artist and producer have so narrowly and myopically missed what should have been an outstanding example of lavender-scented, old-lace antimacassar-draped time travels in musical nostalgia. All that was really needed was the choice of an appropriate period instrument rather than the obviously modern piano actually used (and cleanly if routinely recorded) here. It would have helped too if Elizabeth Marshall, who plays with admirable fluency and aplomb, had been just a bit less dispassionate and—while still resisting the temptation to camp up her materials—had infused them with at least some personal humor and sentiment.

As things are, one must substitute one's own imagination for the performer's lack of it if any true life can be restored to these favorite musical entertainments of pre-Victorian London—the filigree pianistic decorations on and bravura elaborations of favorite tunes. Dussek (who qualifies for inclusion on the basis of a London residency for the last dozen years of the eighteenth century) is the only "name" composer here, but his variations on "My Lodging Is On the Cold, Cold Ground," better known nowadays as "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," are no more and no less disarmingly naive and exasperatingly interminable than their companions.

They include bombastically inflated variations on "God Save the King" by a transplanted Frenchman, one Latour; simple-minded variations—complete with an Irish jig episode—on a Hanoverian air (the popular German song "Gestern Abend war Vetter Michel hier") by the transplanted German-born Italian composer Federigo Fiorillo; bustling rondo elaborations on the still-familiar Irish air "Robin Adair" by the completely obscure Mr. T. Howell; and

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rather better varied and more effective variations on the "Caledonian" airs "Auld Robin Gray" and (inevitably) "Auld Lang Syne" by the once-noted English organist John F. Burrowes.

Fair warning: If any of this old-fashioned virtuosity is to have a genuine, however quaint, appeal, I strongly advise sampling the music before reading any of the ineptly written and printed jacket notes. R.D.D.

**B** **MUSIC OF THE FRENCH BAROQUE.** Oberlin Baroque Ensemble. [Thomas Bethel, prod.] Vox SVBX 5142, \$10.98 (three discs).

**BARRIERE:** Sonatas, Book V, No. 4, in G. **BOISMORTIER:** Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord, in G, Op. 91. **F. COUPERIN:** La Steinguerque (trio sonata); La Sultane (quartet sonata). **L. COUPERIN:** Five Symphonies for viols and continuo. **MARAI:** La Gamme en forme de petit opéra. Pièces de viole, Book II: Sulte in B minor. **RAVEAU:** Pièces de clavecin en concert: 2e Concert. **SAINTE-COLOMBE:** Two Concerts for two viols.

For a number of years I have lamented America's lack of a polished baroque-music ensemble of the caliber of, say, Harnoncourt's Vienna Concentus Musicus. There have been various individuals and (largely de facto) groups who have made some conscious attempts at "authenticity"—with period instruments and some degree of stylistic understanding—but few American performances have achieved the aura of utter authority, or even the technical security, that we have come to expect of the best European groups.

If the present album by the Oberlin Baroque Ensemble (James Caldwell, Lisa Goode Crawford, Marilyn McDonald, Catharina Meints, and Robert Willoughby) is any indication, the U.S. may finally be providing some viable competition for Harnoncourt et al. In an admirable anthology of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French instrumental music, the Oberlin players demonstrate technical finesse, stylistic authority, and a more than ample measure of sheer musicality. So secure, in fact, are the technical and stylistic aspects of their performances that we are soon conscious only of the musicality, and this is exactly as it should be. If there is any disappointment at all, it is only in "L'Agaçante" from Rameau's *Pièces de clavecin en concert*; here the performance is perhaps too refined to capture the real aggressiveness implied by the title (c.f. Leonhardt, Brüngen, and Kuijken on Telefunken 6.41133).

The instruments used in these performances—all authentic period examples or modern reconstructions—include a one-key flute, oboe, two quintons (violins), one treble and three bass viols, and harpsichord. The sounds are lovely indeed, and not the least bit "quaint"—a special tribute to the skill of the players. The rich sonorities of the seven-string bass viols are particularly magnificent, nowhere more so than in the poignant "Tombeau de Mons'r. de Lully" of Marais.

Recording engineer Thomas Bethel is to be commended for the marvelously natural sound of these discs, and especially for resisting the temptation to place the microphones too close. It's unfortunate, though, that two sides of the review copy were afflicted by rather objectionable surface noises. The discs are accompanied by a fine program brochure, with lucid notes on the

music and instruments by Mary Anne Ballard. All told, this is a uniquely satisfying production, and I sincerely hope we soon will be hearing more from this superb ensemble. S.C.

**MARTIN PEARLMAN:** Music of the Couperin Family—See L. Couperin: Suites for Harpsichord.

**THE VIRTUOSO BASSOON.** Arthur Grossman, bassoon; Silvia Kind, harpsichord; Randolph Hokanson, piano. RAVENNA RAVE 761, \$7.50 postpaid (University of Washington Press, Seattle, Wash. 98105).

Discophiles who share my own susceptibil-

ity to the gruffly reedy but often poignantly eloquent voice of the too often maligned "clown of the orchestra" will share my relish of the best bassoon recital I've encountered since Robert Thompson's "Baroque Bassoon" program (MHS 1853, July 1975). The more widely known Arthur Grossman plays even more magisterially and is recorded with better balanced, less reticent accompaniments in a repertorially wider-ranging program. The baroque era is represented by three fine Telemann sonatas, in E minor, D, and F minor (the first of which is the same one, originally for gamba and continuo, recorded earlier by Thompson). And harpsichordist Silvia Kind matches the truly virtuoso Grossman in both taut control and tonal piquancy.

The B-side more modern music is less



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substantially satisfying (for me at least), but it's no less well played and recorded, although pianist Randolph Hokanson is more a modest accompanist than a full partner. If one can forget Telemann for a moment, there is some novel interest in the four widely varied pieces, none of which I've encountered on records previously. They range from a characteristically Elgarian *Romance*, Op. 62 (Elgar was once a bassoonist as well as violinist and organist), to a deftly turned unaccompanied *Rhapsodie* (1954) by the Michigan-born Willson Osborne. In between are a divertingly ingenious, unaccompanied five-movement *Partita* by Gordon Jacob and a (for me) rather contrived suite for bassoon and piano by Alexandre Tansman. It too is given distinction, however, by Grossman's bravura performance, and it will appeal to the Tansman fans who already treasure the *Sonatine* that Grossman and Hokanson recorded in their 1972 program (Coronet 2741). R.D.D.

## Theater and Film

**THE DEEP.** Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by John Barry; Donna Summer, vocal. [John Barry, prod.] CASABLANCA NBLP 7060, \$8.98.

Once one of the most original and promising of contemporary film composers, John Barry has, within the past few years, sadly fallen into disfavor with his admirers. Barry, the composer of such distinguished scores as *The Lion in Winter*, *The Last Valley*, *Deadfall*, and the best of the Bonds, *From Russia with Love*, *Goldfinger*, and *You Only Live Twice*, has apparently lapsed into a creative slump, with his recent output failing to duplicate the freshness and excitement of his earlier works.

His score for director Peter Yates's conspicuously shallow undersea thriller *The Deep*, unfortunately continues the composer's lean period. Though suitably ominous and exotic in all the right places, this is little more than characterless filler music, providing an omnipresent but innocuous accompaniment to the briny goings-on. The Barry trademarks are all here: the sensuous theme song and the short motifs, ostinato figures, and extended pedal points—the fragmentary devices that he pioneered in film scoring—but all minus the inspirational spark and dramatic flair that embellished many of his other scores. This lackluster quality is especially disappointing considering that most of the movie's action takes place underwater and without dialogue, thus offering enormous possibilities for musical invention and development.

In all fairness, it should be mentioned that Barry was brought in to work on *The Deep* on very short notice after John Williams' score was thrown out at the last moment by the film's producers. Taking this into consideration, Barry must be complimented for composing music that, if not-

ing else, succeeds at being effective. Also, apart from Richard Lester's *Robin and Marian* (whose lovely score was inexplicably never issued on LP), Barry hasn't had the opportunity to write for a really fine film in quite some time. Surely it would have been difficult for any composer to work up much enthusiasm for the ludicrous remake of *King Kong* and the string of second-rate stuff he has worked on lately.

Barry was at least concerned enough to present *The Deep* in a unified, listenable format on the soundtrack LP. Rather than stringing together separate cues in disconnected fashion as is the standard practice for soundtracks, he rearranged the score into a twenty-three-minute ballet titled *Return to the Sea—2033 A.D.* This transfiguration doesn't compensate for the music's shortcomings, but it does make it more palatable, forging the score into an occasionally absorbing underwater pastorate (in the traditional pastoral key of F major) complete with harp arpeggios, bass pedal points to suggest depth, and eerie string glissandos moving downward to suggest descent and upward to heighten suspense.

Side 2 contains, not one, but two vocal versions of the theme song, "Down, Deep Inside," unintelligibly sung by Donna Summer. Though I really couldn't make out the lyrics, Summer's orgasmic grunts and groans make me suspect that the title refers less to the sea than to female anatomy.

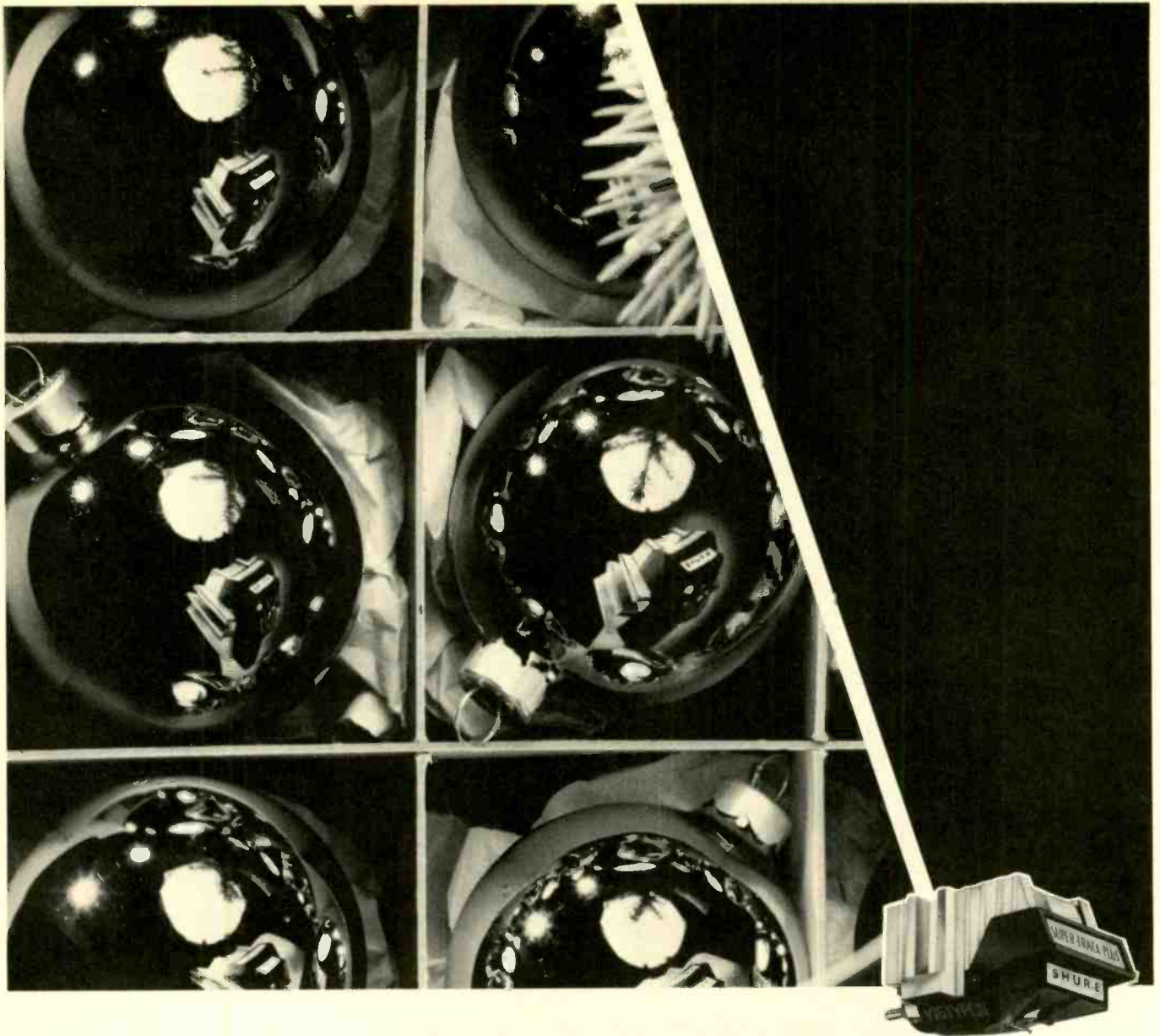
With its transparent blue pressing, the LP will probably make its biggest sales splash with collectors of recorded esoterica. Barry fans will be better off saving their money for the time when he starts to fulfill his early promise. R.F.

**THE SPY WHO LOVED ME.** Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Marvin Hamlisch; Carly Simon, vocal. [Marvin Hamlisch and Richard Perry, prod.] UNITED ARTISTS LA 774H, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CA 774H, \$7.98; ●● EA 774H, \$7.98.

Marvin Hamlisch's career as a film composer proceeds in its inadequate way with this amorphous quasi-score for the latest James Bond adventure. Those of us who recall the sinister, exotic, quick-pulsed ambience of John Barry's classic Bond scores will doubtless be appalled at Hamlisch's treatment of *The Spy Who Loved Me*. His nondescript melodies, clumsy orchestrations, trite jazz riffs, and over-all dramatic and technical ineptitude are embarrassing, to say nothing of the score's lack of effectiveness in the film. Even the theme song—Hamlisch's métier—the sophomoricly suggestive "Nobody Does It Better"—fails miserably to evoke any response except irritation at the ad infinitum repetition of its insipid vocal refrain. And just wait until you hear what he has done to Monty Norman's twangy misterioso 007 signature theme! He has rearranged it and added some annoying wah-wah effects so as to make it almost unrecognizable.

As Hamlisch continues to trade on his one genuinely good song, "The Way We Were," and some Scott Joplin rags to further his career, it won't be long before even the most tin-eared film producers learn to stop confusing these lucky breaks with true musical talent. R.F.





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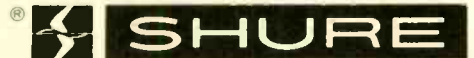
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Foreigner. July.

Franks, Michael: Sleeping Gypsy. March.

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess. Albert; Dale; DeMain. September.

Gershwin: Vocal Works. Gregg Smith Singers. September.

Giordano: Andrea Chénier. Domingo; Scotto; National Philharmonic, Levine. August.

Gold, Andrew: What's Wrong with This Picture? February.

Hampton, Lionel: The Complete Lionel Hampton. April.

Haydn: Piano Works. Kalish. Piano Works, Vol. 1. McCabe. Piano Works, Vol. 1. Pertis; Sebestyén. January.

Holliger, Heinz—and Aurèle Nicolet: Orchestral Works with Oboe and Flute. Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Inbal. October.

King, Carole: Simple Things. October.

Liszt: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in A. Berman; Vienna Symphony, Giuliani. February.

Liszt: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1 in E flat; Totentanz. Kiss, Hungarian State, Ferencsik. February.

Liszt: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat. Gutiérrez; London Symphony, Previn. February.

Lully: Alceste. Grand Ecurie et Chambre du Roy, Malgoire. October.

McGarrigle, Kate and Anna: Dancer with Bruised Knees. May.

Meyerbeer: Le Prophète. Scotto; Horne; McCracken; Royal Philharmonic, Lewis. March.

Mitchell, Joni: Hejira. March.

Montemezzi: L'Amore dei tre re. Štepi; London Symphony, Santl. August.

Morrison, Van: A Period of Transition. June.

Mount, William Sidney—Violin and Fiddle Music: The Cradle of Harmony. Ross. March.

Mozart: Operatic Arias. M. Price; English Chamber, Lockhart. April.

Mozart: Operatic and Concert Arias. Sass; Hungarian State Opera, Lukács. April.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550. London Philharmonic, Kleiber. September.

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Shostakovich: The Nose. Moscow Chamber, Rozhdestvensky. December.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 14, Op. 135. Vishnevskaya; Reshetin; Moscow Philharmonic, Rostropovich. June.

Sibelius: En Saga, Op. 9; Valse triste, Op. 44. London Philharmonic, De Sabata. September.

Strauss, R.: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. New York

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Tchaikovsky: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 23. Gutiérrez; London Symphony, Previn. February.

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Venuti, Joe—and George Barnes: Live at the Concord Summer Festival. November.

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Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Bailey; Bode; Kollo; Vienna Philharmonic, Solti. February.

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Stanton Magnetics' Left-Handed Stylus. (News  
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Computer Technology Transforms Speaker De-  
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Shure M-615AS equalization analyzer. May.

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## You've Come a Long Way, Dolly

by Jack Hurst

**I**nevitably, the recent national notice accorded Dolly Parton has focused more on the improbability of her image than on her art. A voluptuous woman with a childish giggle, she finger-picks the guitar, the banjo, and the mountain dulcimer with inch-long, painted nails. She composes delicate lyrics of Tennessee mountain innocence and performs them in

“If you have any talent,  
people are gonna overlook it . . .  
unless you've got  
somethin' to get attention.”

finery a stripper would happily peel. And through layers of lipstick, she pushes a voice fervent with fundamentalist religion.

Today she would like to be a little more listened to and a little less ogled. But the reams of copy about her fashion and physiognomy can hardly be blamed

*The author is the country-music columnist for the Chicago Tribune and a staff writer on the Tribune Magazine.*

on anyone but herself; she donned the gaudy garb and high-piled hair specifically to make us stare. “If you have talent, people are gonna overlook it,” she rather cynically observes, “unless you've got somethin' to get attention.”

Parton has a lot of both. Behind the much-ballyhooed facade has evolved a music that is even more improbable than her image. The cultural bedrock on which it rests derives from sources that now are all but lost to the American scene. Having gone to Nashville thirteen years ago with nothing but a cardboard suitcase, she today owns properties that, she acknowledges, “would amount to millions of dollars if I sold 'em.” They include a BMI music publishing company called Velvet Apple; Owepar Music (also BMI), in which she owns the controlling interest (her former boss, Grand Ole Opry star Porter Wagoner, is a minority stockholder); and Nashville's busy Fireside Studios, owned by Owepar and supervised by Wagoner.

She seems rather hesitant, however, to claim the skills that earned her these holdings. Like most country-based performers, she begins by dismissing her in-

# Backbeat

strumental talents. "I don't pride myself on bein' a great musician," she says in her choppy, eastern Tennessee drawl. "I could've learned to be, but I liked bein' a girl, too, and you can't really learn to be a great musician with long fingernails. So I've just kind of learned to compromise. As long as I can play enough to write my songs the way I want 'em and play the particular songs I do onstage, that's fine with me."

Parton says she isn't proficient enough to perform as a studio musician, but then recalls that she has done so a few times. On her last LP, "New Harvest, First

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"I may not be hot forever, so  
I'm gonna enjoy bein' out there."

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Gathering" (RCA APL 1-2188), she played banjo on *Applejack*, and a couple of years ago she played guitar behind Merle Haggard on his recordings of her *Kentucky Gambler* and *The Seeker*. "He asked me to play on 'em because he liked the kind of sound I got, but in the mix you didn't hear me much," she notes. "They wanted it mostly for feel."

On her own sessions, Parton has had full control of production only recently, starting with "New Harvest." In her desire to make that album distinctive and cross over into pop, she confesses she may have gone too far: "It was my first chance to totally produce, and I didn't know if I'd ever get another one. I went overboard. I got too many hot licks in that I'd been savin' up over the years. I just wanted to hear it all at once."

Although it has sold "three times more" than any of her previous LPs, she says, it did not yield the "smash single" that would have given her identity as a pop star. To try to find such a song, she went to Los Angeles where her current LP, "Here You Come Again" (the first she has recorded outside Nashville), was produced by Gary Klein. He has rendered the same service for Glen Campbell, Barbra Streisand, and Gladys Knight. She feels the new LP is "simpler and classier" than "New Harvest."

Parton doesn't intend to be produced by anybody but herself for very long, however. Klein was brought in partly because her heavy schedule of one-nighters last year didn't allow her time to choose material, record, and mix it. "This way, I just had to sing," she explains.

Looking back over her thirty-one years, she sees a marked progression in her singing and composing. Her lyrics haven't changed much since her teens, she observes, "but you can just go back in time and watch my music grow." A year ago, as she was explaining her movement away from country toward a more pop-styled production and instrumentation, she commented that she had never really been "traditional country." In a way, she was entirely correct. More authentic folk than traditionally country, she came from a poorer, more insular background than that of her generation of country singers.

Subsisting on tenant farms along mountainous backroads in Sevier County, Tennessee, her family was too poor to own a television set or radio during the formative years in which she began writing. But the musical heritage in the Smoky Mountain foothills was as rich as the life was poor, and Dolly's style grew out of her exposure to its three basic components: Elizabethan ballads preserved for centuries by isolated Appalachian mountaineers; the wildly emotional religious music of the fundamentalist churches, complete with shouting, rolling on the floor, even snake handling; and, when there was a radio around, the country music of the early 1950s. The last was the least important of the three, which becomes obvious from her own appraisal: "It was natural when I wrote to reflect back to the old songs we used to sing, and part of my melodies kind of carried that old-timey flavor without me realizing it until after they were done. And I still do that—those folkly-type melodies are the best of all."

She was so young when she wrote her first song that her mother had to spell the words for her. At age ten she made her first radio and TV appearances in eastern Tennessee, 200 miles east of Nashville, singing "just real dreadful, plain, sorrowful country songs." The day after her high school graduation in 1964, she set out for Nashville to live with an uncle until she could afford to rent a cheap apartment. She soon landed a \$50-a-week songwriting "draw" from Combine Music and began recording for Monument Records with Ray Stevens (of *Ahab the Arab* fame) and Monument president Fred Foster as producers.

"She didn't know much of anything about stage presence, or makeup, or things like that, but I thought she was the freshest, most distinctive thing I'd seen," Foster recalls. "I don't think she had any idea what

her potential was, but she did at least realize that she didn't quite sound like anybody else. And she saw no reason why she couldn't become a star."

Foster and Stevens had her doing "more of a pop-oriented, rockabilly thing," Parton recalls, when in 1967 the big break of her career came: a chance to become the featured female vocalist with the touring troupe of Wagoner, a rhinestone-studded Opry star who headlined (and still headlines) one of Nashville's most popular syndicated country-music TV series. She took her chance, leaving Monument for Wagoner's label, RCA, and "pop-oriented rockabilly" for mainstream country.

Parton credits Wagoner, one of the field's shrewdest businessmen, with teaching her many valuable lessons, including the warm, familiar way he worked a crowd. "I learned from him, and he always said he'd learned most of what he knew from [the late] Red Foley." And it was during the years with him that her talents as a songwriter matured. Not long after she joined the show, she wrote *Coat of Many Colors*, a folk-oriented song about a garment of rags her mother sewed for her to wear to school. It is a true classic that would have legitimized her claim to both country and pop recognition had she never done anything else. But she did, and with *Tennessee Mountain Home*, she set her high vibrato to a more urgent tempo. Then in 1971 with *Muleskinner Blues*, her music took on a heavier beat that continued through such other country (but folk-derived) hits as *Joshua* and the chilling *Jolene*.

"That was the first time I noticed people sayin', 'That's different than what you been doin'.' But I had been fightin' for that sort of thing for years," she says. "I had all these songs I was writin', and I was developin' musically, as far as a different style of pickin' and hearin' different sounds in my mind was concerned. *Jolene* was the first good example of the fact that you can be yourself and still improve on whatever you do." Such a thesis may not sound terribly revolutionary, but it is in country music, where traditionalists often view innovation as a threat to the art.

In talking of her struggles to "improve," Parton



carefully avoids mentioning Wagoner's name, but her former mentor plainly became an artistic adversary as the seven years she worked for him wore on. An old pro who knew the mainstream country market like the inside of his wallet, he seems to have been leery of much of Parton's daring creativity. But she, swiftly noting that "it was only when I started expandin' musically that I started expandin' in the music *business*," kept pushing.

She worked her way toward a lighter, more pop sound with such songs as *Love Is like a Butterfly* before finally leaving Wagoner's show to form her own band in 1974. He produced or coproduced her records

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### "Those folky-type melodies are the best of all."

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for another two years, but "New Harvest" in the fall of 1976 ended all but the business partnership. With that LP she made what she terms her "greatest departure from the simplified music." When she started on her own, she had only the "basic guitar, steel guitar, drums, bass, and piano. Now I use ever'thing," she exults. "On records I'm usin' horns, clavinet—a keyboard instrument that gets a kind of rockier sound—and synthesizers, and all sorts o' things that would've scared ever'body to death before in country music.

"Onstage, I use the clavinet and synthesized drums, which make a kind of a wah-wah sound that is new and excitin'. I've got two electric guitars as opposed to the one I used to have. And I use the Arp, which can sound like strings and"—she suddenly giggles—"make other noises, too.

"I may not be hot forever, so I'm gonna enjoy bein' out there. Later on, I can say, 'Well, at least I tried it.'"

Innovative though she tries to be, her creative process usually begins in the traditional country manner: with a guitar and a pencil. Her songwriting has diminished markedly because of the recent long tours intended to take her into pop while retaining her dominance in the country field. Throat problems, brought on by the frenetic activity, also affect her songwriting. "In order to write, I have to sing songs over and over, so I'm writin' less now." That bothers her, she concedes, "but, you know, I've written several thousand songs. If I never wrote another one, I'd still never live to record 'em all."

Musically, Dolly Parton's story has been one of liberation—from isolation, from poverty, from strictly interpreted country form, and from resistance to her creative impulse. Learning lessons from each of her captors, the little hill-country blonde has vastly broadened her musical capacities while continuing to employ many of the basic melodies and rhythms of her childhood.

To country fans, she emphasizes that, although her music is growing, she remains the same country person—just one that has matured musically. The "child who had just come from the mountains," as she describes herself when she was recording for Fred Foster, has become a woman taking possession of her destiny.



## Yes Plugs In at the Garden: The Setup

by John Storm Roberts

It's 9 a.m. in New York and already 80 degrees on the way to a muggy inner-city 90. In just 12 hours, British rock group Yes will perform the first of three concerts to a sellout crowd. Since 8:15 union stagehands have been unloading mountains of various hardware from four semis parked at Madison Square Garden's 33rd Street freight entrance: crates and girders, speakers, lighting banks, and who-knows-what-all-else. Under the supervision of promoter Ron Delsener's man Keith Kevin and Yes stage manager Chip Irwin, the work goes smoothly on a flow of good humor and bad language.

Five stories above ground level, the 18,000-plus-seat arena looks surprisingly small. The stage, bare but for a few scattered girders, is no more impressive than a high-school auditorium. A young rigger discusses the placement of chains and pulleys with a disembodied voice called Tiger somewhere in the rafters. Down on the floor in the neutral zone between the stage and the first rows of seats, electricians (a young woman among them) poke around in cable boxes. Multiple speaker cabinets, looking like small rail wagons with their wheels permanently screwed to their backs, are trundled in by stagehands. High up among the banks of seats, scattered cleaning women are busy with last night's debris.

The pace is beginning to pick up. By 10 o'clock the space in front of the stage is filling up rapidly with anonymous black boxes, and by 10:30, the bank of speakers that will hang stage-left is already being assembled on its horseshoe-shaped metal frame. Fifteen minutes later, the stage suddenly fills up with stagehands, through with unloading downstairs. Under the direction of Yes production manager Michael Tait, they begin shifting the girders that will form the skeleton of the lighting truss. Invisible underneath them are a couple of carpenters hammering on shims to level up the stage. There's nothing desultory about progress now. The upper speakers are bolted onto their grid, and the left-hand bank is hoisted head-high on Tiger's pulleys by means of huge leather straps.

By noontime the main lighting truss—a rectangle of girders containing perhaps a hundred individual spots—is assembled onstage. Shortly after the lunch

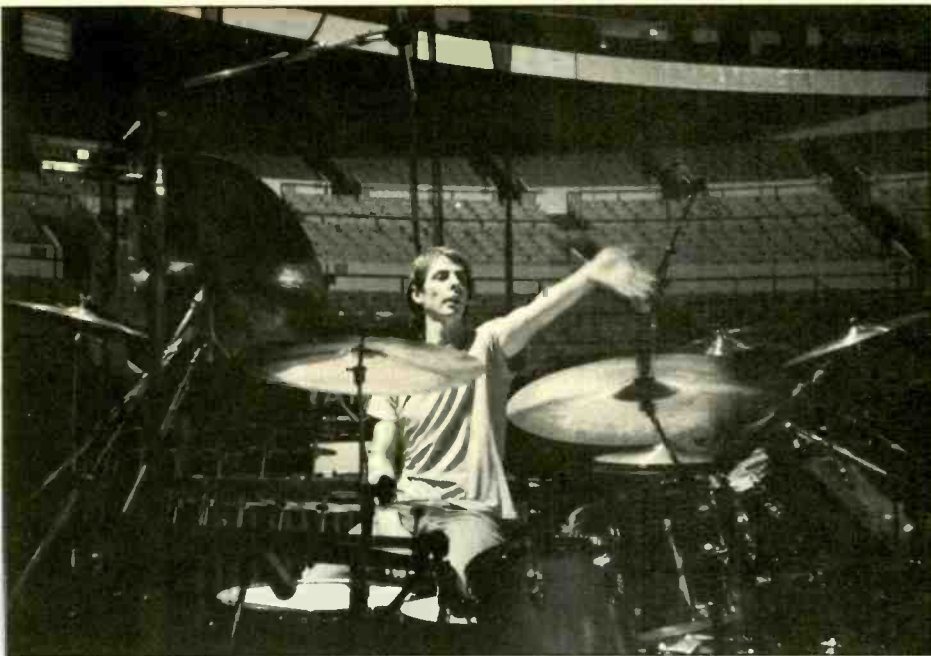
break, it is hauled six feet off the stage while electricians attack it from above and below. By now the right-hand sound stack is coming together on the floor, while way off in the distance two mixing boards—one for sound, one for lighting—are being installed over two side exits. At 1:50, the left-hand stack comes alive with several blasts of feedback. At 2:15, one of the chains that supports it breaks. Nobody, not even the rigger perched among its components, shows visible alarm.

By 3 p.m., while the first amps and instruments go onstage, the right-hand sound stack is raised twenty feet or so above the floor. Black cloth and a draped white drop curtain are attached to the lighting truss.

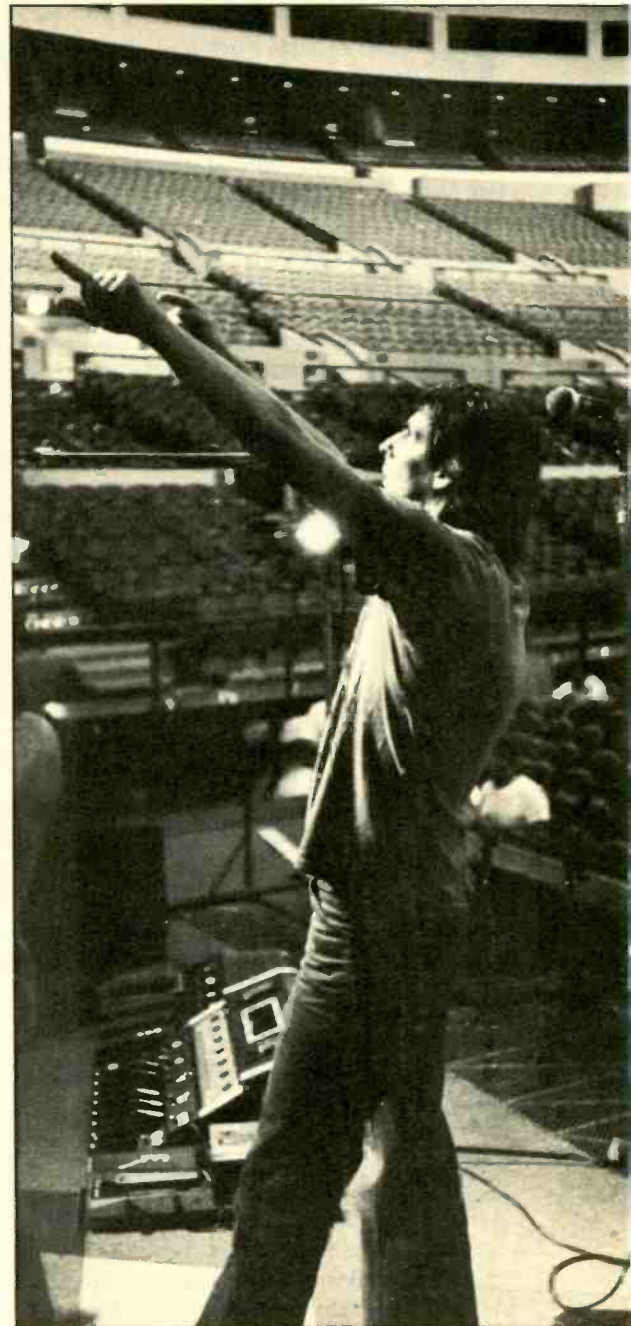


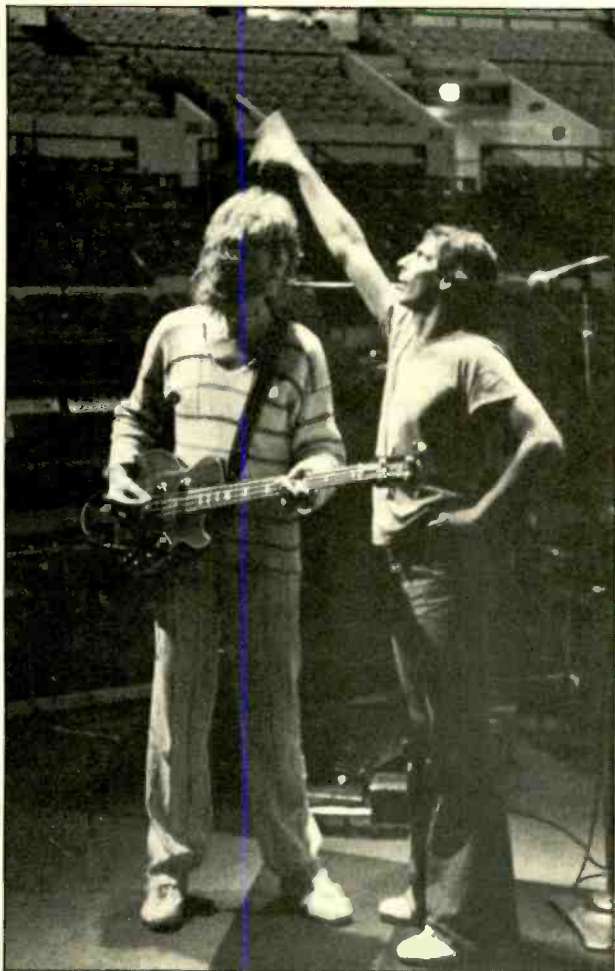
*View from the top, about midway through the setup*

At 3:45 a waiter in brown jacket—the first of the Garden's army of stomach-fillers and thirst-quenchers—wanders down an aisle with a trayful of forks, while a huge voice begins to declaim “one-two-check, one-two-check.” Roofed by the flat tray of lights and the massive twin horseshoes of speakers, the stage is a high-school auditorium no longer. It's a supermarket or maybe even a trendy temple, and the time for decking it has come. In front of the stage, carpenters hammer together a makeshift security barrier. Above it a tatty looking blue cloth is hung loosely from the back of the lighting truss. Meanwhile Tait oversees the adjustment of lights, one by endless one. The speakers'



*Production manager Michael Tait first checks the spotlights on Jon Anderson (top) and Alan White's drum kit (above left), then directs frontstage lighting with Steve Howe's pedal board in the background (right)*





Tait oversees adjustment of Chris Squire's spot

litany of "one-two-check" gives way to a burst of taped special-effects music. "Sounds like one of those English thriller movies, don't it?" a passing carpenter comments tolerantly. There's an audience now: Three

"Sound men and electricians  
dodge between Moogs and  
amplifiers, cords and  
microphones."

security cops are in Loge 35 eating sandwiches as they check things out.

By 6 p.m. the sound check is under way. First Chris Squire, then Jon Anderson, then other musicians drift onstage, pick at their various instruments, sing a few phrases, and huddle with their personal roadies over tunings or cables. Tait is now patiently supervising small adjustments to individual spots, and sound men and electricians dodge between Moogs and amplifiers, cords and microphones. Like planets in their orbits, they revolve apparently oblivious of each other.

By 7 it is done. Yes members retreat to their hotel, stagehands and electricians drift away or hang around chatting. An incongruous little cone of red and yellow ribbons is being hung in a corner of the concrete backstage area: the hospitality tent. In the nine service

floors that encase the arena like a nutshell, bartenders, hotdog sellers, T-shirt concessionaires, and security guards are gathering. So—sitting outdoors on the concrete pots that hold decorative shrubs, or hanging out near the stage doors—is a portion of what all this activity has been about: the audience.

At 9 Donovan, the warmup, has gone. Yes is imminent. Awaiting the Moment, a swarming audience punches six bright beachballs about. Suddenly, telepathically, a surge of cheering sweeps across the arena. Lights appear on the closed curtain—red, yellow, white, blue, red, yellow. With the first notes of music, a mass high takes over, phalanxes of kids jumping, yelling, clapping slightly off the beat. Then, instantaneously all are sitting, docile, as the curtain goes up.

By 10 p.m. the kids are in ecstasy. Onstage a gaunt fellow in a Russian shirt is doing a sitting dance. Under lights and stretched taut, the tatty cloth looks

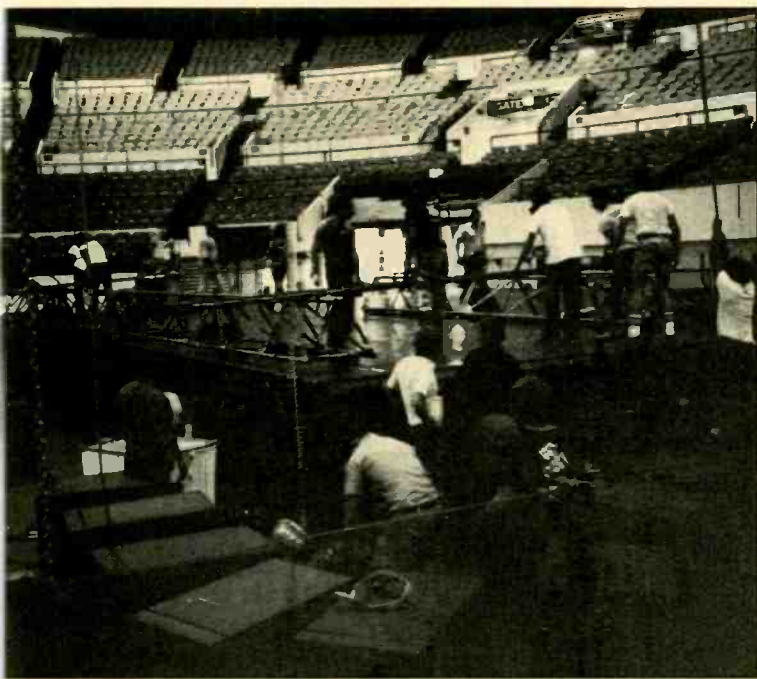
"It takes more than ten people  
to put one member  
of Yes onstage."

good. During *Close to the Edge* the effect of long, ringing chords and drifting dry ice on a mostly blue-lit stage is decidedly pretty. Tait's lighting effects, though hardly subtle, are effective enough, flickering in time to the clash of cymbals, matching the recitation of colors in *Rainbow* flawlessly—at least until the line, "blue is the color of a Siamese cat's eyes," when Jon Anderson is bathed in a fetching red. . . .

The five-man British group called Yes has been in existence since 1968, though only bassist Chris Squire and vocalist Jon Anderson go back that far. The present configuration took shape in 1971, when Steve Howe joined as lead guitarist and Rick Wakeman as keyboardist. (Wakeman left in 1974, but returned last winter.) In that year, the group got a Moog and put out its first all-original-material LP, "The Yes Album." Its first headlining U.S. tour came in 1972, and in 1973 percussionist Alan White joined to complete the current lineup.

Yes is a proponent of "art rock," a catchall concept that embraces classical, jazz, and other nonrock tinges. The emphasis is on keyboards, long numbers with vaguely metaphysical or mystical aspects, and complex multimedia effects that sometimes dwarf the music.

It takes more than ten people to put one member of Yes onstage, not including those indirectly involved, like the agents (Premier Talent in New York) who book the tour's shows with promoters in various cities months in advance. The setup itself involves three teams: the promoter's representatives, Yes people, and union stagehands and electricians who are the responsibility of the concert hall (with Keith Kevin as the go-between). The full road crew, under the wing of road manager Alex Scott, totals around twenty-seven, from sound technicians to the four semi drivers. Tait supervises two special effects and two lighting men and one rigger. "We're very light on personnel," he says. "But we've designed equipment



*The stage-left speaker bank is first assembled on the floor (top), then hoisted head high with Tiger's pulleys*

that's very, very fast. Almost the entire lighting system is put together on the floor, and it's very easy."

The musicians employ full-time personal road managers (Rick Wakeman has two because of the complexity of his instruments) who know their employer's instruments and problems in depth. Add the band's two pilots and steward for its jet plane, record company personnel, press, and photographers, and the entire caravan can amount to fifty people at times.

The Garden concerts involved far fewer than that. New York (like Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit) is a strong union city and one union man must be hired for every band roadie. The only Yes personnel

on hand were there to supervise; the actual setting up was handled by a couple of dozen union stagehands and twenty union electricians.

"The rest of the country's pretty loose," Tait says. "Out of town, we usually have a stage call of only eight to twelve union people."

Tait and stage manager Chip Irwin were the two main supervisors at the Garden. Irwin's main responsibilities are the sound system and the transfer of equipment from truck to stage and back again. Tait handles everything to do with the production, onstage

**"Union members get . . .  
\$12.94 an hour for electricians,  
\$13.50 for stagehand heads,  
and \$11.50 for regular stagehands."**

or off, but his particular province is the special effects and the lighting—a quarter of a million watts of it—which he designed and built himself.

Yes's 1976 tour cost almost a million dollars, which is a pretty heavy investment considering its profits had to finance the rest of the year's activities including recording and tours of Europe. "By the end of the year we're broke again," says Tait. "The show's so expensive that we have to play the big arenas, and we've got to do at least forty shows to break even."

This year's stint is budgeted at \$600,000 with a projected gross revenue of \$1.5 million—out of which the band aims to make fifty cents on every dollar. Though it's impossible to find out exactly how the figures break down, the rock & roll industry being more paranoid about budget details than the CIA, a quick rundown by Tait made it clear that gross had to cover a good deal more than carfare. He himself "comes expensive," as he rather coyly put it. The group's basic crew is on a (hush-hush) yearly set-rate deal. Union members get scale, which in New York runs \$12.94 an hour for electricians, \$13.50 for stagehand heads, and \$11.50 for regular stagehands. Add double time at lunch and after 6 p.m., penalties for more than eight-hour calls, and it's a safe bet that three days at the Garden comes to the tens of thousands of dollars for non-crew personnel alone. (A stagehand's estimate of \$12,000 for this time period was said by Delsener's office to be way too low. Also, his office flatly refused to comment on their financial arrangements with the union. Hmmm.)

Then there's transport: Before the band so much as arrives, transatlantic freight runs \$15,000. Trucking costs in the States amount to as much as \$100,000. The band's Grumman Gulfstream Two jet eats up at least \$2,000 a day. The roadies need air tickets costing at least \$50 daily per man and six cars at a minimum \$300-a-day rental. Living arrangements cost several hundred dollars a day: The band has suites in the best hotels available, the crew stays in plainer places near the concert hall. Food alone adds up to a few hundred dollars, since Yes members eat only vegetarian whole foods prepared by caterers hired each day in each city.

And you thought it was just five guys up there playing. ●

## Yes Plugs In at the Garden: The Equipment

by Michael Lobel

**T**he skyhook horn and lights mounting that John Storm Roberts describes in "InSights" is the characteristic *modus operandi* for all of Yes's staging, which is a kind of understated technological overkill. For instance, the JBL horns, hung high above the stage lighting, were invisible during performance, and all onstage amps were concealed behind white lattice-work. So aside from musical instruments and microphones, Yes appears as independent, free, and self-contained as five gentlemen capriciously playing in the park on a Sunday afternoon. It ain't so.

What I witnessed was the setting up of an oversized recording studio, minus tape recorder. In a session, it's a simple matter to stop and start, switch instruments, change a sound, punch in, whatever. Since a live audience is entitled to the same quality of performance as it is used to hearing on record, provisions must be made to duplicate the technological gloss of the studio—only this time without being able to stop. It can get pretty complicated.

Steve Howe changed between predetermined tone settings by means of a toggle switch on the body of his guitar, while his custom-built pedal board provided an array of special effects: Presets included MXR Phase 90, a DBX flanger and noise-reduction unit, Maestro fuzz tone and Boomerang, Cry Baby wah-wah, four Sho-Bud volume pedals, and two Electro-Harmonix Big Muffs. Additional effects were achieved with an Echoplex Groupmaster and Eventide digital delay, and Howe's stage amps were Fender Dual Showmans. His guitar list was equally staggering: a Gibson 175D and 345 stereo, the Les Paul 6/12 double-neck, Fender Telecaster and Stratocaster, twin-neck steel guitar, Sho-Bud pedal steel, Rickenbacker 12-string, Coral electric sitar, Martin 00-18 acoustic, and a vachalia (a Spanish guitar).

Bassist/vocalist Chris Squire solved the problem of quick instrument changes with a three-necked monster worn guitar-style around his neck. (This may have worked well musically but I wonder how his back felt the next day.) He too used a custom-built pedal

board, this one with Moog Taurus and Dutron bass pedals. Trade secrets being the name of the game, I was asked not to divulge the other goodies on it, but I saw nothing there that can't be purchased at a good supply house.

Rick Wakeman's keyboards, which enclosed him

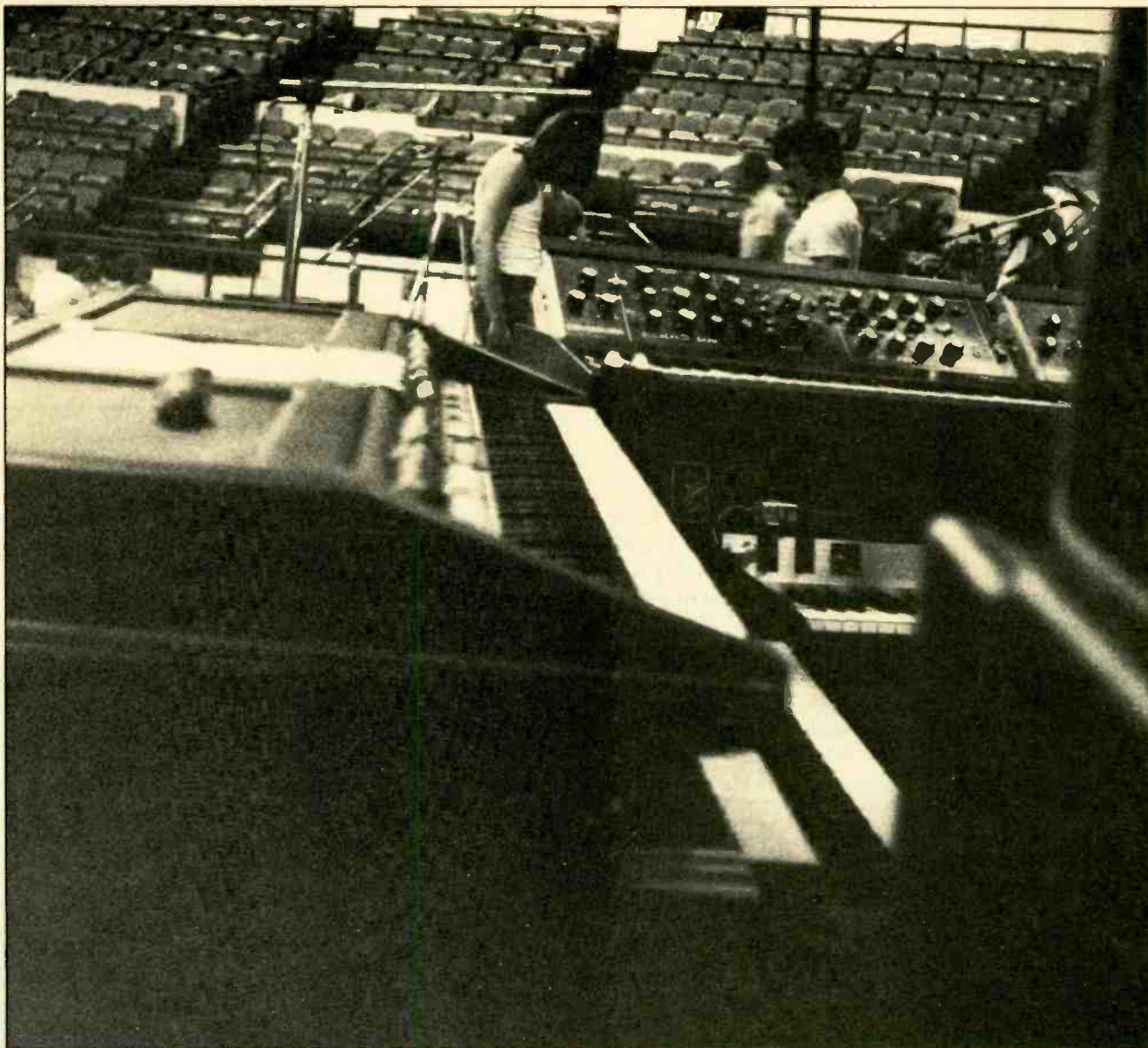


*Chris Squire's three-necked bass*

and served as semi-isolation, included a grand piano (with a Helpinstill pickup), a Mander pipe church organ, the Hammond C3, a Polymoog, four (!) Minimoogs, four Birotrones (a new string synthesizer), a Fender Rhodes, an R.M.I. computer keyboard, a Roxy chord organ, Baldwin harpsichord, and Godwin organ. Although the amount of stage equipment was staggering, there was no sense of clutter whatsoever. Visual simplicity was maintained throughout and only once was it necessary for a technician to appear even briefly onstage.

Mikes were used in many combinations. I saw AKG, Shure, Electro-Voice and Beyer well represented. The rule of thumb was tightness. Virtually everything save the hi-hat and cymbals was closely miked. Mikes on the amps, for instance, were placed

*Michael Lobel is a recording engineer and an electronic music composer.*



*Rick Wakeman's keyboards served as a semi-isolation booth*

literally against the speaker cloth. All miking appeared to be on axis, and all decisions were made on the basis of sound, not expediency. For example, the bass speaker was miked! In many cases, an instrument was picked up through both mike and direct line.

While wandering around onstage I noticed that Jon Anderson's acoustic instruments had been fitted with Barcus Berry transducers. During performance their sound was rich and even, with no trace of boomy resonance—a combination of proper installation by his roadies and quality components. The care that was given to sound quality throughout was admirable. During the sound check a Leslie was producing too much mechanical noise and was finally placed backstage (in the hall) where it was miked top and bottom.

The mixing console, custom-built by Claire Bros. Audio in Lititz, Pa., was located to the right of the stage and midway back in the hall, directly across from the lighting console. It was a board you'd be more apt to see in a recording studio: bar-graph meters with both average and peak readings, plenty of

equalization, and 45 inputs, almost all of which were used. The matter of the number of outputs was academic. A special effect or perhaps the toms might be panned, but the sound reinforcement we were dealing in was mono. Picture a concert in which the mix was stereo: You might end up hearing mostly snare drum all night long!

My questions about the in-concert mix were most graciously answered by two gentlemen who had very much to do in very little time. Yes, they used DBX noise reduction and some limiting. Reverb? They looked at each other and smiled. "Sometimes we put a touch on the acoustic piano but only in some halls." I was to realize the humor in my question later.

Pre-recorded sounds were at times fed through the board and mixed with the live music onstage. The engineer, what with mixing vocals, miked and patched instruments, special effects, and pre-recorded tapes—and all with no second chance—gave the impression of a traffic controller at a busy airport. Meanwhile, onstage Jon Anderson floated about like a celestial

puffball, seemingly oblivious to all this wizardry.

Have you ever wondered why so many professional singers have intonation problems in concert? Easy—they can't hear themselves. In the studio, the singer can work with one phone on and one off, or wear phones that don't isolate him from the room sound. In concert, monitor speakers are used in place of phones. In this case, 12-inch JBLs were placed behind the barrier in front of the stage, facing the performers. Hidden behind the stage was a 24-in/8-out Midas Electronics board at which the monitor mix (a good one in this case) was being carefully engineered so that Yes could hear themselves in balance.

So with incredible equipment, superb engineering, and great musicianship, how did it sound? There are musicians' musicians like Gentle Giant. There are mixers' mixes like George Martin's. And there are producers' productions like Yes's. Gentle Giant at Avery Fisher Hall sounded like a recording made with Dolby A that had not been decoded. Yes at Madison Square Garden sounded like a reverb bus—now I know why the engineers smiled when I asked them about reverb. I could not make out the notes in the guitar solos. Lyrics were lost. All sound was reduced to an impressionistic blur. Careful production on a record can draw the listener's attention to what is important. In this performance, the lighting directed the viewer. If Yes records sounded like this concert, there wouldn't have been a concert. Yet no one was asking for his money back.



Steve Howe's roadie sets up the pedal steel



Jon Anderson—seemingly oblivious to it all

If you were there, you may insist that my observations are attributable to a condition endemic to certain gardens—*cannabis ambiens*. I maintain that they are attributable to the acoustics. Members of the New York Philharmonic sometimes lovingly refer to their home as A Very Fishy Hall. The Garden may be swell for the circus, but for music it must be called a disaster.

The infinite care that had gone into the setup began to seem absurd. Was it only a matter of proper procedure carried out by conscientious craftsmen who refused to admit to the futility of it all? Why was the Leslie moved during the sound check? Because, had an idling motorcycle been placed in that original position, I doubt that anyone would have heard it. I had asked the engineers whether they ever wore earplugs when crossing the pain threshold with amplitude. My question was greeted by vigorous denial. Engineers heard what the audience heard. What I was hearing was mush. What I was experiencing was real pain. Amplitude is not a remedy for lack of definition.

A concert at the Garden is simply an extra-musical experience. Thousands of young people had gathered in a communal act of homage to a group of fine musicians who, like it or not, had become demi-gods to their adoring followers. But the Orpheus of the record was replaced by Thor at the Garden; whereas subtlety and nuance charmed the listener on record, technological thunder overwhelmed and awed the faithful in concert. ■

# Input Output

Instruments and  
Accessories

## Digital Tuning

**T**uning your instrument to play a job or even to practice is basic to good musicianship. (Although I'm sometimes amazed at how musicians who ought to know better will launch into Take 1 without so much as bothering to ask for a concert A from the piano.) Most professionals can tune to a reference pitch (an A or B flat from the fixed instrument in the ensemble), but student musicians and/or those who aren't used to trusting their ears have for years been using tuning devices to assist them. Who can forget the balding band director in junior high school plugging in the old strobe tuner and wincing as his ensemble attempted to come within close proximity of B flat? Since those days digital circuitry has become as common as table salt, and several updated versions of that old strobe tuner are available. Here are three of them.

**JMF Model DT70 Musical Instrument Tuner.** This model has both a built-in



JMF DT70 Instrument Tuner



Michel Electronics PC96 Pitch Calibrator

microphone and an input jack, enabling you to tune either acoustically or directly. The note selector on the front panel covers a full octave, and range is selectable between LO, MID, and HI. (A piano keyboard depicted on the front panel shows which notes correspond to JMF's designation of ranges, and an LED indicates which one you're in.) The DT70 has a gain control for matching the sensitivity of the input amplifier to your instrument's output, and FILTER RESONANCE maximizes the sensitivity of the machine to the fundamental note being played without affecting the tuner's accuracy.

The state of your pitch is indicated by red LEDs that light up in a black window: *F* stands for flat, *S* for sharp, and the digits that follow *F* or *S* tell you by how many cents (hundredths of a semitone, or half-step) you're off. If you are 50 cents sharp, for instance, you are a full quarter-tone sharp. Since no pitch is constant, the numbers in the window tend to ramble around. This can be a bit distracting, and makes it difficult for you to hold your note, match the ever changing numbers, interpret the information, and

decide what to do about it. But this is all for the cause of accuracy. The DT70 is attractive and durable and comes in a vinyl carrying case. It measures 10 by 7 by 5½ inches, weighs 6½ pounds, and operates on standard 115-volt AC. Suggested list price is \$349.95.

CIRCLE 123 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**Michel Electronics PC96 Pitch Calibrator.** I had not heard of this company until recently and it's no wonder. Their catalog indicates that they're involved in the manufacture of aircraft simulator items (for teaching student pilots). Why they decided to make a musical instrument tuner, I'll never know—but I'm glad they did. With the NOTE selector switch on the front panel you choose the pitch desired, and OCTAVE permits tuning in any of eight octaves. When the AUDIO MOMENT position of the FUNCTION switch is set and a corresponding button depressed, an internal oscillator will play the note you have dialed through a built-in speaker. In AUDIO you need not use the button, and the note is generated without interruption. In PITCH 100 the built-in meter





*Telesis 626V Guitar Tuner*

indicates how many cents your instrument is flat or sharp on a scale of 100. In PITCH 20 the meter responds on a scale of 20 cents—a sort of fine-tune control. The PC96 has a built-in microphone. Electric instruments may be plugged in directly with a small red LED indicating whether or not the unit is receiving enough signal. A tilt rack is built onto the back of the unit, and it uses a 9-volt cell with an AC adapter as an option. The PC96 measures 9 by 6 by 3½ inches, weighs 2½ pounds, and retails for \$319.50.

CIRCLE 124 ON READER SERVICE CARD

**Telesis 626 Guitar Tuner.** While the other two tuners are perfectly suitable to the task, the Telesis is designed specifically for tuning six-string guitars and basses. The guitar cord is plugged into the front panel and one of the six notes—E, A, D, G, B, or high E—is selected by a front-panel selector button, or a foot-switch (not supplied). An LED lights up to indicate which note is to be tuned, and when the note is played, a row of LEDs lights from left to right if the note is sharp, or from right to left if it is flat. The farther away from correct pitch you are, the faster the lights will move. There are no meters, selectors, or knobs on the 626, just an input jack, a note selector, and some lights. The unit is extremely easy to use and costs \$129.95. The Model 626V, offers a “variable time base” control pot that allows instant recalibration of the tuning standard for matching an out-of-tune instrument, such as a keyboard. The 626V costs \$149.95

CIRCLE 125 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The Telesis’ redeeming features are its simplicity of operation and low cost. Aesthetically speaking, it looks cheap compared to the other models, and, of course, it is limited to electric guitars and basses. The Michel Electronics and JMF units are impressive, sturdily constructed machines that use high-quality compo-

nents. Both have built-in microphones and can be used with all instruments. While the JMF’s lifetime accuracy is  $\pm 1/100$  of a semitone, the LED window display is distracting and can slow down the tuning process. The Michel PC96 has two distinct advantages over the other units: It enables you to read specifically any one of 96 notes, and it can actually produce those notes via its internal oscillator and speaker. No matter how accurate any meter or digital display might be, that tone generator lets me hear with my own ears how far out of tune I might be, and in the end, that’s still the best way to tune up.

**Electro-Voice PL Microphones.** Basically, the PL (which stands for pro-line) series of microphones is designed for live as opposed to recording-studio applications. The most impressive of the eight is the PL77, a cardioid condenser mike powered either by a 4.5-volt battery or by phantom powering in a PA or recording console. It has an extremely good sound and, when worked close to the mouth, has a rising-bass characteristic (+5 dB at 500 Hz, for instance) that gives depth to vocals—which can make all the difference in a live performance. The response is even with no high-end sacrifice. Electro-Voice’s Memraflex grille screens virtually eliminate popping Ps, and the anti-feedback characteristics on this and all of these models are remarkable. The suggested list price of the PL77 is \$150.

The PL91 and 95 are dynamic cardioid mikes. The 91, which costs \$86.25, has an on/off switch, and, though it has rising bass characteristics similar to the PL77, it is not as responsive at the high end. The PL95 has a better frequency response than the 91 and a noticeably lower output. (You’ll have to turn up your amplifier a bit.) As with the PL91, the sound quality is quite good: the cost is \$112.50.

The manufacturer designates the PL77, 91, and 95 as vocal mikes. The instrument series—the PL5, 6, 9, and 11—are all dynamic mikes, designed variously to be used with brass, drums, piano, amplified guitars, etc., but all can be used as vocal mikes (especially the 11) in a pinch. The PL5 and 9 are omnidirectional; the PL6 and 11 are cardioid. The PL5 is a dead ringer for the old model 635A (even the rated frequency response is identical) except that it is gray rather than silver gray. In the case of the PL11 and the old RE11, the shape of the mike bodies, the frequency responses, and even the prices are identical. The only difference seems to be that the PL11 doesn’t have a bass rolloff switch. I’m puzzled as to why Electro-Voice has



*Electro-Voice PL Microphones:  
the PL11 and PL77*

done this, since I’ve been using the older models faithfully for six years and they’re still in fine shape—despite all kinds of bizarre circumstances. (They’ve been dropped, drowned, and run over, and they just never stop working.)

The Model PL6 is another good utility mike. As an example of its amazing anti-feedback characteristics, I held the PL6 up to the speaker that was reproducing the signal and it didn’t feed back until it was about a foot from the source, even with the volume wide open.

The star of the instrumental group is the PL9. Physically, it’s the smallest of the lot (5¾ inches long). It has the best rated frequency response and sounds terrific. I used it to mike the bass drum of a disco session and it came through beautifully. Pure Philadelphia.

Suggested prices of the instrument microphones are \$67.50, \$86.25, \$120, and \$135 for the PL5, 6, 9 and 11, respectively. All the mikes in the PL series have low-impedance balanced outputs, dark gray housing, and come with leatherette carrying cases. The vocal mikes are insensitive to handling noise, which is tremendously important, and they are all equipped with three-pin XLR male connectors.

FRED MILLER

CIRCLE 122 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# Records

SUSAN ELLIOTT  
KEN EMERSON  
TODD EVERETT  
TOBY GOLDSTEIN  
DON HECKMAN

JOHN STORM ROBERTS  
SAM SUTHERLAND  
NICK TOSCHES  
JOHN S. WILSON

## Randy Newman's Latest Outrageous Triumph

by Ken Emerson

**Randy Newman: Little Criminals.** Lenny Waronker & Russ Titelman, producers. Warner Brothers BSK 3079, \$7.98. Tape: ●● M5 3079, ●● M8 3079, \$7.98.

Randy Newman has always puzzled rock critics. First, he has seemed only peripherally related to rock & roll. Second, he has been content with a small cult following, while nominally working within a medium—pop music—which, by definition, aspires to a mass audience. Such conspicuous talent and so little apparent ambition have been almost impossible to reconcile.

With the release of "Little Criminals," however, the problem disappears. Two images, among many others, stand out here: that of the child-murderer in *In Germany Before the War* who is "looking at the river/but . . . thinking of the sea," and that of the "beat-up little sea gull" in *Baltimore* who is "tryin' to find the ocean/lookin' everywhere." On this album Newman is looking for the mainstream, for a way out of esoteric eddies and into the open waters of commercial accessibility.

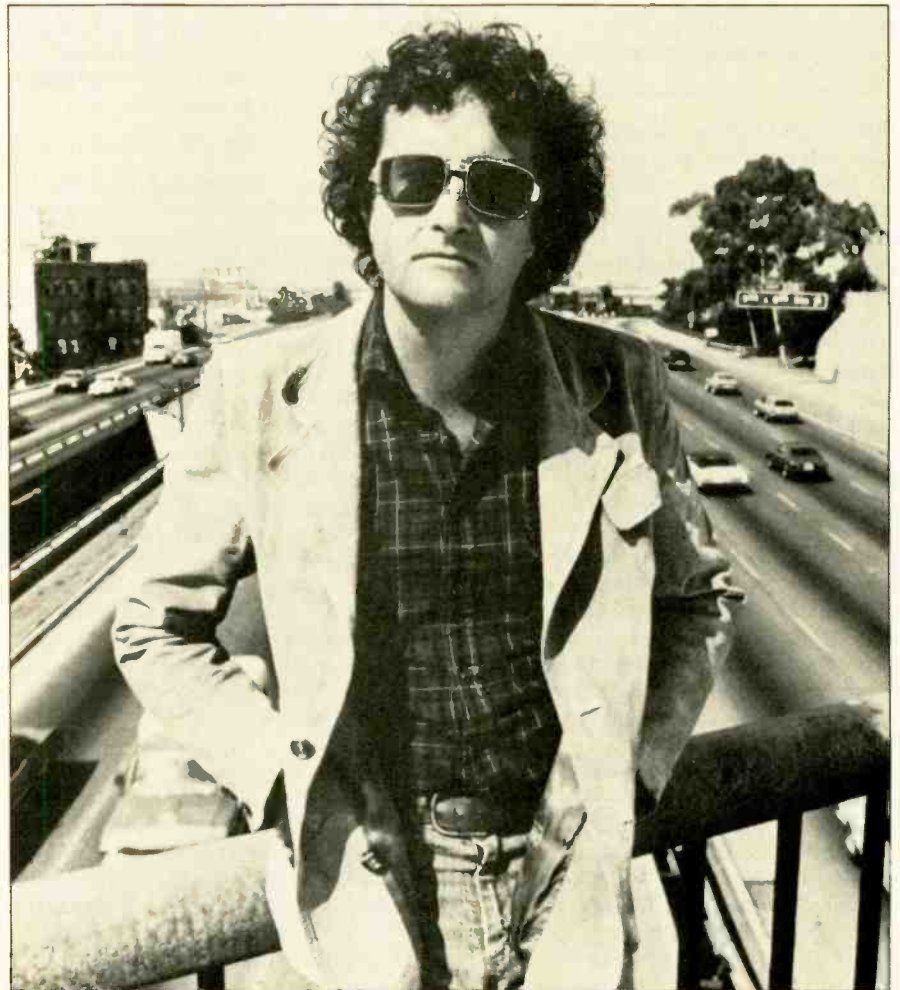
It's too early at this writing to tell whether "Little Criminals" will become his first big hit, but many of its tracks have all the ingredients. And none more so than *Baltimore*, whose debt to the rock music Newman has shied away from in the past is threefold. Not only does Eagle Glenn Frey play guitar and sing background vocals here, not only does the arrangement—which builds architecturally from somber beginnings—recall Linda Ronstadt's version of *You're No Good*, but the refrain ironically echoes James Taylor's *Mexico*, coming as sweet release after the tension has mounted almost unbearably. In other words, this isn't simply another eccentric Randy Newman song for the chosen few, it's pedigreed pop music. The same goes for the bulk of the album, which universalizes his

unique vision by conveying it with the help of rock riffs and rock guitars.

Which is not to say that nothing has been lost in the process. No song here is as intellectually or emotionally challenging as *Rednecks* or *Sail Away*. But if something has been lost, something has been gained: Never before has Newman been capable of the hilarity of *Jolly Cop-*

*pers on Parade*, a benign view of marching men in blue, or of the broad, genial humor of *Rider in the Rain*, wherein he improbably impersonates a cowboy who has "raped and pillaged 'cross the plain." For every track that is obscure or oblique, there's another whose comic impact is immediate.

The musical impact made possible by Newman's rapprochement with rock is in turn made possible by a slight shift in the psychologies of his cast of characters. As always, his subjects are at the mercy of their bizarre compulsions, but this time around they're not nearly so complacent. The Southerners Newman sang about three years ago on "Good Old Boys," for instance, never dreamed of escaping the South. But his "Little Criminals," be they down-and-out residents of



Newman—new mainstream possibilities

Baltimore, two-bit punks planning to hold up a gas station, or Albert Einstein emigrating to America, are desperate to bust loose. This desperation infuses the best songs with an excruciating tension as the characters struggle against the confines of Newman's relentlessly repeated piano figures. And the tension results in rock & roll—or is it rock & roll, which has always been about busting loose, that results in the tension?

In either event, words and music mesh perfectly. *Short People*, the album's most outrageous cut, makes malicious fun of half-pints with Newman's hammering piano underscoring his *idée fixe*. On *Kathleen (Catholicism Made Easier)*, which is about a Chicagoan's ignorant lust for Irish girls, he appropriately adapts Chicago blues. In *Germany Before the War* begins innocuously enough, but as the plot—inspired by M. Fritz Lang's classic film—thickens, the arrangement turns mimetically queasy.

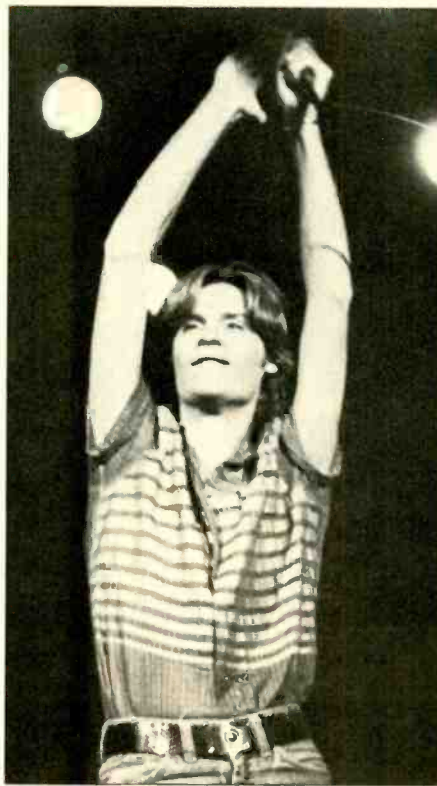
Three years is a long time between albums, but "Good Old Boys" never paled during the wait. It's hard to believe that "Little Criminals" won't sound just as strong three years from now as it does today. ●

**Daryl Hall and John Oates: Beauty on a Back Street.** Christopher Bond, producer. RCA AFL 1-2300, \$7.98. Tape: ●● AFK 1-2300, ●● AFS 1-2300, \$7.98.

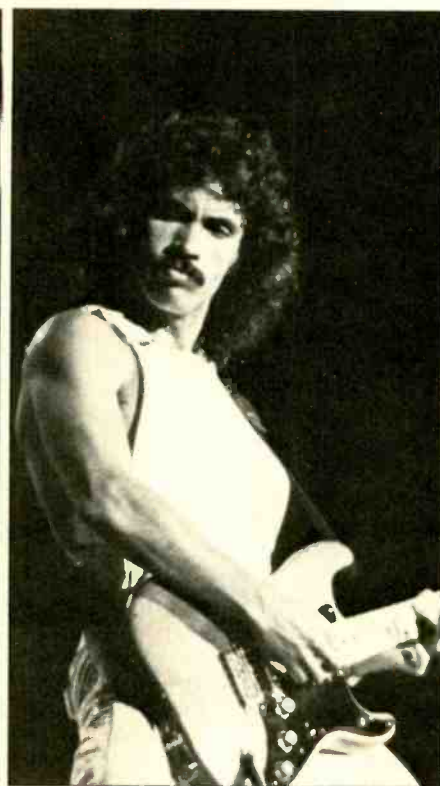
Like 1973's "War Babies," which saw Daryl Hall and John Oates collaborating with producer and fellow Philly refugee Todd Rundgren, "Beauty on a Back Street" seeks to reinstate the duo's early rock dreams. Of course, it's a gamble: Their best-selling records have all been blue-eyed soul stylings, with the emphasis on melodic ballads, some uptempo, like *Rich Girl*, their hit last Spring. But Hall and Oates also harbor white rock credentials (an early band, *Gulliver*, saw them balancing rock against a nascent sense of r&b), and seem compelled to display them periodically, perhaps as evidence of their integrity or versatility.

Initially the reduction of the band to a small rugged ensemble promises a bite to their music that is contrary to the smooth arranging style of earlier r&b-flavored works like the classic "Abandoned Luncheonette." *Don't Change* starts the album with a taut, stripped-down r&b feel and raw rhythm guitars that suggest they are about to forge some tough-minded, elemental rock.

Instead, they wind down into histrionics. *The Emptiness* (sic) gives us Oates mewling into chasms of echo; *Bad Habits and Infections* applies the same overkill, this time with a droning, distorted guitar underpinning meant to be driving but rendered simply grating by the lack of any riveting lyric or instru-



Daryl Hall



John Oates

mental hook. (There is a 'Queen-like break, replete with music hall piano comping and high, chirping harmonies that fail to achieve the intended humor.) Throughout, there are metaphors as subtle as an ax murder, reaching a bombastic peak with the gothic allegory of *Winged Bull*, which unintentionally lives up to its title.

Both writers are strong enough not to lapse into total anarchy. *You Must Be Good for Something* has a convincing roughness despite the tame outrage of the lyric, and *Don't Change* succeeds through an economy missing elsewhere. Likewise, Chris Bond keeps the production style rich enough to make maximum use of Gary Coleman's atmospheric percussion and Lee Sklar's elastic bass lines; the session crew, which includes Jeff Porcaro, Scotty Edwards, and Tom Scott, is generally tight and expressive.

But "Beauty on a Back Street" still seems generally strained and self-important alongside the duo's more lissome soul records. With solo projects now their main priority, it should be interesting to see whether Hall and Oates decide to take divergent paths; in either case I'll bet the more ephemeral but musically convincing blue-eyed r&b route will prove the most successful. s.s.

**Billy Joel: The Stranger.** Phil Ramone, producer. Columbia JC 34987, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 34987, ●● JCA 34987, \$7.98.

It's time to find a new tag for Billy Joel. His first and biggest hit of three years ago, *Piano Man*, has left him with a reputation as the small, power-packed, yet sensitive rocker behind the great big concert grand. Lyrically, the album of the same name and its two successors contained a few potent references to life in the suburbs (e.g. *Captain Jack*). That seemed pretty unusual for a commercial recording artist these days. Thus was born tag No. 2, "suburban."

It should all change with "The Stranger." While the album is by no means a radical departure, Joel's continued stylistic expansion comes to a new peak here. First, on only two or three cuts is the piano the featured instrument. Many of the arrangements are guitar-based, with the spotlight often going to the saxophones of Phil Woods and Richie Cannata. In such cases, the piano's role might be reduced to an overdub to strengthen a song's reference point. Second, *Scenes from an Italian Restaurant*—the whatever-happened-to tale of Brenda and Eddie, the queen and king of the prom—is the only song that can even remotely be called suburban.

So what's the new tag? Alas, there isn't one. "The Stranger" defies easy classification in its mixture of r&b groove jazz, rockabilly, and simple ballads of natural yet compelling melodies. On the verse of the title cut, Joel puts himself in the role of commentator/narrator—the macho stranger—letting the chorus' spongy, gentle r&b provide a superficial foil to

his truisms. The onomatopoeic lyric of *Movin' Out (Anthony's Song)* enables him to acidly spit out the lower East Side workingman's gripe while a teasing, driving sixteenth-note ostinato effectively sets off the monotony and frustration of it all.

There are good times here too. *Only the Good Die Young* is a rollicking rock & roller complete with Dave "Baby" Cortez organ, Fifties saxophone, and hand claps. *She's Always a Woman* is a beautiful ballad simply set in acoustic piano and guitar, bass, and flute. Not only is it the most effective song on the album, but it shows Joel's voice to be as capable of clear, sure lyricism as it is of rough-edged rock & roll. *Get It Right the First Time* features Ralph MacDonald's percussion, and its funky Latin groove makes it a natural for the AM set.

Phil Ramone's production (though slightly too synthetic on *Just the Way You Are*) and the combination of Joel's own band with the New York Studio All-Stars make this one of Joel's most thoroughly realized efforts to date. S.E.

**Mandrill: We Are One.** Jeff Lane, producer. *Arista AB 4144, \$7.98. Tape: ●● ATC 4144, ● AT8 4144, \$7.98.*

Mandrill was one of the creators of the currently dominant black-Latin-funk sound. Jeff Lane is an independent producer who steered both B.T. Express and Brass Construction to the top of the charts. Together, they've come up with a very attractive pop/r&b album.

Lane's stated policy is to aim for a "street sound" and avoid other producers' formulas. Unlike far too many other Gamble & Huff-type producers, he has lightly flavored rather than swamped Mandrill's basic skills with chart-wise trappings. He has even refrained from recording a bunch of his own tunes. The result is a commercial sound full of musical pleasures. He achieves it by backing a cohesive get-down with a varied and experimental flip. The first side consists of three pieces of dance-it-up with a relatively standard beat to drive strings, brass, and voices. But *Can You Get It* has jovial little bop phrasings scattered through its vocals, and an admirably forthright trombone solo; *Funky Monkey* blends some salsa and Caribbean ingredients from the band's largely Panamanian background with some righteous heavy-metal rock guitar; and *Happy People* is set against a truly splendid banjo obbligato.

Side 2 is patchier. The remarkable ballad of *Gilly Hines* is succeeded by a dreary discoid effusion called *Holiday* (though even that has a redeeming touch of salsa flute). An almost equally boring Top 40-ish ballad, *Closer to You*, precedes *Love One Another*, which, despite



Mandrill—the right producer makes the difference

its bathetic title, is the best piece of reggae from non-Jamaicans that I've ever heard. As a whole, "We Are One" works very well, preserving most of what Mandrill has always been about in contexts that may give Lane a third set of chart positions to hang on his wall. J.S.R.

**Mel McDaniel: Gentle to Your Senses.** Johnny MacRae, producer. *Capitol ST 11694, \$6.98. Tape: ● 8XT 11694, \$7.98.*

If I had to explain what distinguishes Mel McDaniel from most of the other country singers who have released first albums in 1977, I would say that he has a good voice and a sense of humor. Writer Bob Morrison has contributed two fine jukebox bleaters here: *Soul of a Honky-Tonk Woman* and *Have a Dream on Me* (McDaniel's first hit). *Roll Your Own*, written by McDaniel, is about going back to nature. It contains the same blowsy good cheer that set the western Swing bands of the 1930s off from the heart of mainstream country music, which was rocking along to *Wreck on the Highway*. Dennis Linde's *T.J.'s Last Ride* is about a culture caught in the pull of the tide.

Then, of course, there's the song about the inflatable plastic doll. "No one ever had her before me," sings Mel with a proud wink in *Plastic Girl*. She never has a headache, and she doesn't own a dog. Alas, there arrives another man, and the romance goes the way of all plastic. The gods look down and weep as Mel sadly sings, "She was more than just a friend." Johnny MacRae's production is superb, and what he and McDaniel have given us here is that most elusive of all earthly things: a good country album. N.T.

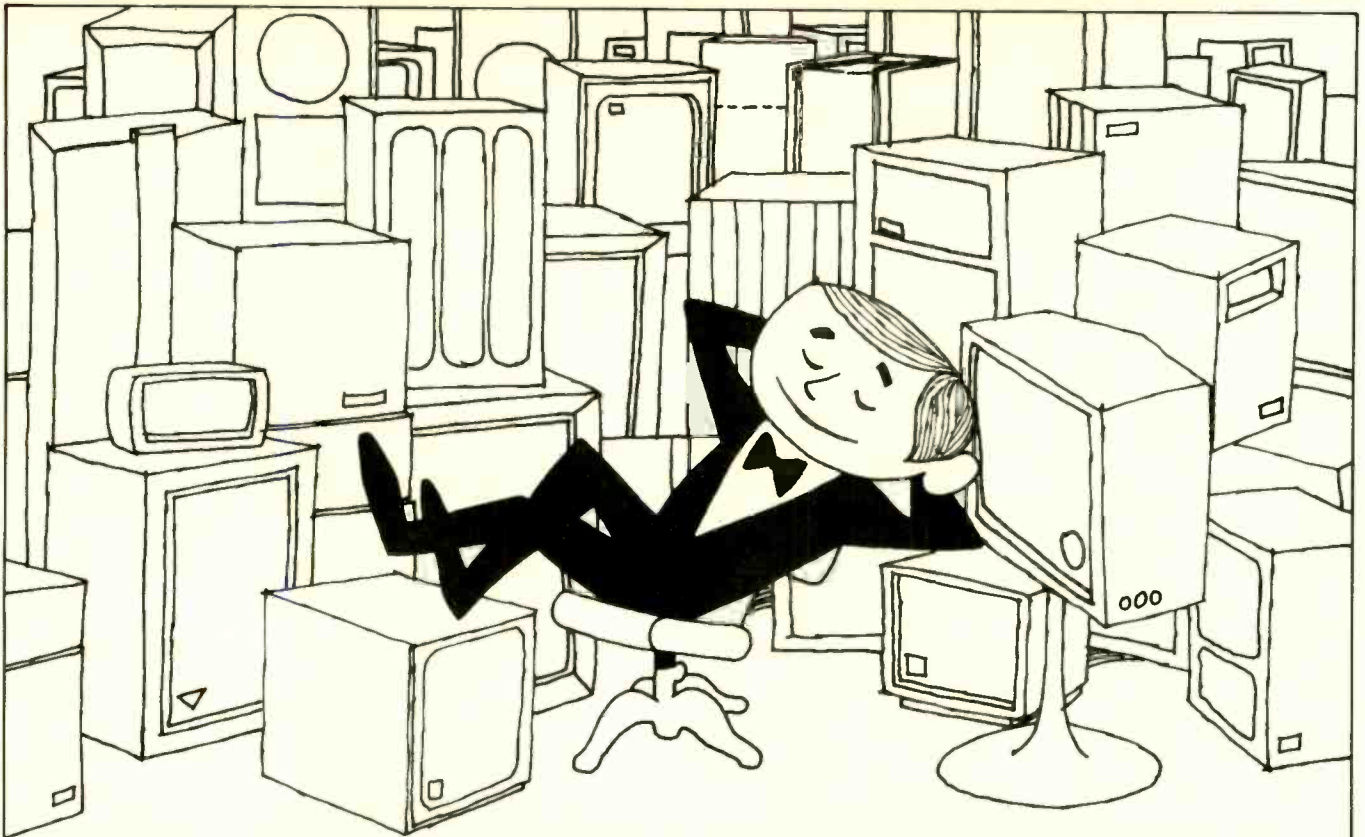
**The Rolling Stones: Love You Live.** Mick Jagger & Keith Richard, producers. *Rolling Stones Records COC 2-9001, \$11.98 (two discs). Tape: ●● CS 2-9001, ● TP 2-9001, \$11.98.*

It generally takes me a while to get accustomed enough to post-"Sticky Fingers" Rolling Stones to actually enjoy them, although I eventually come around. With "Love You Live," though, "eventually" may be a long time coming. In practically every sense, the album is an embarrassment to what the Stones once stood for and points up the current band as being a bunch of gracelessly aging poop-stars.

Part of the album was apparently recorded in Paris in 1976, with one side cut in Toronto earlier this year. The Paris sides, particularly, are recorded and mixed with a quality that many bootleggers would consider unworthy of release: flat lead vocals, harmonies louder than the leads, instruments tripping over one another, and the kind of presence and fidelity that a recording on a cassette machine set up somewhere in the back row might achieve. If this is how one achieves a realistic concert sound, then I'm all for extensive studio overdubbing. (It isn't, of course, and I'm of the firm though minority opinion that a band should sound as good live as on records or refund the audience's money.) The songs include some of the best and some of the worst from relatively recent Stones albums.

Side 3, the Toronto side, sounds somewhat better. The tunes are all vintage Chicago blues by Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, Willie Dixon, and Bo Diddley, and the Stones do a credible job of re-

Continued on page 140



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## Elvis Costello: New Wave Rock Classicist

by Sam Sutherland

At first glance, Elvis Costello is the unluckiest rock hero of the decade. Pigeon-toed and scrawny, with a nose too long and a chin too weak, he has none of the physical beauty or sexual magnetism that are usually prerequisites for teen worship. Yet in his native Britain, he is already generating enough media attention to make his professed greatest fear—to be cast as elder statesman for England's New Wave rockers—seem less like publicity-minded provocation and more like justifiable concern.

In fact, Costello is the press agent's dream: a galvanic artist whose screwball appearance only heightens the force of his debut album, "My Aim Is True." If he appears to suffer from temporal dislocation, the visual symptoms only reinforce his music's rock classicism. His narrow lapels, cuffed jeans, and battered old Fender Jazz guitar provide a '50s link that his oversized horn rims and mangled pompadour complete. He looks a bit like Buddy Holly, and he plays rhythm chords on the Fender that evoke Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent.

His songs are ripe with a sense of history and a barbed wit, but he is neither a nostalgic impersonator nor a parodist. Visual and musical echoes of the '50s and '60s are undeniably there, but as a singer and writer, he appears to have absorbed his influences enough to obscure any singular models. His rasping, often glottal singing invites inevitable comparisons with Bruce Springsteen, Van Morrison, and Graham Parker, yet Costello arrogantly dismisses any debts to those artists. (He says Springsteen is a lousy lyricist and claims he's never even heard Morrison's "Astral Weeks.") His songs are indeed tougher and his lyrics more economical than the briefest Springsteen anthems, his singing never wanders far enough from the beat to fol-



low Morrison's vocal mien, and his caustic perspective denies any link to Parker's underlying romanticism and introspection.

Nor does Costello typify New Wave's assumed flamboyant primitivism. His record may sound initially jarring, due to the simplicity of the arrangements and Nick Lowe's atmospheric production, but both playing and songwriting attest to a melodic sense forged directly from the best rock and pop sources. *Welcome to the Working Week*, which opens the album, may carry a scathing contempt for middle-class verities, but it rocks like crazy and even manages to kid Costello's own imminent celebrity. It also clocks in at a minute and twenty seconds.

That tension between genuine rage and saving humor emerges as one of the album's, and the artist's, most convincing virtues. *Less than Zero* salts its blunt nihilism ("Everything means less than zero...") with a quirky surrealism as pithy and truly funny as some of Dylan's more whimsical mid-'60s mindgames, yet the wordless refrain is at least as close to simple r&b workouts. Such intriguing fusions of musical and verbal sense recur throughout. (*The Angels Wanna Wear My Red Shoes*, possibly the best cut, balances heartfelt lyricism and Byrds-meet-Merseybeat guitar against a vaguely Faustian legend of eternal youth spiced with some wonderful, deadpanned jokes. *Mystery Dance* takes a classic rock metaphor for sex and enlightenment to equally bizarre extremes, driven by a frantic rockabilly arrangement that is nearly indistinguishable from vintage Sun sides. *No Dancing* turns its title phrase into a double-edged hook through a small-scale approximation of Phil Spector's syncopated ballads, enabling Costello to both mock romance and reaffirm it at the same time.

Yet he never settles for mere cleverness. His verbal playfulness and sneering delivery are augmented by a striking poetic sense and genuine passion, and on the album's one ballad, *Alison*, all of those qualities coexist: On the one hand, he offers absurd imagery ("Did you leave your pretty fingers lying in the wedding cake?") with corny, garage-band guitar glissandos, yet his exasperation with his lover reveals a tenderness most rock males can only feign.

Costello and Lowe have forsaken the precision and virtuosity of '70s pop in order to rediscover the raw vitality of rock. Whether American listeners will embrace Costello's feisty intelligence or Lowe's deliberately crude, exciting production style remains to be seen. ●

**Elvis Costello: My Aim Is True.** Nick Lowe, producer. Columbia JC 35037, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 35037, ●● JCA 35037, \$7.98.

# Pop/Rock

BY KEN EMERSON

**Steve Goodman: Say It in Private.** Joel Dorn, producer. *Asylum 7E 1118, \$6.98. Tape: ●● TC5 1118, ● ET8 1118, \$7.98.*

Steve Goodman's first "professionally" produced album is polished and pleasant, but the tender loving care—the creamy strings, etc.—has been lavished on material that isn't quite up to snuff. Apart from a mirthful mock spiritual lamenting the passing of Chicago's Mayor Daley and a mawkish elegy for Goodman's father, these are mostly innocuous love ditties that lack the emotion, bite, and hilarity of Goodman's best songs.

**Richie Havens: Mirage.** Christopher Bond, producer. *A & M SP 4641, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS 4641, ● 8T 4641, \$7.98.*

Richie Havens boogies down? Yes indeed, and Christopher Bond's busy production snaps, crackles, and pops. Interestingly enough, the only egregious track here is a maundering throwback to Havens' folksy days that naively wonders, "What if politicians were all good guys?" Otherwise this album is a spirited surprise—not just a comeback but a rousing resuscitation.



**KLAATU**  
Hope

**Klaatu: Hope.** Klaatu, producers. *Capitol ST 11633, \$6.98. Tape: ●● 4XT 11633, ● 8XT 11633, \$7.98.*

Fewer listeners will mistake Klaatu for the Beatles this time around, but "Hope" could pass for the soundtrack of a *Star Wars* sequel. Though this abundantly orchestrated

magical mystery tour of outer space is ingenious and amiable, one wishes it led to a more interesting conclusion than the trite observation that "To give Hope is to enlighten all mankind." Klaatu is a talented group, but it has yet to find the Force.

**Bill Quateman: Shot in the Dark.** Barry Mraz, producer. *RCA APL 1-2434, \$6.98. Tape: ●● APK 1-2434, ● APS 1-2434, \$7.98.*

Bill Quateman has almost everything going for him: a great band (including Paul McCartney's former drummer and Elton John's erstwhile guitarist),



**STEVE GOODMAN**

SAY IT  
IN  
PRIVATE



**BILL QUATEMAN**  
SHOT IN THE DARK

RCA

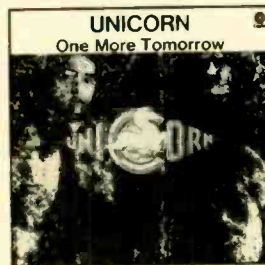
good looks, an attractive voice variously smoky and husky, a flair for writing songs that fuse a crunching riff with a funky lilt, and an ear for snappy percussion and beguiling backing harmonies. "Shot in the Dark" just misses the bull's-eye because Quateman has yet to come up with a personal vision, but it's definitely on target.

**Phoebe Snow: Never Letting Go.** Phil Ramone, producer. *Columbia JC 34875, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 34875, ● JCA 34875, \$7.98.*

Here's living proof that it takes more than chops to make a champ. There seems to be nothing Phoebe Snow's voice can't do—at one point on this album her falsetto squeal melds indistinguishably with a saxophone—except express emotion. All her mannerisms, her vocal curlicues, come from the head and not the heart, and the problem is compounded here by prissy production. "Never Letting Go" needs a little less "good taste" and a lot more funk.

**Talking Heads: Talking Heads 77.** Tony Boniovi, Lance Quinn, & Talking Heads, producers. *Sire SR 6036, \$6.98.*

It's because of bands such as Talking Heads that the term "New Wave" has superseded "punk rock." There's nothing remotely punk about this ingratiating group that combines simple but catchy musical hooks with cerebral lyrics sung by David Byrne at the top of (and sometimes above) his pinched vocal range. Heads are less compelling emotionally and instrumentally than Television, the outstanding American New Wave band, but they're more immediately charming, and this is a superb debut.



**UNICORN**  
One More Tomorrow

**Unicorn: One More Tomorrow.** David Gilmour & Muff Winwood, producers. *Capitol ST 11692, \$6.98.*

London is just another suburb of LA to Unicorn, a British country/rock quartet whose previous releases went undeservedly unnoticed in the States. It won't be such an injustice, however, if this, their third album, meets the same fate. The group's work has always been low-energy, but here it's downright listless, and "One More Tomorrow" settles half-heartedly for the musical clichés that its predecessors subtly transfigured. The lyrics, too, are less imaginative, and one wonders if Unicorn has become a common nag.

**Bill Withers: Menagerie.** Various producers. *Columbia JC 34903, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 34903, ● JCA 34903, \$7.98.*

"Menagerie" is a collection of dogs and turkeys: flaccid disco tracks orchestrated by rote. Bill Withers' talent, which resides in the strength of his personality and the mature intelligence of his speaking voice, is antithetical to the anonymity of disco, and these songs aren't even good for dancing—nodding out is more like it.



**BILL WITHERS**  
MENAGERIE

including  
She Wants To (Get On Down) Lovely Day  
I Want To Spend The Night  
Lovely Night For Dancing  
Let Me Be The One You Need

Continued from page 136  
 creating the torridness that led to their initial reputation in and around London in the Sixties. In fact, an entire album of this kind of stuff would be infinitely preferable. From the sound of things, the Rolling Stones are overdue for a long, long rest. No wonder Mick Taylor left the band. But why are Watts and Wyman hanging on?  
 T.E.

off Ms. Ross's voice and the band's smooth funk. That cut also proves that she can move outside her original role. So does *Gettin' Ready for Love*, a typical 1950s cabaret patter tune that she treats in a beautifully easy, laid-back manner.

What she doesn't seem to be able to do is to rise above the ho-hum material. She sings several ballads competently, but her cool surface doesn't carry any sense

mic pacing. There are two slower tunes that might have qualified as ballads prior to the producer's canny instrumental goosing, but the emphasis is clearly on sustaining a galloping hustle.

From a lesser writer, the consistency of the performances would be a triumph. But Sayer's earlier productions, especially with Dave Courtney, offered a far more complex, if uneven, persona than the facile romantic crooner that emerges here. Even the vulnerability of his early work might not have been missed, were his current lyrics more than reworked romantic clichés. But with the exception of the tough-minded *It's Over* and the ebullience of *We Can Start All Over Again*, all Sayer mouths are standard-issue declarations of love and devotion. His writing collaborations with Tom Snow work best, including the title single, *It's Over*, and *We Can Start*, the last composed with Snow and Bruce Roberts. Snow and John Vastano are responsible for another high point with *Everything I've Got*. Perry's production is larger than life, but that may overwhelm listeners who don't need the Sensurround echo that he apparently feels is a common denominator.  
 S.S.



*The Rolling Stones—"gracelessly aging poop-stars"*

**Diana Ross: *Baby It's Me*.** Richard Perry, producer. *Motown M7 890R1*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● M7 890HC, ●● M7 890HT*, \$7.98.

How do you get away from a huge reputation established as long ago as Diana Ross's? With difficulty. Though much of the material on "Baby It's Me" moves well away from the archetypal teen soul of *Baby Love*, the sound lingers like an ancient (and mixed) blessing. *Top of the World*, *You Got It*, and above all *All Night Lover* are absolute "Ooooh Baby" classics: Sexy softness rises to a shout (well, not quite—Diana Ross was always too cool to shout) with almost every line's end a dying fall. All three sound like updates of the Supremes with that delicious combination of bounce and float. But craft can never quite re-create the conviction of youth, particularly not with this cutesy-teen material, and the playing-at-feeling tease motif that was fetching back then no longer makes it.

Two other numbers do work, almost totally. Tight group vocals, crisp light-funk backing, and a fine hypnotic hook make *one* from the old days. *Baby It's Me*, a natural hit single—again. And Bill Withers' *The Same Love that Made Me Laugh* is a gem at once traditional and fresh, its tango feeling perfectly setting

of still waters running deep. And as a singer gets older, that can become increasingly serious.  
 J.S.R.

**Leo Sayer: *Thunder in My Heart*.** Richard Perry, producer. *Warner Bros. BSK 3089*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● M5 3089, ●● M8 3089*, \$7.98.

"Thunder in My Heart" is a stylish collection of featherweight, discofied love songs. Fans of the dreaded backbeat will probably cite it as evidence that disco records aren't just möbius strips of repeated rhythm riffs, orchestral climaxes, and keening strings: Sayer and his various cowriters have crafted tidy verses, infectious choruses, and sleek bridges, and producer Richard Perry uses the precision of an excellent studio instrumental ensemble to dramatic widescreen effect. At center stage is Sayer, whose supple yet controlled vocals are fueled by a confidence that seems unimaginable from the introspective songwriter that made his debut as a recording artist at the onset of the decade.

But a disco album it is. Perry hasn't missed the message carried by two of Sayer's three hit singles during the past year, as pointed up by this second collaboration's virtually seamless rhyth-

**Small Faces: *Playmates*.** Kemastri, producer. *Atlantic SD 19113*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● CS 19113, ●● TP 19113*, \$7.98.

**Peter Townshend & Ronnie Lane: *Rough Mix*.** Glyn Johns, producer. *MCA Records MCA 2295*, \$6.98. *Tape: ●● MCAC 2295, ●● MCAT 2295*, \$7.98.

Back in the Sixties when such things mattered, much of British youth could be divided into two classes: the "mods" and the "rockers." The rockers were perched somewhere between what had previously been referred to as "teds" (leather-jacketed, switchblade-toting attempted replicas of American motorcycle gangsters as seen in *The Wild One*) and today's punks. The mods were



*Sayer—gone the way of disco*





Small Faces/Townshend & Lane

a reaction to all of that nastiness: fancy dressers with Edwardian suits and paisley neckties. The Rolling Stones and very early Beatles were rockers. Chief among the mod bands were the Who (remember those Union Jackets?) and the Small Faces.

The Who continued on their way through the Sixties and Seventies, reaching mass audiences and raking in big bucks. The Small Faces (so named because of their uniformly tiny stature) recorded, split, re-formed, split again, and once more are giving it a try here with the near original personnel. Lead singer Steve Marriott, pianist Ian "Mac" McLagen, and drummer Kenny Jones remain. The fourth member, bassist Ronnie Lane, after a go with his aptly named Slim Chance band, has recorded an album with Who leader, Pete Townshend.

The Small Faces on "Playmates" isn't the polished, flower-powered group that came out with such acid extravaganzas as *Lazy Sunday* and *Itchykoo Park*. Rather, they've re-created the flavor of their first LP where they did the blues and stole *I'm Confused* from Willie Dixon. (Led Zeppelin later stole the tune from the Faces and retitled it *Dazed and Confused*, but that's another story altogether.)

They've smoothed up more than a bit over the years, and Marriott's gravelly shout isn't quite what it was with the early Faces or with Humble Pie. Yet one trademark of the old band remains:

the pervasive sense of good-timeyness and all-around fun. Highlights are a recreation of the Valentinos' *Lookin' for a Love*, pretty much like J. Geils's and apparently a studio lark; *Saylarvee*, evidently a mistranscription of *C'est la Vie*, but a rowdy number in any case; and McLagen's ballad *Tonight*. Trivialists should note that the name of the album's producer, Kemastri, is formed of the first letters of Kenny, Mac, Steve, and Rick (Wills, the bassist).

If Townshend continues to be as polite as he is on "Rough Mix," he's going to have to rename his band the Whom. Like "Who Came First," this LP is a consciously unpolished rendering of his philosophical and sociologic ruminations, committed in his own voice rather than Who lead singer Roger Daltrey's—who was out making his solo album at about the time that this was being pasted together. At least notable contributions are made by Eric Clapton on guitar and dobro, reedman Mel Collins, and keyboardist John "Rabbit" Bundrick. But the album is chiefly Townshend's and somewhat Lane's project, with Lane chiming in on backing vocals, taking a lead or two, and playing any number of fretted instruments. On *Street in the City* Townshend's less-than-astounding voice is joined by a full orchestra for a textural contrast somewhat akin to Johnny Rotten in a Rolls-Royce limousine.

It occurs to me that I'm being pretty harsh, when in fact I find much to enjoy on both of these albums. But each one, particularly "Rough Mix," is a personal statement: I'm all but positive that Townshend had no intention of cutting a potentially platinum record, and the Small Faces are operating in a time frame long past. The post-album addition of Wings guitarist Jimmy McCullough may help bring them up to date. T.E.

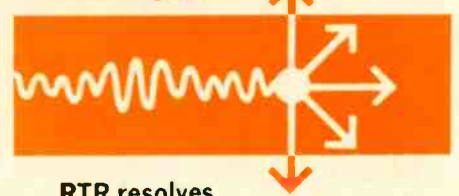
**Steely Dan: Aja.** Gary Katz, producer. ABC AB 1006, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 5 1006AB, ● 8 1006AB, \$7.95.

"Aja" is easily the best album released thus far this year. I hesitate to qualify that statement with words like "pop" or "rock," because these seven new songs have the melodic economy and sleek feel of pop music and yet are reminiscent of Miles Davis' mid-'50s experiments with cool. Walter Becker and Donald Fagen have slipped past the explicit drama of the mainstream and into a more ethereal ensemble style, which here reaches a new level of power.

*Black Cow* opens the record and signals that cooling process with its reined rhythm section, muted horn charts, and half-soothing, half-chiding backing vocals. The lyric is scathing, the narrator shrugging off a lover on the edge of self-

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indulgent oblivion. Naturally, it's quite funny. But more significant is the song's melodic grace: Here, as on at least half the album, Becker and Fagen are refining the rhapsodic ballad style that has remained a prime attraction.

*Deacon Blues* receives the same deceptively relaxed melodic treatment that made *Rikki, Don't Lose That Number* and *Doctor Wu* so affecting. The chorus, like so many Dan songs, reminds me less of other tunes than of an entire novel or film. On the title cut, the Dan frame an intriguing verse and chorus, laced with striking harmonic changes, in a stunning acoustic jazz setting. Wayne Shorter's tenor sax solo rises with lyrical power against Steve Gadd's furious, triple-speed drum rolls. Elsewhere, Becker and Fagen retell the *Odyssey* (on *Home at Last*) and promise a jubilant homecoming (for the title siren of *Josie*) that sounds murderously close to a rampage.

Then there are the love songs—or songs that reflect on that venerable pop mold. *Peg* is typical of their antiromantic approach, its oblique, confidential tone projecting both glamor ("I've seen your picture/your name in lights above it") and retribution ("It will come back to you"). *I've Got the News* carries that leering a few steps further and, like *Peg* and *Black Cow*, is both chilling and funny.

The production is magnificent, with long-term Dan producer Gary Katz and engineer Roger Nichol achieving a clarity and depth that advances the group's already awesome sonic presence. Drums are captured with sticks intact, piano hammers strike the strings. That technical accuracy is matched by the playing, with the Dan auxiliary expanded to include jazz reed players Shorter, Pete Christlieb, and Tom Scott. Fagen has relinquished keyboards to guest players to focus on synthesizer lines, while Becker has furthered his role as a guitarist with three featured solos. s.s.

## JAZZ

Urszula Dudziak: *Midnight Rain*. Michal Urbaniak, producer. *Arista AL 4132* \$6.98. *Tape*: ●● 5301 4132, ●● 8301 4132, \$7.98.

The first time I saw Urszula Dudziak was at the Village Vanguard in New York where she was singing with husband Michal Urbaniak's group. Actually, singing is not quite the right word. She was using her voice as a different kind of instrument, feeding it into an echo/repeating machine that allowed her to build reverberating sheets of sound. Impressive. I thought. Especially since she had excel-



Urszula Dudziak

lent pitch and a strong rhythmic understanding of the complex music created by her violinist spouse.

Arista now has decided to make Ms. Dudziak into something more than an instrument yet something less than, say, a Barbra Streisand. She romps with great enthusiasm and dexterity through a program that includes such venerable chestnuts as Errol Garner's *Misty*, Rodgers' and Hart's *Lover*, and the Dizzy Gillespie/Charlie Parker *Night in Tunisia*. All well and good, except Urbaniak's arrangements sound unclear as to whether the voice is singing or acting as an instrument. Worse, they often vacillate between hokey disco-pop (*Lover*) and murky bathos (*Midnight Rain*). Ms. Dudziak seems quite willing to do whatever is asked of her, and she does it all very well. She occasionally verges on Flora Purim-like cutesy dialect, but more often she is a consummate and gifted performer.

Clearly, she needs to make a decision about her identity. Peeking out at us from behind the collar of a black raincoat on the cover of "Midnight Rain," she doesn't seem to have made up her mind yet. D.H.

Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen: *Jaywalkin'*. Nils Winther, producer. *Inner City IC 2041*. \$6.98.

Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen has for several years been giving American jazz fans a taste of what Europeans have been hearing for more than fifty years. Although the young Danish bassist has stayed close to his homeland, he has developed a tremendous word-of-mouth reputation among traveling American musicians who have played with him—Sonny Rollins, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, and Dexter Gordon among them. Count Basie reportedly once asked Orsted Pedersen to join his band, but he didn't want to leave Denmark.

He is a superb musician with a gorgeous tone, great technique, and dazzling virtuosity. As might be expected, however, he has been recorded primarily as a member of a rhythm section, back-

ing a soloist. On this disc, made in 1975, he is finally the one who is out front—and in no uncertain terms. Even more important than Orsted Pedersen's virtuoso display on this startling collection is the variety and imagination with which he carries out his role of primary soloist and lead voice in a quartet composed of guitar (Philip Catherine), electric piano (Ole Kock Hansen), bass, and drums (Billy Higgins). Although Catherine and Hansen each has an occasional impressive solo, the bassist completely dominates the set, playing warm, singing, melodic lines that dance and sigh and exult his bright yet subtle accents and phrasing. His authority is never more evident than on *Jaywalkin'* when, after an ensemble section, a piano solo, and a guitar solo, his entrance causes the tone of the piece to change completely from a rather shrill and frantic attack to a balanced, firmly directed performance. Orsted Pedersen has a charm as a composer—on *My Little Anna*, *Summer Song*, and *Interlude*—that matches the imaginative scope of his playing. The latter reaches its peak on Antonio Carlos Jobim's *A Felicidade*, a remarkable, sustained solo that ranges from haunting lyricism to exuberant and lusty explosions. This is great music. J.S.W.

**Freddie Hubbard: Bundle of Joy.** Bert DeCoteaux, producer. *Columbia JC 34902*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● JCT 34902, ●● JCA 34902*, \$7.98.

Freddie Hubbard's going to get a lot of flak for this recording. Though his recent performances have all gone in the direction of over-orchestrated glop, they usually offered a few endearing moments that made up for it all. Bob James's producing and arranging on the last outing, for example, provided a touch of class that it might not have otherwise had.

On "Bundle of Joy," however, Hubbard has finally fallen prey to the promotion men. Even his own excellent pieces—*Bundle of Joy*, *Tucson Stomp*, and *Rahsann*—have been filtered through the commercial sieve to work for the masses. Other tunes make no pretense of appropriateness to Hubbard's very special skills. And, to make things worse, the whole project has been produced, arranged, and conducted in slick superficial fashion by the r&b-oriented Bert DeCoteaux. A huge orchestra fills in every nook and cranny with chirps, burps, and squirts, ensuring that Hubbard's talents will never break free.

Despite all this, his hot, fiery, and still-original trumpet playing maintains a vestige of creativity. Without all the silliness (I'd love to strip the master tapes of everything except Hubbard and the rhythm section) one might have a re-

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spectable performance. Alas, I can only review what's in the grooves.

It may be worth noting, by the way, that the cover of his last album showed him trying to play his horn against a sheet of Mylar. This time his horn is tightly wrapped in a sheet of red plastic. Is somebody giving us a message? D.H.

**The University of Illinois Jazz Band:**  
*The World of Jazz. Golden Crest CRS*  
4161, \$7.98.

John Garvey's University of Illinois bands have been consistently among the best college jazz ensembles for more than a decade. The 1977 group is no exception, and on this disc it has a better opportunity to show its merits than on most. The better college jazz ensembles have gotten beyond the derivative stage in which everything they played sounded like second-rate Stan Kenton or Count Basie. The composing and arranging has become much more adventurous, although they are still apt to be tied down to a fairly standard conception of what a jazz arrangement should sound like. Some of that is noticeable here: An original by Tom Frederickson, *Déjà Vu*, is a recollection of the days when big bands played at theaters, and *Corner Pocket*—a familiar part of the Count Basie repertory—runs into the inevitable problem of comparison with the original.

But these aside, Garvey focuses on the relationship between jazz and music of other cultures. This stems from the band's tour of the Soviet Union in 1969 and 1970, from Garvey's study of various ethnic musics while on sabbatical in 1972 and 1973, and from the experience of Howie Smith, a onetime alto saxophonist in the band, who taught in Australia for three years. As a result, there are three pieces written by Russian musicians that bring some idiomatic folk and pop feeling into the band's jazz context and show off two excellent soloists—Herminio Diaz on flute and Karel Lidral on tenor and soprano saxophones. Smith's *Thandi* mixes the unusual folk sources of aboriginal drumming and singing with big-band power jazz and what Garvey perceives as a Charles Ives influence. And although Django Reinhardt is so much a part of the medium that he can scarcely be viewed as an exotic in jazz terms, his *Manoir de mes Rêves* has a folk flavor that makes it a viable part of the overall concept of this record. The ensemble playing is strong and spirited, and the soloists, who are usually of widely varying quality in a college band, hold to an excellent professional standard. The disc is based on a provocative idea and carried out with imagination and skill; it is a refreshing change from the usual, routine big-band fare. J.S.W.

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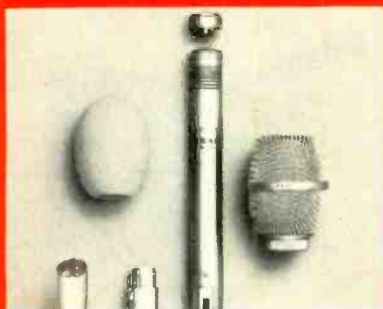
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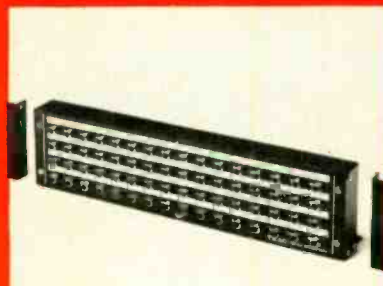
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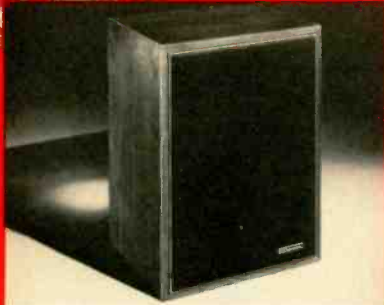
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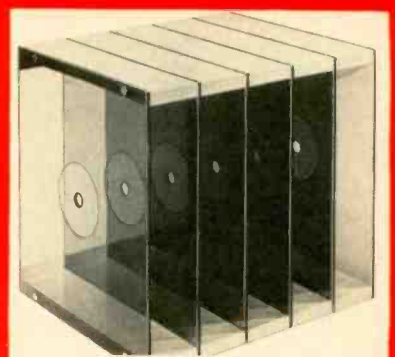
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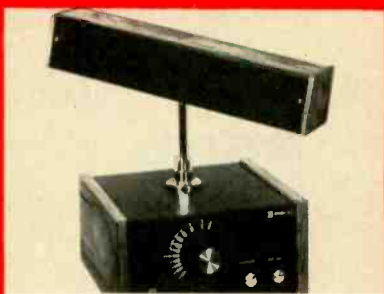
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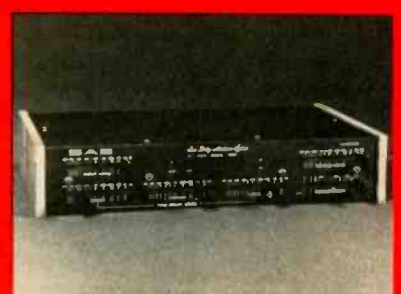
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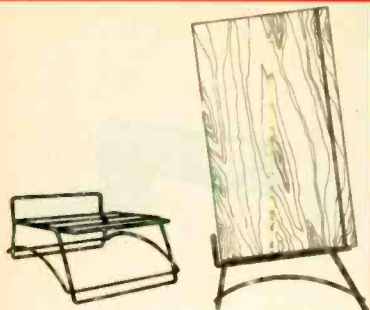
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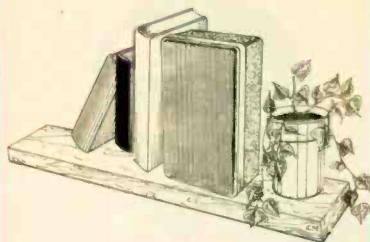
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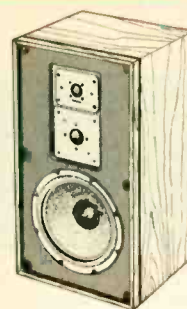
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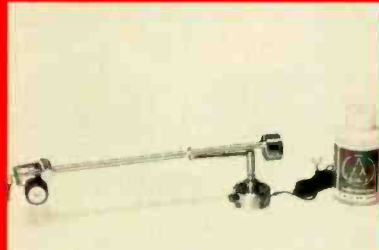
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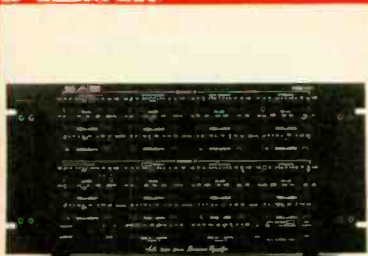
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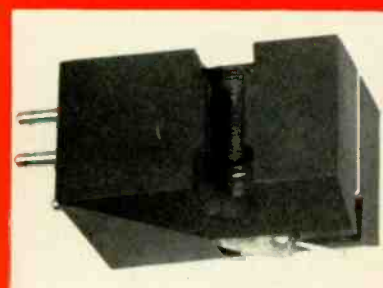
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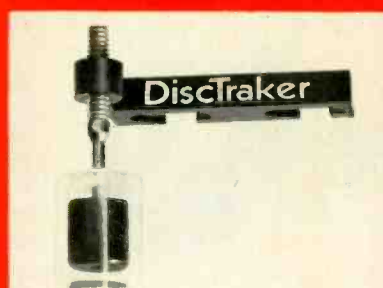
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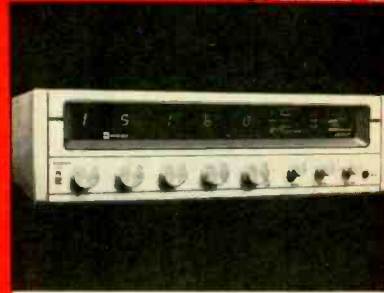




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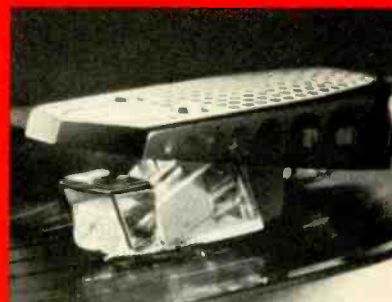
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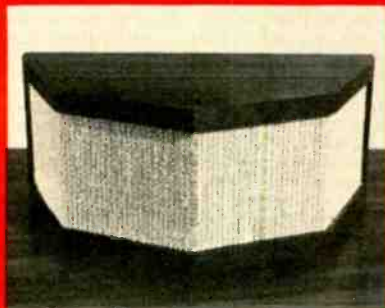
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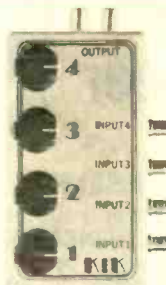
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Clarke, who is electric bassist for Corea's *Return to Forever*, contributes a stylish folio of his own compositions, which are Mingus-influenced but more esoteric. Jessie has done these arrangements also, ably assisted by John Curtin. Both collections are meritorious and sure to find their market.

**Captain and Tennille: Come in from the Rain.** *AP, 11 songs, \$5.95.*

An m.o.r. song folio that is actually an improvement over the frantic record album it matches. One full page is devoted to a listing of the duo's disc awards. But the publishers might have better given the space to crediting the folio's arranger. The Sager-Manchester *Come in from the Rain* and Alan O'Day's *Easy Evil* have been published in other keys, other collections. Rather than taking the easy way out by simply transposing them, a very capable ear has accurately duplicated the Captain's keyboard patterns and Tennille's silky phrasing. What you hear is exactly what you get, and by all standards it's a classy package.

**Quincy Jones: Roots.** *WBP, 17 songs, \$5.95.*

The merchandising of *Roots* continues with the publication of Quincy Jones's score for the TV series. The table of contents lists seventeen selections, but much of this music is nonmelodic and belongs in the percussionist's file. Designed as an adjunct to the video portion of the show, it cannot be fully appreciated when separated from the small screen—unless you're a musicologist or an importer of West African log drums.

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**Kenny Loggins and Jim Messina Complete.** *WBP, 54 songs, \$9.95.*

I have tried to separate Loggins and Messina from their music, but it can't be done. Their songs, like the cinematic adventures of Robert Redford and Paul Newman, are shared, bilateral experiences, offered for our listening pleasure but not for our participation. This folio is at its best when the piano part accompanies, rather than duplicates, the vocal line—which it does most of the time. But without the strength and interplay of the two performing personalities, there is, alas, no sting.

**Cat Stevens Complete (1970–1975).** *WBP, 60 songs, \$9.95.*

I'm puzzled about the title of this folio. A "complete" anthology that comprises only the first six years of a writer's still-flourishing career is a new high in contradictions—even for a music publisher. Some of the material is touching, some is banal. In either case, your speed-reading course will come in handy, since the prolific Mr. Stevens employs his own metric system. Without any warning, a solidly established group of four-beat measures will splinter off into 5/4 or 6/8 before returning just as suddenly to home base. Professionals will be intrigued, but practice is mandatory for the home musician.

**Supertramp: Crisis? What Crisis?.** *AP, 10 songs, \$5.95.*

**Supertramp: Even in the Quietest Moments.** *AP, 7 songs, \$5.95.*

Supertramp should re-assess its priorities. The material is spotty; a valid lyric seems to be taking shape when suddenly it gets lost in the band's enthusiasm for its own instrumental performance. Perhaps I shouldn't complain—after all, the group is in the business of selling records. But for the home musician, these folios represent \$11.90 worth of disappointment.

**James Taylor: Anthology.** *Big 3, 35 songs, \$7.95.*

This is James Taylor, vintage 1969–73. The two-line piano-vocals are simple to play and as effective as the well-remembered recordings like "Sweet Baby James" are affecting. Taylor's folksy lyrics require some down-home accompaniment, and this folio includes a sepa-

rate section for guitar-playing nonreaders: chord names above the printed words, some of which are underlined to indicate the desired stress, with a complete tablature showing the formation of each chord at the bottom of the page. Especially recommended for younguns and awakening musicians.

**John Travolta: Can't Let You Go.** *AP, 13 songs, \$5.95.*

Those who don't need the lush six pages of full-color Travolta are in for a pleasant surprise. He is not a writer, but his musical advisers have selected his romantic material carefully: a Paul Williams lyric here, a Peter Allen melody there, and, of course, the artist's hit record, *Gonna Let Her In* (here titled *Let Her In*). The result is a good contemporary mélange with universal appeal that is easy to play and easier to enjoy.

**Jethro Tull: Songs from the Wood.** *AP, 9 songs, \$5.95.*

Looking for new musical horizons? Jethro Tull—the British rock group led by Ian Anderson—can take you along on a time trip. The destination is Elizabethan England, and the time is—oh, 4/4, 3/8, 2/4, and many mixtures thereof. Exploring these polyrhythmic outposts is not too perilous, and it might even be fun. Just remember to pack your metronome.

ELISE BREFTON



*Cat Stevens—practice is mandatory*

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Motor System. The steadyest, most accurate tape-transport method. Speed accuracy is superb, with Wow and Flutter below 0.08% (WRMS).

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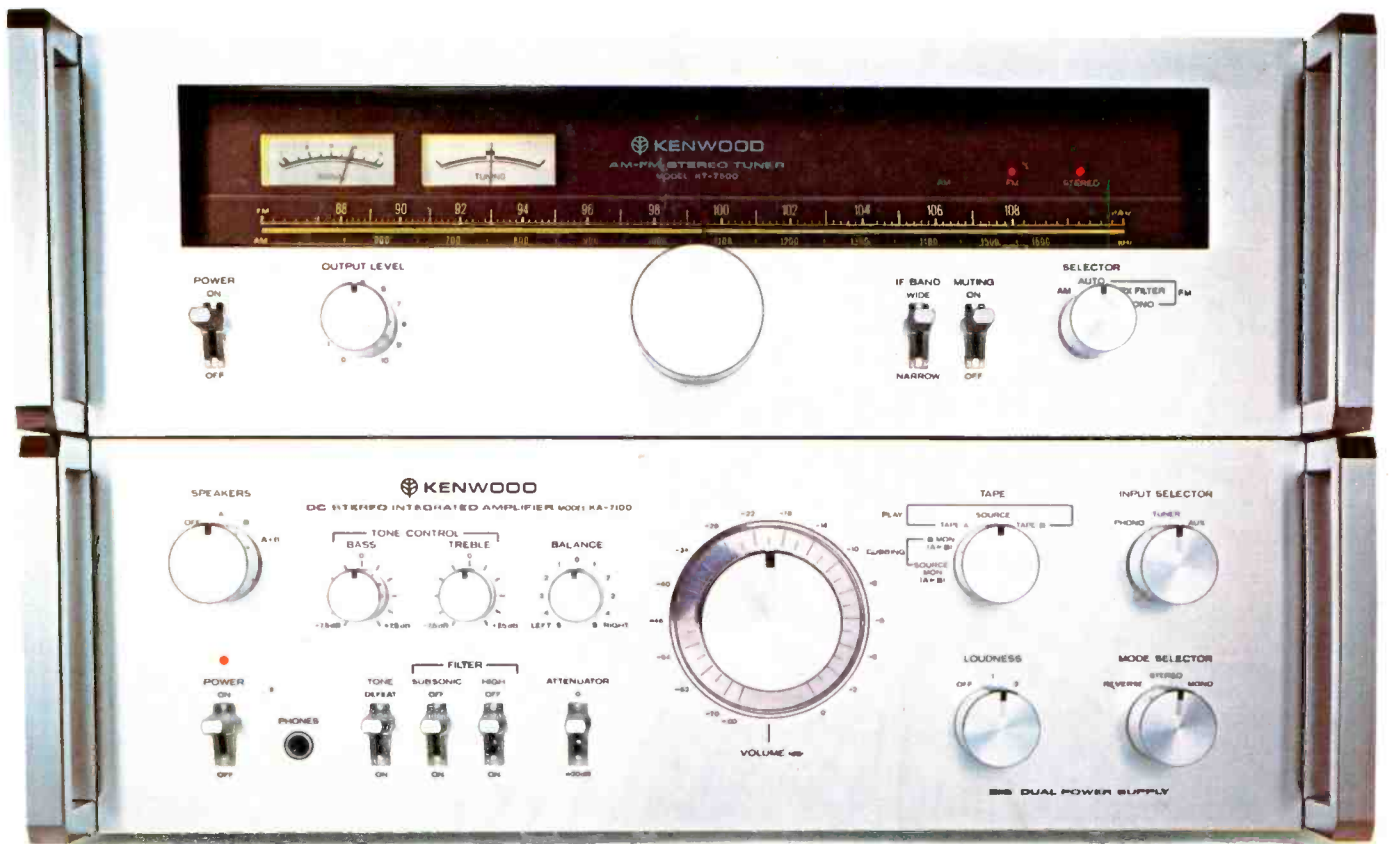
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**2.** The KT-7500 marks the next plateau for FM tuners. For optimum reception under any condition it has two independent IF bands: the narrow band virtually eliminating interference when stations are close together, the wide band for lower distortion and maximizing stereo separation. In addition, we've developed new circuitry which eliminates the high

frequency beat distortion (that is, swishing noises) thought to be inherent in stereo FM broadcast. Even we were impressed that it costs only \$275\*.

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