

DECEMBER 1978 \$1.50

In Backbeat Peter, Paul & Mary: A Courageously Uncool "Reunion"

HIGH FIDELITY

ICD © 1978

Auto Sound Shifts Into High
SEPARATES FOR THE CAR

- The Brands to Look For
- Spooks in the Specs?
- Ways to Thwart Thieves

**International Critics Pick
BEST RECORDS OF 1978**



HE RSS4NR 7R0190CT 79 1 03
ROGER H RUSSELL
7 NORMANDY CT
BINGHAMTON N Y
13903



For years, Nakamichi has enjoyed a reputation for building the world's finest cassette deck.

Now Pioneer is introducing something Nakamichi won't enjoy at all: the Pioneer CT-F1000.

A cassette deck that offers all the features and performance of Nakamichi's best cassette deck, at less than half the price.

PIONEER VS. NAKAMICHI: THE HEAD TO HEAD COMPETITION.

The \$1,650* Nakamichi 1000II and the \$600* Pioneer CT-F1000 are both honest three headed cassette decks that let you monitor right off the tape as you record.

Both have separate Dolby systems for the playback and recording heads. So when you're making a recording with the Dolby on, you can monitor it exactly the same way.

Both have two motors to insure accurate tape speed.

Both feature solenoid logic controls that let you go from fast forward to reverse, or from play to record without punching the stop button, and without jamming the tape.

And both are filled with convenient items like automatic memories for going back to a selected spot on a tape, multiplex filters for making cleaner FM recordings, separate bias and equalization switches for getting the most out of different kinds of tape, and even a pitch control adjustment that lets you match the pitch of a cassette to the tuning of your guitar or piano.

A \$1,000 GAP IN PRICE; NO GAP IN SOUND.

When we built the CT-F1000, however, we did more than match the Nakamichi's renowned features. We also matched its renowned performance.

Both machines boast totally inaudible total harmonic distortion levels of less than 1.5%.

Both have all but conquered the problem of wow and flutter. (An identical 0.05% for each machine.)

Both offer similarly impressive signal to noise ratios: 64 decibels Pioneer, 65 decibels Nakamichi. (At these levels

It's value.

we dare you to hear any noise at all, let alone any difference.)

And finally, where the CT-F1000 delivers a frequency response of 30 to 17,000 hertz, the Nakamichi deck goes from 35 to 20,000 hertz. (We offer a little more at the bottom; they offer a little more at the top. Either way, the specifications are close enough to be called virtually identical.)

A FEW PIONEER ADVANTAGES THAT AREN'T MONETARY.

To prevent you from making distorted tapes, the CT-F1000 has a peak limiter that the Nakamichi machine lacks.

Our tape heads are made out of a special single crystal ferrite material that's been proven to last longer than the Nakamichi's permalloy variety.

And our Dolby system can be calibrated by hand while the Nakamichi 1000II requires a screwdriver.

Admittedly, the Nakamichi 1000II *does* feature a fancy azimuth control for aligning your heads before every recording session. But we've developed a more accurate way to mount the heads in the first place. So you can spend your time recording, instead of aligning.

A FEW CONCESSIONS TO NAKAMICHI.

Obviously, at almost \$1,000 more, the Nakamichi 1000II must offer some advantages over the CT-F1000.

And we'd be remiss if we didn't point out that their VU meters extend slightly higher than ours.

And that they have extra input for premixed program sources.

And although their signal to noise ratio is hardly different than ours, the Nakamichi 1000II does feature an extra Nakamichi-invented noise reduction system.

Considering the slimness of these advantages, the choice is clear-cut:

You can buy a Nakamichi 1000II and get an incredibly expensive cassette deck.

Or you can buy a CT-F1000. And get one that's simply incredible.

 **PIONEER**
We bring it back alive.

The big
difference
between this
cassette deck
and Pioneer's new
CTF1000
isn't sound.



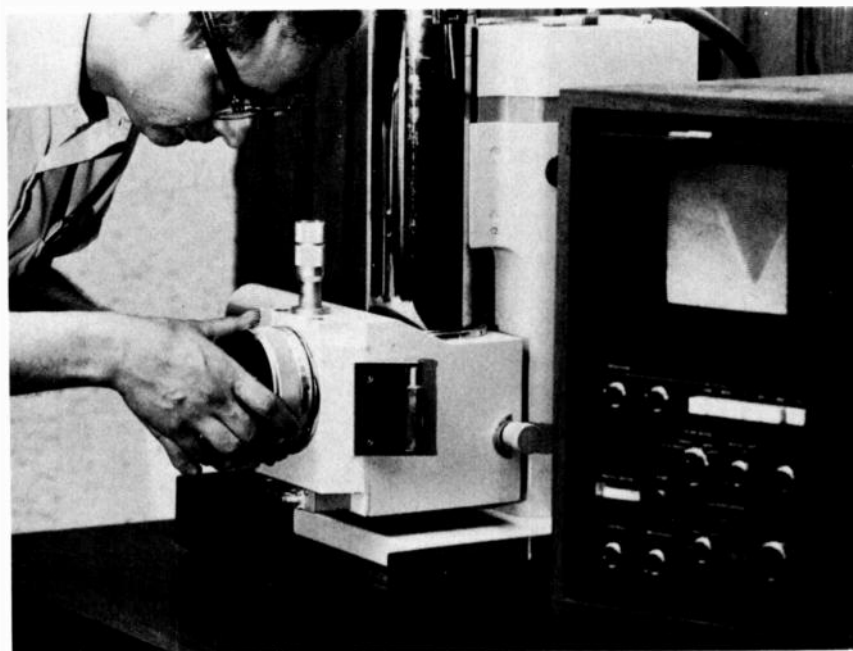
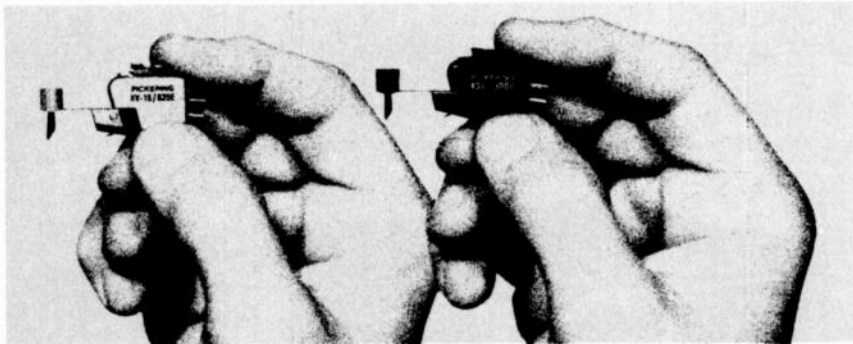
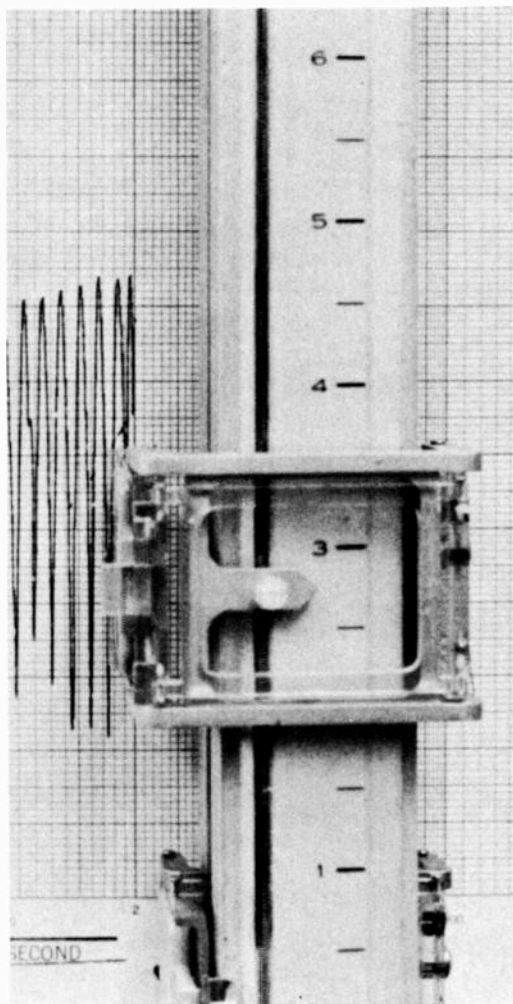
The Pioneer CT-F1000 5000



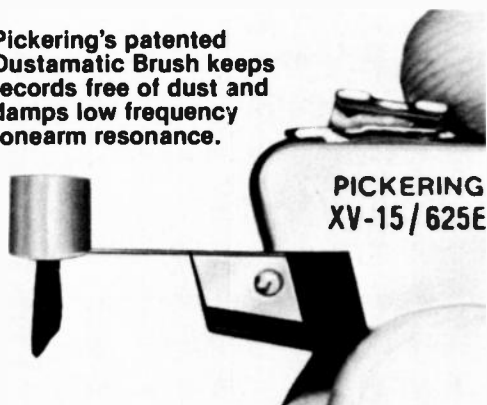
The Nakamichi 1000II: \$1,650

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Pickering's patented Dustomatic Brush keeps records free of dust and damps low frequency tonearm resonance.



It takes real effort and skill to become the acknowledged leader in the industry, and even more to stay ahead.

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Pickering's engineering department is responsible for creating these two outstanding cartridges that, as one reviewer stated: "The XV-15/625E offers performance per dollar; the XSV/3000 higher absolute performance level."

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HIGH FIDELITY

DECEMBER 1978

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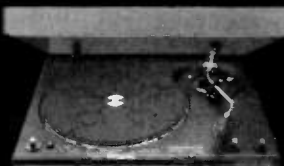
On every BSR Quanta turntable is an S-shaped statically balanced tonearm. Viscous damped cueing for perfectly smooth arm movement. And on the Quanta ECO is the most accurate Quartz Phase-Locked Loop direct drive motor in existence. The quartz generated pulsed LED strobe display provides visual monitoring of the speed.

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Technics professional portable cassette decks. Our top-of-the-line RS-686DS speaks for itself. Its 6 lbs., 13 oz. say it's portable. Its 3 heads say it's professional. And all the other features say it will give you recordings of professional caliber.

Features like a unique anti-rolling mechanism for unprecedented portable transport stability. A frequency generator servo motor that immediately counteracts any variation in rotational speed. Separate bias and equalization. Even Dolby.*

The RS-686DS also gives you controls you won't find on many non-portables. Like a tape/source monitor switch. Low cut filter. Mike attenuator. And a three-minute tape and alert eye.

A less expensive alternative is the RS-646DS. The portable deck with performance specifications usually found only in higher priced cassette decks.

The RS-686DS and RS-646DS. Professional specifications. Plus the flexibility of recording sound wherever it may take you.

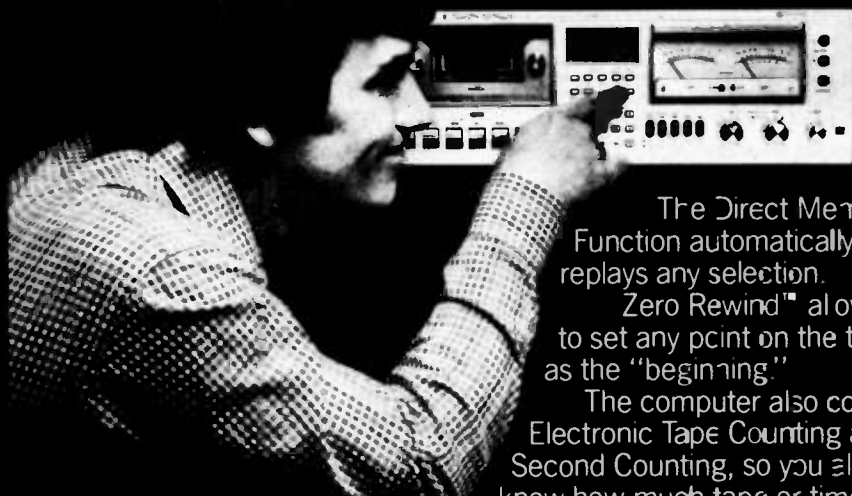
TRACK SYSTEM: (686, 646) 4-track, 2-channel record/playback. MOTOR: FG servo-controlled DC motor (RS-686DS), DC electronic speed control motor (RS-646DS). FREQ. RESP. (± 3 dB): RS-686DS: CrO₂ tape, 50-16,000 Hz; Normal Tape, 50-14,000 Hz. RS-646DS: CrO₂ and Normal Tape, 50-14,000 Hz. WOVN AND FLUTTER (WRMS): 0.07% (686), 0.10% (646). S/N RATIO (Dolby): 66 dB (686), 65 dB (646). DIMENSIONS: 3" H x 9 1/2" W x 7 7/8" D (686), 4 1/4" H x 14 1/4" W x 11" D (646).

Technics RS-686DS and Technics RS-646DS. A rare combination of audio technology. A new standard of audio excellence.

*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

Technics
 Professional Series

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The first cassette deck controlled by computer—a micro-processor with no fewer than five memories—would be enough to dazzle anybody.

You merely program the computer: tell it how and when you want to listen to which song.

It controls Sharp's exclusive Auto Program Locate Device. This unique feature skips ahead or back to any song you select (up to 19 songs) and plays it automatically.

The Direct Memory Function automatically replays any selection.

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every bit as dazzling as the electronic performance of the computer.

Just a few specs tell the story: S/N ratio; 64dB with Dcby.* Wow and flutter, a minimal 0.06%. Frequency response, 30-16,000 Hz ($\pm 3dB$) for FeCr.

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But how nice that you can have the deck with your own private computer to run it. (The RT-3388 is just one of a complete line of Sharp® cassette decks with the unique ability to find and play your music for you.)

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THE FIRST COMPUTER THAT PLAYS MUSIC.



Coming Next Month

In the market for a midpriced turntable? In January, as part of our traditional winter **Ten Lab/Listening Reports** issue, we review five from top manufacturers: Fisher, Garrard, Kenwood, Stanton, and Visonik. Not in the market for a turntable? We offer additional reports on a preamp, a cartridge, a headset, a cassette deck, and an ambience-simulation unit, all bearing prominent names. Conrad L. Osborne diagnoses the disease of the throat called Broadway singing—"belt" and "legit" are its two most virulent strains—in **How Musicals Ruin Singers**, and Deena Rosenberg surveys the spate of recent **Show-Tune Reissues**. In **BACKBEAT**, Sam Sutherland assays the elemental magic of **Earth, Wind and Fire**, and Peter Brown confesses "I Built Peter Brown's New Studio." And we reveal the results of our annual **Pop Critics' Pick**: Best Records, Most Promising Artists, Best (and Worst) Cover Art, Best Comeback LP, as well as the Emperor's Clothes Award for the year's most ephemeral trend, the Purple Heart Award for the company that took the biggest risks, the P. T. Barnum Award for the year's grossest hype, and more. Ready for this one?

SOLUTION TO HIFI-CROSTIC NO. 40

DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU:

[Schubert's] Songs: [A Biographical Study]

His "style" should not really be called that, since his successors have accustomed us to think of style as something affected attained by "art" in a studio. Thus, almost all his contemporaries, even the musicians, underestimated Schubert's greatness.

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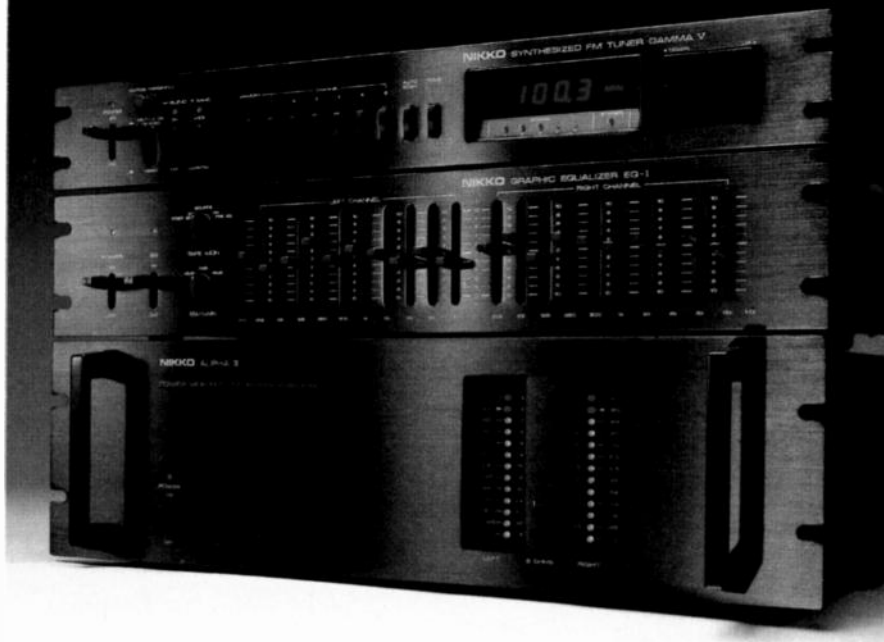
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Many stereotypes predictably claim they found the seed of sound . . . but only Nikko Audio actually delivers that pinnacle of purity through three new components in our professional series.

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All three components can be professionally stacked into Nikko's new 19" rack mount cabinet. But hearing is believing. Call our toll-free number for the name of your nearest Nikko dealer at (800) 423-2994 and find out why Nikko's reputation for accuracy is forever sound.



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A new Space Program by Sansui.

Designed to send every audiophile into orbit.

Sansui has conquered space — the space in your listening room. Our engineers have created a rack to hold all your high fidelity components in one place so they're easily accessible and easy to operate. And the Sansui GX-5 rack is so elegant you will be proud to display it in your home.

The **Sansui GX-5 rack** is about the only EIA 19" standard-width rack available with casters for moving your sound system easily from room to room. It is 37-1/2 inches tall and can hold every rack-mountable component. You can also adjust the height of each unit to meet your needs.

We have filled the rack with our choice of outstanding Sansui components. And there's still plenty of room for your records. Listen to them on the **Sansui SR-838 Quartz-Servo direct-drive turntable**, about the most elegant and stable precision turntable in the world. Even when set on top of so much power, the SR-838 will perform free from all noise and feedback.

When your mood changes, listen to your favorite FM station on the **Sansui TU-717 tuner**. Reception, even of the weakest stations, is outstanding, with selectivity so high there is never a problem with adjacent channel programming.

And, of course, if you want to preserve these treasured sounds for years — as clean and pure as they were the very first time you heard them — it's all possible with the **SC-3110 cassette deck**, our rack-mountable version of the SC-3100, already well-known for its superior performance and ultraconvenience including Sansui exclusive Direct-O-Matic loading.

To match these outstanding components, Sansui offers you the **AU-717 amplifier** with the widest frequency response (from main-in) of any available **DC integrated amplifier** at any price. With astonishingly low distortion and noise, and wide overall frequency response, the signal is an ultra-faithful replica of the original. The AU-717 delivers the brilliance and all the nuance that makes music so important in your life.

Listen through a pair of **SP-L800** (or SP-L 900 or 700) **dual-woofer speaker systems***. They have been designed to give you the full enjoyment of the clean and pure sound that our advanced technology components provide.

Of course, you can select other components to meet your own listening needs. You may want slightly less power; so we offer you the AU-517 DC integrated amplifier, created with the very same expertise as its bigger brother, the AU-717. If you wish to spend a little less on your cassette, you can choose the SC-1110.

And for you recordists and musicians we have something almost out of this world. The **AX-7 mixer/reverb unit** is about the finest home recording console that you can find at such a reasonable price. Versatility is the key, with up to 6 inputs for microphones, line level, electrical instruments, discs, broadcasts or tapes. You get panpots and



20dB input level attenuators on the 4 main inputs. Reverb is included, as well as circuits for 4-channel, equalization and noise reduction. Record the sounds you create on up to 3 tape decks.

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*Walnut veneer finish

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The New Leader In Audio Technology



...introduces the world's most powerful 50 watt receiver.

The new Hitachi SR 804 stereo receiver has the revolutionary Class G amp that instantly doubles its rated power from 50 to 100 watts to prevent clipping distortion during those demanding musical peaks (note the clipped and unclipped waves in the symbolic graph above). The SR 804 is conservatively rated at 50 watts RMS, 20-20,000 Hz into 8 ohms with only 0.1% THD.

Class G is just one example of Hitachi's leadership in audio technology. Power MOS/FET amplifiers, R&P 3-head system cassette decks, Uni-torque turntable motors, and gathered-edge metal cone speakers are just some of the others. There's a lot more. Ask your Hitachi dealer.



HITACHI

When a company cares,
it shows.

Letters

A Reviewer's Responsibility

We were surprised at the slanted viewpoint of Don Heckman in his review of Orinda's album "A Tribute to Ethel Waters" [BACKBEAT, October], with Diabann Carroll and the Duke Ellington Orchestra under the direction of Mercer Ellington. The first digital master recording to be released by a U.S. company (wouldn't you like to have a copy of the first 45 or Elvis Presley recording?), it was called by *Billboard* "one of the best all-around contemporary audiophile productions."

A superstar like Miss Carroll does not need, in Heckman's phrase, to "manage effective imitations" of others, as she sings as only she can sing. Producer Michael Robert Phillips intended that the album be a "show-time set for Carroll," as Heckman puts it, and *Billboard* refers to her as "a stylist supreme." Every once in a while Heckman allows the reader a glimpse of responsible writing, as when he comments on the "excellent improvisations" by the "uncredited" alto saxophonist, Buddy Collette, and pianist, Mike Lang. But mostly he seems to wield a sharp pen in order to create controversy—and so he commissioned to write more reviews?

It's one thing to indulge your ego this way, and another to give the reader responsible reviews based on sound judgment. Well, at least Heckman spelled our name right.

Cynthia Bennett
Public Relations Director
Orinda Recording Corp.
Orinda, Calif.

It is hard not to admire the spirit in Ms. Bennett's defense of the Orinda "Tribute" disc, but it is equally hard to ignore the fact that it is self-serving. We're delighted for all concerned, of course, that *Billboard* favored their efforts and wish that Heckman could have shared that journal's unqualified enthusiasm. (It should be noted that he did praise some aspects of the recording, both musical and sonic.) But, like the other stalwarts of our reviewing staff—all of them, incidentally, thoroughly grounded in the music on which they offer their reflections and deeply concerned that it prosper by bringing pleasure to its audiences—Heckman has but one mandate from IF. That mandate is decidedly not that he should attempt to provoke controversy, and equally not that he should attempt to shun it; it is to call 'em as he sees 'em (always, of course, respecting the bounds of civilized discourse), in order to provide music lovers with the means to discriminate among the thousands of recordings that yearly vie for their purchasing dollar. That's how we define responsible writing and how we fulfill our responsibility to our readers.

When viewpoints diverge, as they do here, the only arbiter can be individual taste. Herewith we enjoin our readers to

decide for themselves on the merits of the Orinda recording.

Exotic Speaker Cables

I promised my parents I'd never become an "up-the-wall audiophile," so I hesitate to come out of the closet. But Harold A. Rodgers' article, "Exotic Speaker Cables: Cure with No Disease?" [October], prods me into the open. That issue arrived the same day several friends and I (a musician, an engineer, an audio salesperson, and two audiophiles) completed several hours of listening tests, comparing four "exotic" speaker wires with 16-gauge, 12-gauge, and 8-gauge wire.

We used every control we could think of and a host of fine equipment. Most important, at no time during our listening did more than one person know the gauge of cable A or B. The results were fascinating and diametrically opposed to yours. A wide difference in quality among the cables was consistently detected time and time again by all listeners on all the systems we tried. What varied was the magnitude of the differences, which could be easily diminished by the associated equipment. For instance, a system with a Micro-Acoustic 530MP cartridge and Precise Technology speakers provided a clear and distinct difference between every wire, whereas another system with some highly vaunted speakers and a cartridge of considerable repute did not.

Though I never wanted to become obsessive about high fidelity, I do trust my ears. When I switched from 12-gauge to the best cables I could find, my system bloomed marvelously.

Andrew Teton
San Francisco, Calif.

We, who also trust our ears, listened too—and we concluded that we heard no difference. But more important, we think, are questions of philosophy and methodology. For example, since there are only so many things that can happen to a signal as it passes through a circuit, and these are known and understood, it is not sufficient to assert that this or that cable influences the sound without stating just how the cable altered the corresponding signal. The explanations offered by the manufacturers of exotic cables are not convincing in that they depend on capabilities of the human ear—i.e., the ability to hear frequencies far in excess of 20 kHz—that other evidence has shown do not exist. In other cases, transmission-line theory is invoked and then misapplied.

Since you offer no explanations for the phenomena you say exist, we are inclined to trust our lab data, which in our view correlates very well with the listening tests. We judge also that your A/B tests were probably inadequate. Such a test should compare units in pairs and include a large number of trials (which allows one to analyze findings for statistical significance and to see if positive findings occur on more than a chance level). It is also important that none of the listeners knows how the experiment is set up and that the experiment be exhaustively examined to be sure



We build
a speaker
that sounds
like music

It can accurately reproduce the 120+ dB peaks that are found in some live music. That's more than just being able to play music loud. It can accurately reproduce the music bandwidth—from below 25Hz to 20kHz. And the Interface:D's vented midrange speaker reproduces midrange sounds with the clarity and purity that allows precise localization of sound sources—both lateral and front-to-back.

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Open Reel: The format

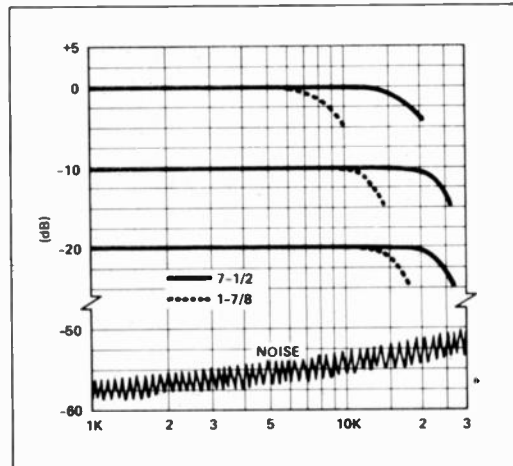
You're looking for a tape recorder. You've heard from friends and salesmen that cassette is the answer. At TEAC we make both cassette and reel-to-reel tape recorders. Because we make each for a specific person and application, you should depend on fact, not hearsay, before spending your money.

IT'S A MATTER OF PHYSICS

There are immutable reasons why cassettes can't match open reel fidelity.

Take tape speed. Open reel tape running at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips is running four times faster than a cassette. And speed has more to do with the relationship between frequency response and signal-to-noise than anything else by far.

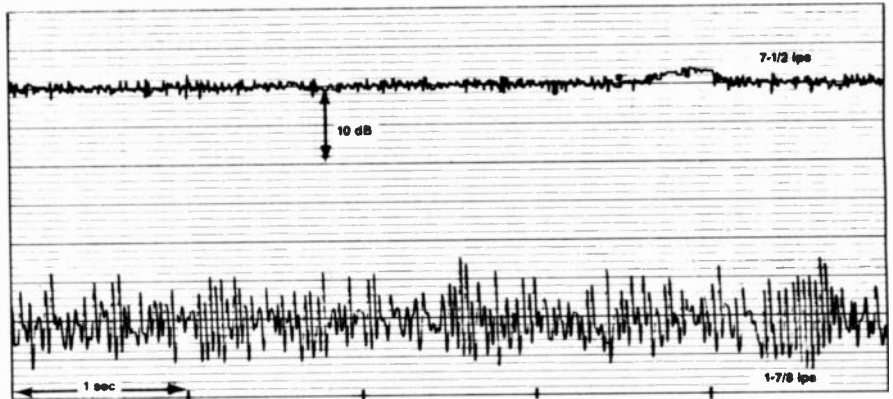
At $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips all audio frequencies can be recorded at full level



Tape saturation vs. level at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips and $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips.

without tape saturation. Recording at $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips forces you to make drastic compromises in record levels. The more you have to back off on recording levels, the more you hurt the ratio of signal-to-noise.

In short, with a cassette deck you cannot have high frequency response and good signal-to-noise. So a cassette deck is always operating on the ragged edge of disaster. It's so much easier to get into trouble than out of it because there's a difficulty for every solution.



Comparative dropouts between $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips and $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips at 15kHz.

MORE IS MORE

The faster the speed the longer the wavelength, the longer the wavelength the more protection you have against dropouts. You also have an easier job of editing.

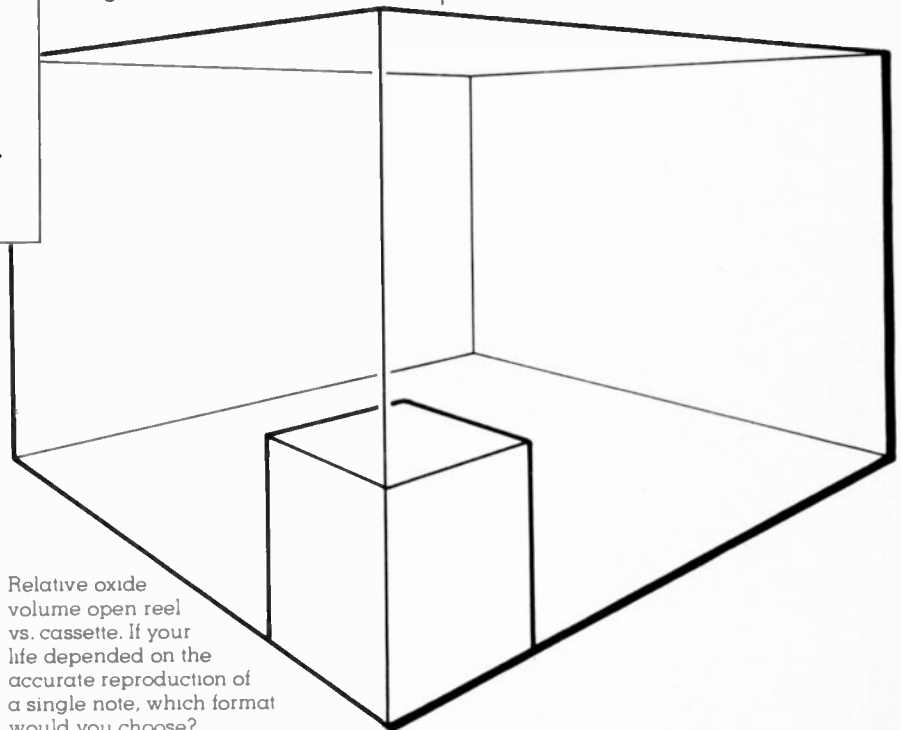
Now take track width. Open reel gives you twice the track width of cassettes. The wider

the track width the higher the output, the higher the output the better the signal-to-noise ratio. A wider track is also less sensitive to dropouts and, obviously, a wider track retains more magnetism.

And while we're on the subject of magnetism, an open reel tape has twice the oxide coating of a cassette.

Upshot: A total tape volume 16 times greater than a cassette, which means 16 times more magnetic particles to store and remember music.

If that sounds better to you, if we've convinced you the cassette format is a high price to pay for convenience, then you ought to look at the TEAC lineup of open reel tape recorders.



Relative oxide volume open reel vs. cassette. If your life depended on the accurate reproduction of a single note, which format would you choose?

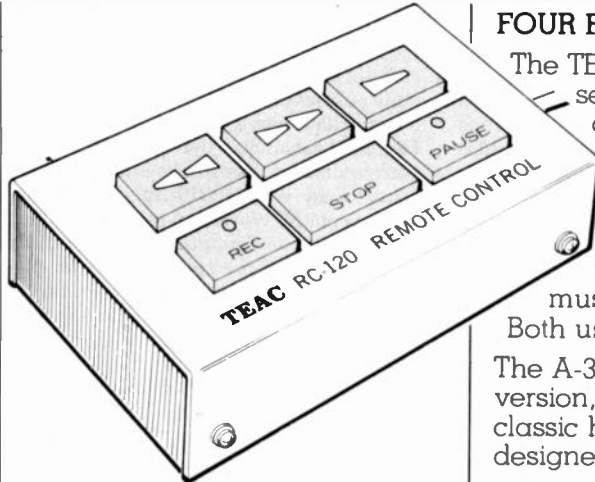
for the informed.

INSIDE INFORMATION

TEAC is a leading designer and manufacturer of computer and instrumentation recorders. In medical centers, for example, physicians depend on special TEAC units to record vital data in life-or-death situations; in remote wilderness areas, scientists depend on TEAC to monitor now-or-never phenomena like earthquakes.

From that experience we've learned that the quality of the transport mechanism is the single most important consideration in a tape recorder. For the computer industry, and for you. That's why many of the same engineers have designed the tape recorders we make for both.

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FACE IT

In the end, the cassette recorder is for those who are fonder of convenience than fidelity. If you want fidelity you can't ignore open reel.

In all crucial specifications, open reel tape recorders are better than cassette decks. And that message comes from the people who make the best of both. TEAC.



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that only the variable under study is changed. (A study purporting to find significant differences in sound between power amplifiers was shown to be invalid on just such grounds.)

The suggestion that the "right" associated components must be used to get positive results doesn't wash either, in our book. One could easily interpret evidence of that kind to mean that the speaker has the "wrong" input impedance and the reactance of the cable has adjusted the load so that it is more to the amplifier's liking—which surely does not indicate any general advantage in the use of special cables.

Scala Recordings: Other Views

I found Kenneth Furie's remarks in "The Scala Recordings: A Particular View" [September] extremely biased, problematic, and even incomprehensible. The criticism of Claudio Abbado's leadership of the recently released *Simon Boccanegra* [a 1978 International Record Critics Award winner; see the article in this issue—Ed.] is particularly irritating, because his baton here is the most incisive and musical on records, unifying the many loose strands of a most uneven work. In comparison, the tempos of Gabriele Santini on *Angel* and Gianandrea Gavazzeni on *RCA* are flaccid and indeterminate. I dare say that one of the most remarkable developments in Italian opera in recent years has been the emergence of first-rate conductors like Abbado, Lam-

berto Gardelli, James Levine, and Riccardo Muti. In addition, unlike Mr. Furie, I find that all the principals in the DG *Boccanegra* sing extremely well and overall are clearly superior to those on other recordings.

In stark contrast, the view that the DG *Rigoletto* with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Carlo Bergonzi, Renata Scotto, and Rafael Kubelik is "the best on records" seems to me quite ludicrous, despite the fact that several other critics agree with that contention. Fischer-Dieskau does deliver his best Verdi performance on disc, but he is hardly in the same league vocally with Riccardo Stracciari, Leonard Warren, Giuseppe Taddei, and Tito Gobbi. Bergonzi sings beautifully but really lacks the spirit, dash, and elegance of Alfredo Kraus and Jan Peerce as the Duke of Mantua. Scotto's *Gilda* is an estimable effort but light years away from Maria Callas' interpretation, musically and dramatically. I am afraid that Kubelik's conducting on the DG set, however brilliant, cannot redeem the performance.

Thomas R. Wilson
Downers Grove, Ill.

Mr. Furie replies: I'd like to clarify two points raised here. First, in saying that Kubelik "conduct(s) the best Rigoletto on records," I thought readers would understand "best" to refer to the conducting; you can write "best-conducted" only so often. The DG set would be a contender if I were to try to pick a "best" Rigoletto, but I didn't try. (Mr. Wilson and I would doubtless go

about the job differently.)

As for *Boccanegra*, to say that the DG recording surpasses its predecessors is to say little—and I'm not sure I agree anyway. I'm pleased that it seems to be winning new friends for this gloomy masterpiece, but I'd suggest that they have much yet to look forward to—qualities at best hinted at in the recordings. What I miss in the DG set was well described by Conrad L. Osborne in his February 1978 review: "I am unable to discover much electricity or atmosphere in the proceedings. I do not hear the personal urgencies of these characters, or feel much of the sensuality, the brooding mystery and fire, I know to be in the piece." I should add that I don't consider *Boccanegra* at all "uneven." Reviewing the RCA version in December 1974, I wrote that "if you're judging by the recordings, you'll still have to take the opera's greatness on faith." I'll stand by that.

Many thanks for Kenneth Furie's "The Scala Recordings." For too long opera enthusiasts have been forced to put up with monomaniacal conductors who are unable or unwilling to realize that opera must be allowed to breathe, to "play itself." The truly great opera conductors are those who let sensitive and inspired singers such as Franco Corelli, Mario del Monaco, and Aldo Protti do the interpreting. Mr. Furie is to be commended for his courage in leading the fight against those who would strait-jacket opera performances, all the while

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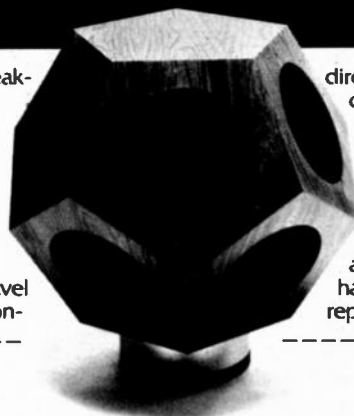
First of all, high frequency sound waves travel in a beam along a fairly direct axis. So with conventional directional speakers, you have to be sitting on or very near this axis to really get the full impact of the highs. But with an omnidirectional speaker, the sound is much more uniform throughout the entire listening area.

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mouthed nonsensical prattle about "realizing the composer's intentions." He has hailed such luminaries as Gabriele Santini and Francesco Molinari-Pradelli in the pages of HF in the past, but how about those maestros who have suffered underserved neglect and even been the targets of outrageous calumny at the hands of other critics? I speak of such underrated and unappreciated batonists as Georges Sebastian, Renato Cellini, and Franco Ghione, all followers of the great tradition bequeathed to us in the recordings of Lorenzo Molajoli and Carlo Sabajno.

Who is there who can say, having heard Alberto Erede's *La Bohème*, that he would not immediately chuck such vaunted but life-draining "interpretations" as those of Toscanini and Beecham into the ashcan? Perhaps Mr. Furie can be persuaded to undertake a complete discography of perhaps the greatest of them all, Fausto Cleva, the brightest light in the Metropolitan Opera's Golden Age (1950-72). Meanwhile, let the symphony conductors—the Levines, the Abbados, the Mutis, the Giulinis—stick to conducting symphonies and leave opera alone!

Brian Bailey
Bremerton, Wash.

Caruso's First Recordings

I enjoyed very much William Weaver's anniversary article, "Sounds of La Scala" [September]. However, it contains an error: the date of Enrico Caruso's first recording session, heretofore thought to have been March 18, 1902. Recent research (the results of which were published in Vol. 5, No. 4, of *The Antique Phonograph Monthly*) shows that Caruso made his first ten records on April 11, 1902. A letter dated April 10, 1902, from the Milan office to G&T's general manager, specifically states that "Caruso sings tomorrow 10 songs for 100 pounds."

I hope the correct date for this important event can be published in your widely distributed magazine.

Prof. Allen Koenigsberg
Editor and Publisher
The Antique Phonograph Monthly
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Bird Not in Hand

I enjoyed John S. Wilson's review of the Charlie Parker Dial sessions albums [BACKBEAT, August]. As soon as I read it, I dashed all over Phoenix to try and find a copy of the six-disc set. No luck. I called all over Los Angeles and all over New York City. No luck. I want desperately to get a copy of these recordings. Can you be of any help?

Fred B. Eisman Jr.
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Warner Bros. informs us that only 4,000 copies of "Charlie Parker" (6BS 3159) were pressed because of contractual stipulations concerning the cover artwork. Unfortunately, those are gone, but the company is canvassing various retail outlets to determine if there is enough demand for another pressing. The two-disc set ("The Very Best

of Bird," 2WB 3198) discussed in the same review should still be available.

Additionally, around the end of this year Arista plans to issue a five-record set of Parker's complete Savoy studio sessions.

All that Jazz

Gene Lees is on the right track in his indictment of "relentlessly diatonic and major-key" music ["The Emergence of Jazz," August] as the progenitor of "rock and roll," but he greatly oversimplifies in ascribing such relentlessness to Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. How does he explain that one of the most modal and expressively free of

American musical traditions, that of the Sacred Harp and similar singing traditions in the rural South, emerged from a 100% Protestant culture? Furthermore, if the example I give is suspect because it is just as much Celtic as English, consider the New England tradition that gave birth to the Sacred Harp style. Surely the uninhibited and expressive style of William Billings and his followers is just as "English" as the four-square style of Lowell Mason, who opposed Billings et al. so successfully.

It seems that it is authoritarian temperament rather than any ideology that stifles creativity, whether in the arts, social relations, or any other human endeavor. The authoritarian temperament (and its oppo-

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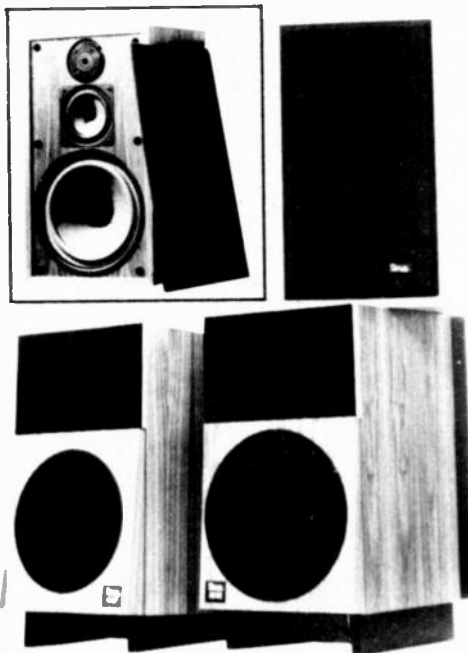
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site) can be found among all religions and peoples of the world, but it seems to have a propensity for uncritical support of the values of the "haves" as opposed to the "have nots." It should come as no surprise that its most common American manifestations are (or were) WASP-ish rather than black or Catholic.

Berkley L. Moore
Springfield, Ill.

The Amen Corner

A brief amen to John Culshaw's celebration of the London *Rheingold's* twentieth birthday [September], especially his remarks about Gustav Neidlinger's *Alberich*. It is, in my opinion, one of the great interpretations on record, in large part because it is so beautifully sung. *Alberich* usually goes to a bass-baritone with no legato and a dry, unfocused tone. The great revelation of Neidlinger's performance is the sheer beauty of *Alberich's* music. I have listened in vain for another interpreter who could sing "Nun denn! *Alberich* liess euch alles" with Neidlinger's poignancy and his tonal purity.

Paul Robinson
Stanford, Calif.

Toscanini on Film

The Toscanini film mentioned by David Hamilton in "For Sound Collectors, ARSC Is the Answer" [June] is currently available from Blackhawk Films, P.O. Box 3990, Davenport, Iowa 52808. The catalog numbers are 880-87-2454 (Super-8, magnetic sound, \$49.98) and 640-68-2754S (16mm, optical sound, \$99.98). This version includes the *Internationale* plus a performance of the overture to Verdi's *La Forza del destino*.

Curtis H. Croulet
San Diego, Calif.

The film is also available on video tape from Reel Images, Inc., 456 Monroe Turnpike, Monroe, Conn. 06468. It is item No. 21 in the current catalog and costs \$29.95 on VHS or Beta II (slow speed), \$39.95 on Beta I (high speed), and \$49.98 on U-Matic cassettes.

Buddy Holly

It is refreshing to read an accurate item on Buddy Holly. Such is the review of the album "Buddy Holly/The Crickets: 20 Golden Greats" [BACKBEAT, August]. A big thank you to Ken Emerson. The only correction necessary is the title of the book by John Goldrosen (who is on our executive board): It is *Buddy Holly, His Life & Music*, not *His Life and Work*.

Bill Griggs
President, Buddy Holly Memorial Society
Wethersfield, Conn.

Beveridge Moves

After our October review of its 2SW-1 speaker system went to press, Harold Beveridge, Inc., relocated its offices. The correct address is 505 East Montecito St., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93103.

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Technology from a Giant

Hitachi, a relative newcomer to the U.S. audio scene, has in a very short time made manifest a high level of technological innovation. Fruits of the company's extensive research and development program are already accessible to the audio market basket in the form of Dynaharmony (Class G) power amplifiers, Hall-effect tape playback heads, and Uitorque turntable motors. Late last summer, Hitachi invited us to participate in its European Audio Convention, at which further high-technology items were to be revealed. As it turned out, we not only became acquainted with some new products and their technological underpinnings, but learned too of certain subtleties associated with equipment that has been in the Hitachi line for some time.

For example, we have heard skepticism concerning Class G amplifiers, stemming from the fact that when the high-voltage transistors are operating there are not just two crossovers per cycle, as in normal Class B operation, but a total of six. While we had been aware of this situation, it had never come to our attention through any audible misbehavior on the part of the equipment. We were further reassured by Hitachi's simultaneous oscilloscope display of the output waveform and the distortion waveform, which indicated that the new crossover notches are far smaller in magnitude than the one traditionally characteristic of Class B. The product being demonstrated, not incidentally, was a new amplifier in which Class G is combined with Hitachi's MOS-FET output devices for the first time. The HMA-8350, like the Hitachi non-MOS-FET receiver reviewed in this issue, offers 200 watts (23 dBW) per channel with instantaneous headroom to 400 watts (26 dBW).

Pulse code modulation is another area in which Hitachi has become involved, and the results can be heard in discs being marketed by Denon. The latest development is a PCM adapter for use with home video tape recorders. Availability of this product, we are informed, will be delayed until necessary standards have been agreed upon industrywide.

Almost as startling, and far closer to market, is a new cassette deck that offers a solution to the increasingly difficult problem of matching tape and recorder. This machine, which is expected to sell for about \$1,000, incorporates a microprocessor that in twenty-five seconds will adjust bias, equalization, and Dolby level for optimum results with any tape. The

processor also can store the parameters of a given tape type for instant recall. When presented with a cassette that is unusable because of damage or abnormal tape characteristics, the system flashes a "tilt" indicator.

Metal loudspeaker cones have certain theoretical advantages over those made of paper, including greater stiffness per unit of mass and a higher speed of internal sound propagation. Despite this, their application has been exceedingly sparse. Hitachi seems to have solved many of the problems associated with metal cones and demonstrated what struck us during our short acquaintance with them as some quite creditable loudspeakers. Part of the taming of the metal driver, it would appear, depends on damping out energy that reaches the surround before it can reflect back along the cone to cause standing waves or resonances or both. A new type of surround has been developed to accomplish this more efficiently while exerting less drag on the desired axial motion of the cone.

Another interesting new product is useful not for the reproduction of music, but for its creation. The Hitachi Music Synthesizer contains an internal sequencer that can be programmed note by note or chord by chord. Thus its operation is not dependent on one's technical proficiency at the keyboard. The range of available tone colors is not the widest we know, but it was most impressive to see a flutist program the synthesizer with the accompaniment to a movement of a sonata and then add the flute part while the machine did its thing in real time.

There was more than this in Hitachi's bag of technological goodies, but these are some of the highlights. And while we were in Europe we got to take in a bit of the Düsseldorf Hi-Fi Show. But that will have to wait until next month.

Larry LeKashman Dies

As this issue nears presstime, we have learned of the passing of a man who, though he probably should not be called a founding father of the modern high fidelity industry, might aptly be referred to as one of its midwives. Larry LeKashman originally went to work at Electro-Voice in 1951 and, despite sojourns at such companies as Bogen, Olsen Radio, and Lafayette, remained there—for some years as its president—through most of the years until his death late in September.

(more)

If you can find a receiver that does more.

DC configuration
OCL power
amplifier with
fully complemen-
tary output stage

Bimodal electro-
sensor relay
protection and
delay circuit
with LED
indication

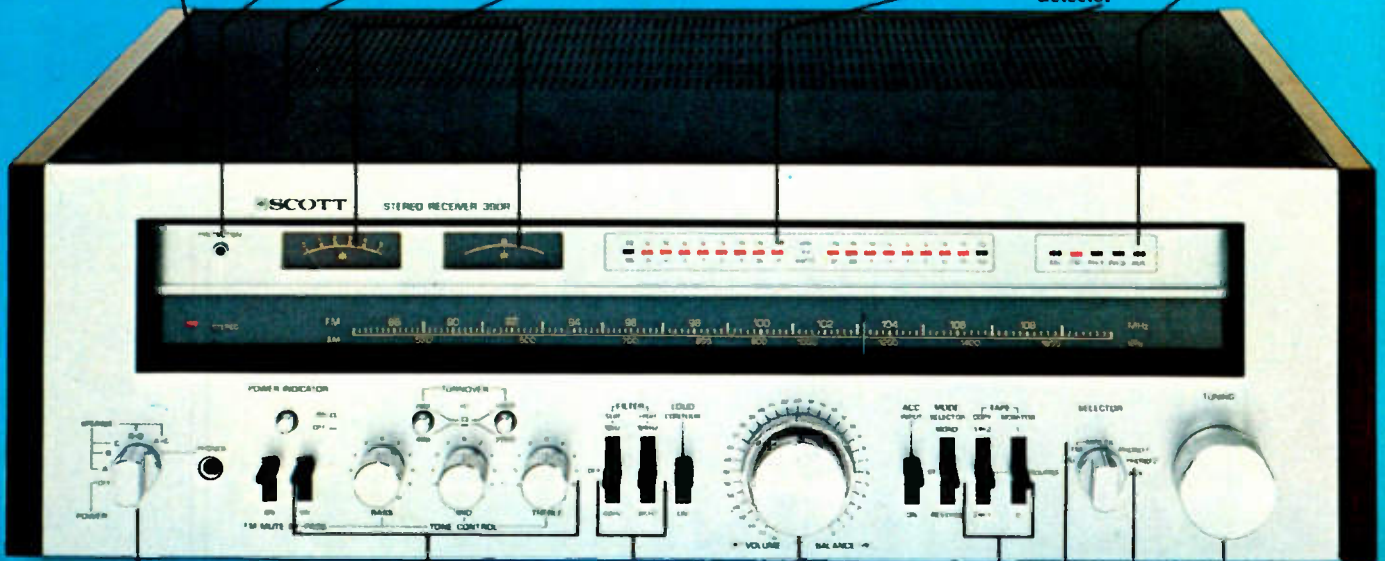
Differential
current mirror
loaded low noise
input stage

Center channel
and signal
strength tuning
meters

18 LED Analog
to digital
logarithmic
power display
indication
calibrated in
watts and dBW

3 stage IF ampli-
fier incorporating
3 linear phase
ceramic filters
with differential
limiter and
quadrature
detector

LED function
indicators



Connections for
3 pair of speakers

11 position
detent bass/
midrange/treble
tone controls
with variable
turnover fre-
quencies and
by-pass

Twin position
active subsonic
and high filters

32 detent loga-
rithmic volume
attenuator cali-
brated in dB

2 tape monitors
with full tape
copy capability

Multiplex filter

2 phono inputs

5 gang FM tun-
ing capacitor
with twin
stage dual gate
MOS FET
TRF amp

Buy it.

Scott's new 390R is perhaps the most complete receiver ever made.

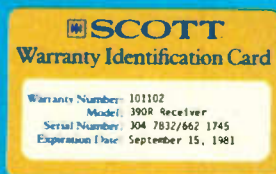
A professional control center for your entire sound system, the 390R delivers a full 120 watts per channel min. RMS, at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz with no more than 0.03% THD. And it offers more options, features and flexibility than you'll find on most separates.

Compare the Scott 390R with any other receiver on the market today. If you can find one that does more... buy it.

Scott's unique, gold warranty card. Individualized with your warranty, model and serial numbers, and expiration date. Scott's fully transferable, three-year parts and labor-limited

warranty is your assurance of lasting pleasure.

For specifications on our complete line of audio components, contact your nearest Scott dealer, or write H.H. Scott, Inc. Corporate Headquarters, 20 Commerce Way, Dept. IR, Woburn, MA 01801. In Canada: Paco Electronics, Ltd., Quebec, Canada.



SCOTT
The Name to listen to.
Makers of high quality high fidelity equipment since 1947.

We sound better because we listen better.

The new Harman Kardon receivers have power, features, excellent specifications.

But so do many other receivers.

What makes us better is the way we sound. More musical, with air between the instruments. Spacious, with extraordinary articulation that allows each instrument to register deep into your musical consciousness.

Why does Harman Kardon sound better?

It starts with ultra-wideband frequency response and remarkably low TIM (transient intermodulation distortion) and SID (slewing induced distortion). But these are merely minimum design parameters for Harman Kardon engineers.

Of course, it is possible for our engineers to build adequate receivers where others build them — in the laboratory. But that's not where you build exceptional ones. You make them in the listening room.

But not just when the receiver design has been

completed. Listening at every stage of development is critical.

The fact is that transistors with the same specifications, but from different manufacturers, vary in ways that affect the texture of music. That's why Harman Kardon engineers actually listened for the *musical character* of every component — singly and in combination — that went into the audio chain of all our new receivers. Every transistor. Every capacitor. Every resistor.

They listened for the subtle differences in component parts that make the immeasurable difference in the final product — changing, refining, in effect tuning the instrument until a receiver emerged that sounded exactly the way they wanted it to sound.

In short, it's not just great specifications that make the difference — it's listening to those things that others tend to take for granted.

Listen to the difference yourself. Visit your Harman Kardon dealer today.



*Pictured: hk670 receiver 60/60 watts
Not shown: hk340 20/20 watts, hk450 30/30 watts,
hk560 40/40 watts*



harman/kardon
Hear all the music.

55 Ames Court
Plainview NY 11803

NOW THERE ARE THREE TRIAXIALS® FROM THE PEOPLE WHO INVENTED THE 3-WAY SPEAKER.

The 6" x 9" Jensen Triax... the first ever.

This is the speaker that revolutionized car stereo sound. It features a separate woofer for the low tones, a tweeter for the highs, and a midrange for the middle tones...just like the better home stereo speakers.

The 5¼" Triax for front seat 3-way sound.

Another Jensen innovation. The 5¼" woofer mounts low in the front door for distortion-free bass. While a separate unit mounts high on the door, delivering sharp, clear high and middle tones from an individual tweeter and midrange.

A new 4" x 10" Triaxial for newer midsize cars.

It's specially designed to bring

3-way high fidelity to the narrower rear decks of the new midsize cars.

And a whole line of other quality speakers.

Jensen also offers a full line of coaxial 2-way speakers, dual cone speakers and surface mount speakers. All with the quality and great sound Jensen is famous for. And with a size and price to fit every car and wallet.



® "Triax" and "Triaxial" are registered trademarks identifying the 3-way car stereo speakers of Jensen Sound Laboratories, Division of Pemcor, Inc.

JENSEN
SOUND LABORATORIES
Division of Pemcor, Inc.
Schiller Park, Illinois 60176

When we asked a friend how old LeKashman was, the reply came: He was born in 1921 and was just over thirty when he died. His energy was, indeed, that of a younger man. Much of it was always put into communicating; not only did he communicate volubly and persuasively about the products he represented—and about the Institute of High Fidelity, of which he had been a director—but he was associated with the Braille Technical Press and was known the world over as a ham radio operator. Those whom his life touched—both inside and outside our industry—will miss him.

Vebjørn Tandberg

It was typical of him that he requested there be no notice of his death. This paragraph, however, is to commemorate not the event, but the life that preceded it. Vebjørn Tandberg's spirit—and long may it remain with us—is the sort that breeds legend. The energy of a Paul Bunyan combined with the moral

and social commitment of a John Bunyan to create an imposing presence: charged with life, immediate; warm and yet not a little intimidating. The company Tandberg founded bears his profound imprint as well as his name, and those who never knew him may sense a little of his qualities in communion with its products.

FCC Okays Stereo AM

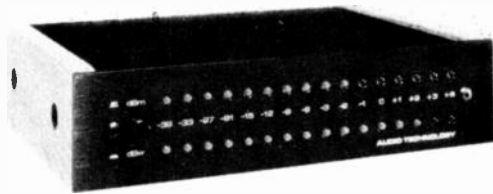
Rule-making is under way in Washington to implement a stereo system for AM broadcasting and, in fact, to determine which of the proposed systems should be adopted. The decision could come by early 1979. By contrast, the proposals for quadriphonic FM broadcasting (which have been under consideration by the Commission even longer) appear to have been shelved; the status quo is that matrixed quad is allowed as a kind of stereo broadcasting, but that "discrete" systems using special subcarriers are permitted only on a special experimental basis.

Equipment in the News

Audio Technology's dual-purpose meter

The Model 510 meter from Audio Technology reads peak voltage and power levels by means of an LED display. In the power mode, 16 LEDs per channel signal output from 0.003 to 400 watts. In the line-level mode, appropriate for peak reading in conjunction with a recorder, the 510 reads from 50 millivolts to 5 volts for a 0 dB indication. Accuracy is said to be $\pm 1/4$ dB. Rear-panel switches calibrate the 0-dB reference level and adjust for speaker impedances. The cost of the Model 510 is \$129.95; options include a rack-mount front (\$11.50) and a pair of oak side panels (\$7.95).

CIRCLE 137 ON PAGE 127



Tape dubbing eased by Superex

The TSB 3 tape switching unit from Superex allows duplication of material from one tape deck to another while a third deck records the incoming source or plays back a different recording. The three modes of operation—source input, dubbing bank, and monitor output—are color-coded for easy identification. The TSB-3, which may be used with any amplifier or receiver that has monitoring facilities, has a slanted front panel for ease of operation and visibility. It costs \$49.95.

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Isotrack turntables with a twist

Two new Thorens Isotrack turntables are available from Elpa Marketing. The top-of-the-line TD-115C is a two-speed (33 and 45 rpm) model featuring electronic circuitry that regulates the DC motor and provides automatic pitch control and electronic shutoff. The suspension system, called Ortho-Inertial, mounts the platter and tone arm on a subchassis suspended from the main chassis. The TD-115C uses the TP-30 Isotrack tone arm, said to have an effective mass of 7.5 grams, and sells for \$390.

CIRCLE 139 ON PAGE 127



See why TDK

It's the little things you can't see
that make a big difference in the way it sounds.

At first glance different brands of tape look pretty much alike. But if you look closely, you'll find there are many subtle differences. And it is these differences that make one tape stand out above all others.

Now you might not spend a lot of time looking closely at tape. But we have to—that's our business. At TDK we're committed to constantly improving our products. For years, our SA cassette has been the High bias reference standard for almost all quality cassette deck manufacturers. Yet we've incorporated improvement after improvement into SA's tape and mechanism since its introduction as the first non-chrome High bias cassette in 1975. These advances mean better quality sound for you. TDK makes this possible, by continuous attention to the little things you can't see.

The Particles

The lifeblood of recording tape is microscopic magnetic particles that can be arranged in patterns to store and reproduce sound. At best, they are as small as possible, uniform in size and shape; they are long and narrow (the greater the ratio of length to width, the better); and they are tightly, uniformly packed together, with no gaps or clumps.

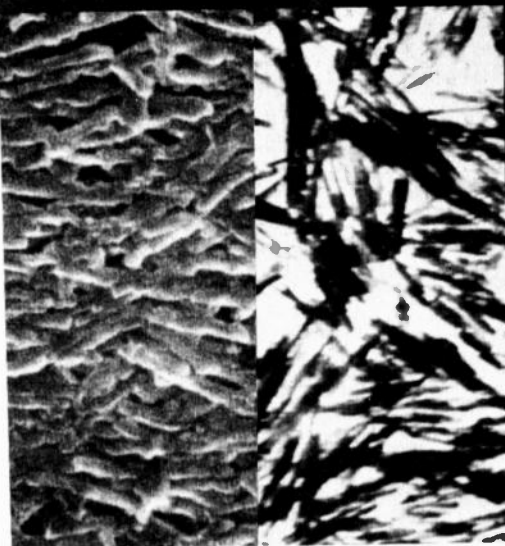
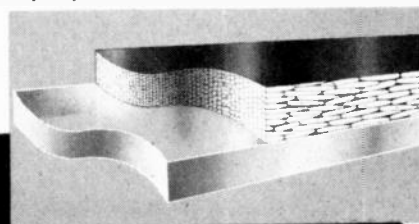
Over 40 years of experience in magnetic ferrite technology and 25 years in developing and manufacturing recording tape, bring the TDK SA and AD cassette particle formulations as close to these ideals as current technology will allow.

The TDK SA particle is a cobalt gamma ferric oxide compound made highly stable by our proprietary cobalt-ion adsorption process. The SA particle possesses one of the greatest length/width ratios of any particle used in audio cassette recording: an amazing 11:1. These little wonders are truly "state-of-the-art," and mean higher maximum output level (MOL), higher signal-to-noise and lower noise.

The particle in TDK AD is pure gamma ferric oxide; it has been developed specifically for use in Normal bias decks—in the home, car, in portables. With a length/width ratio of 10:1, the AD particle can deliver what most conventional cassettes lack: an extended, hot high end, to capture all the elusive highs in music, from classical crescendo to raging rock and roll. It is the logical successor to the world's first high fidelity cassette tape particle, TDK SD, introduced in 1968.

clumps nor gaps of oxide build-up. So we suspend our particles in a unique new binding, and we're fanatic about the way we do it. TDK engineers and craftsmen wear surgically clean robes and caps, and we vacuum the air to eliminate

Tape layers: coating (top); backing.



TDK SA tape surface (left) enlarged 30,000 times. TDK Super Avilyn particles (right) enlarged 20,000 times.

contaminating foreign matter and disruptive static charges. The high packing density that results means that the tape is prepared to handle high input level musical peaks gracefully, and without distortion.

The Base Film

We coat our oxides on broad rolls of supremely flexible, but nearly stretch-proof polyester film, to make sure TDK cassettes don't tangle or introduce wow and flutter.

The Polishing

After each roll is coated, it goes through a polishing process called "calendering." Any oxide is removed,

The Coating

To best attach the particles to the film used for backing, it's necessary to coat that film evenly, with neither

sounds better.

and the surface is smoothed to reduce tape head wear and oxide shedding. Reduced friction across the tape heads means lower noise.

The Edge

If you look closely at the edges of TDK's tape, you'll find that they are uniformly straight and parallel to a tolerance of one micron. That's because we slit our tape by pulling it across an array of precisely-positioned, surgically-sharp knives. That means the tape movement is unimpeded; and mis-tracking that could result in garbled stereo is eliminated.

The Hub/Clamp Assembly

TDK has met a major challenge which has always faced cassette manufacturers:

anchoring the tape to the hub without causing mechanical problems. We use a unique double clamp system we pioneered. It practically eliminates wow and flutter, distortion, drop-outs and other problems related to poor winding. Some manufacturers use plastic pins jammed into notches on the edge of the hub. This system can lead to uneven winding, which causes the edges to feather, the tape to bulk unevenly, and occasionally, to snap at the anchor.

The Cleaning

Like most leader tape, ours is designed to protect the recording surface from stress, and to provide a firm anchor to the hub. Unlike most leader tape, TDK's cleans your recorder heads as it passes by.

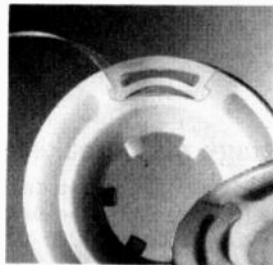
The Splice

Our splices are firm, with leader and tape lined up exactly. Our splicing tape is specially designed not to bleed adhesive into the cassette mechanism, which could gum up the works.

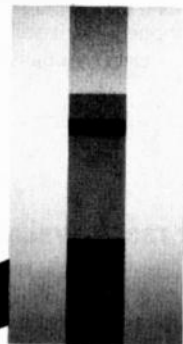
© 1978 TDK Electronics Corp

The Inspection

Before any of our tape is loaded into cassette shells, it must pass a series of inspections to



The TDK double clamp system.



The TDK high tolerance tape/leader splice.

see if it matches up to our own rigorous standards. If it doesn't pass, it's discarded. We never compromise on quality.

The Music and the Machine

We go to more trouble than most companies do, when we manufacture our cassettes. We see to all the little details, so you can hear more of your music. Our super precision cassette mechanism delivers the tape to your heads precisely, without introducing friction, wow and flutter and other problems in the process. And we back that mechanism, and the tape within it, with high fidelity's original full lifetime warranty*, a measure of the value we have placed in our cassettes, for over 10 years.

So next time you buy cassettes, look closely at TDK, and think of all the little things you can't see that make our cassettes just that much better. TDK Electronics Corp., Garden City, NY 11530. In Canada: Superior Electronics Ind., Ltd.

*In the unlikely event that any TDK audio cassette ever fails to perform due to a defect in materials or workmanship, simply return it to your local dealer or to TDK for a free replacement



TDK®

The machine for your machine.®

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Maxell upgrades tape lines

The new packaging style on LN and UD cassettes adorns improved formulations, according to Maxell. The company says the upgraded UD provides more uniform distribution and improved orientation of the magnetic particles, resulting in a dynamic-range increase of 2 dB. Maxell has also paid specific attention to improving shell construction in its lines. Prices of the tapes remain the same, however: ranging from \$3.50 for a UD C-46 to \$7.50 for a UD C-120; from \$2.30 for an LN C-46 to \$5.20 for an LN C-120.

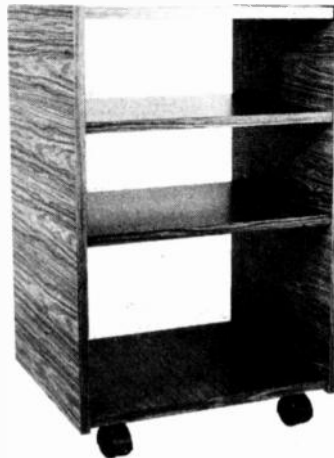
CIRCLE 144 ON PAGE 127



On-stage matchmaker

Musical Research Laboratories' LOC-1 is an "output converter" designed for use between the external speaker jack of a stage amp and a higher-impedance load (200 ohms or greater) so that a performer can feed a line-level signal to an additional amplifier, public-address system, or microphone line with better impedance matching. The LOC-1 has a built-in 1/4-inch mono phone plug for connection to the stage amp and a female output phone jack. It sells for \$9.95.

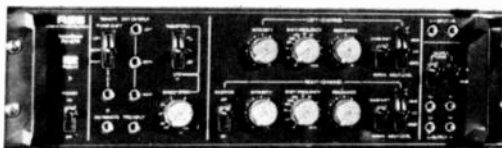
CIRCLE 145 ON PAGE 127



Star component racks available

The RS-30 from Star Case is a four-shelf rack for audio components. The entire unit stands 28 inches high and is 23 3/4 inches wide by 18 inches deep. Steel barrel casters are provided for portability. The RS-30, at a price of \$199.95, is finished in rosewood Formica.

CIRCLE 146 ON PAGE 127



Stereo phaser from Roland

The Model PH-830 phaser is part of the New Roland Studio System. It has INTENSITY, FREQUENCY, and RESONANCE controls and switches for power, waveform, sweep speed, and phase on/off. All inputs and outputs are 1/4-inch phone jacks, including the extra inputs for external control voltages, such as those from a low-frequency oscillator. Finally, the phase characteristic can be remote-controlled via a front-panel REMOTE jack. The rack-mountable PH-830 runs on AC power and costs \$725.

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Nasty Cordless microphone

For those performers who don't want to be bothered with mike cables, a more convenient setup is provided by Nasty Cordless. Its new mike transmitter replaces the XLR connector found on almost all professional microphones that have a 5/8-inch opening and is used in conjunction with the company's tunable FM receiver. The complete system, tunable from 88 to 108 MHz, is said to be 20 to 30 dB quieter than any other cordless mike system. Price of the Nasty Cordless is \$595.

CIRCLE 148 ON PAGE 127

The evolution of the revolution.

The new Bose® 901® Series IV Direct/Reflecting® speaker.

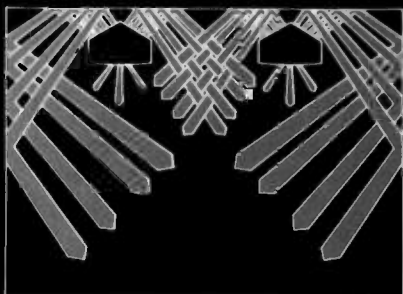
When Bose introduced the original 901® speaker, high-fidelity critics around the world hailed its revolutionary approach to sound reproduction.

"Bose has, in a single giant step, produced one of the finest speaker systems ever made." (USA)

"The orchestra is there in front and the atmosphere of the concert hall all around." (Belgium)

"Bose contains more technical innovations than any other speaker of the past 20 years." (Austria)

"... sets new standards for loud-speaker music reproduction." (France)



Now the 901® has evolved. Again. Introducing the Bose 901 Series IV Direct/Reflecting® speaker system. With new equalizer controls that consider your room as part of the speaker design. And a new answer to the problem of choosing an amplifier.

It is a known fact that moving a speaker just a few feet in a room will alter its performance. And that the variances in a speaker's performance from one living room to the next can be vast. This is a problem all speakers have regardless of design. Except one.

A new approach to the study of listening room acoustics and an ambitious survey of many actual listening rooms has resulted in new equalizer controls for the Bose 901 IV. These controls allow you to simultaneously adjust several bands of frequencies in a precise manner to match the per-



formance of the 901 IV to your room. In a way that cannot be duplicated even with an expensive graphic equalizer.

As a result, the 901 Series IV speakers perform as well in the living room as in the demonstration room. Were our engineers to design a speaker specifically for your living room, you would not get better sound than you do when you properly adjust the equalizer controls on the Bose 901 Series IV.

And the 901 IV provides a simple answer to the problem of choosing the power rating of your amplifier or receiver. Choose any amplifier you wish. The 901 IV provides surprisingly loud sound with as little as 10 watts per channel. Yet it is durable enough for us to remove all power limitations on the 901 IV. There is no power limit. Period.*

With these new improvements, the Bose 901 IV gives you a flexibility no other speaker can. You can place the 901 IV in almost any room and get the life-like, spacious sound for which the 901 IV

Direct/Reflecting® speaker is famous. And you can match it to virtually any amplifier.

We think that once you hear the new Bose 901 IV Direct/Reflecting® speaker, you'll agree. The revolution has evolved.



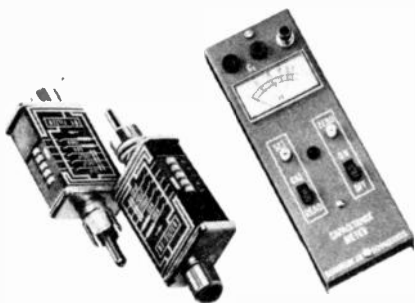
*There is a power limit in commercial applications. For information, contact Bose Customer Service.

BOSE®



Kenwood receiver utilizes new circuitry

Kenwood is offering the KR-6030 stereo receiver, which uses what the company calls "current mirror" amplifier circuitry in the power stage. Low distortion is said to be the result: no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with 80 watts (19 dBW) per channel of output power. Refinements have also been effected in the tuner section: The local oscillator has been isolated from the printed circuit board and mixer section to prevent drift. The KR-6030 costs \$500.



Berkshire helps cartridge/preamp matching

Berkshire Audio has developed devices to assist in insuring proper loads for phono cartridges: The CCM is a hand-held meter, calibrated in picofarads, that measures cable and phono-input capacitance, and the Match-Maker is a switchable adapter that plugs directly into the preamp's phono input. The phono cables are plugged into the adapter, which can then vary both capacitive and resistive loads. The Match-Maker also has a built-in RF filter designed to eliminate radio interference. The CCM costs \$89.95; stereo Match-Maker pairs cost \$49.95.

CIRCLE 140 ON PAGE 127



Singers' Sennheiser

A new performance microphone for vocalists, the Sennheiser MD-431, is a supercardioid of the dynamic, or pressure gradient, type, whose frequency response is rated at 40 Hz to 16 kHz. As with other models in this line, the stand clip has a locking/quick-release feature, and the housing is scratchproof. The on/off switch, a standard feature on performing mikes, is said to be noiseless. Output impedance is 200 ohms, and a standard three-pin XLR male connector is provided at the output. The price is \$308.

CIRCLE 141 ON PAGE 127



Sankyo's new budget cassette deck

Sankyo has introduced a two-head stereo cassette deck with Dolby noise reduction. The STD-1650 is a front-loading model that features automatic shutoff, two-position tape selector switch, and dual recording level controls. According to Sankyo, frequency response is 40 Hz to 13 kHz with less than 2.2% total harmonic distortion using normal tape. Wow and flutter is rated at less than 0.16%. The price of the STD-1650 is \$129.95.

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Big-bass box from Electro-Harmonix

Electro-Harmonix' foot-controlled Bassballs, designed specifically for electric bass guitar, is actually a pair of dynamic filters that respond to different intensities of articulation (attack) and thus provide the bass with the "bigger sonic dimensions enjoyed by the lead guitarist," according to the manufacturer. Bassballs features an IN/OUT foot switch, a SENSITIVITY control, distortion switch, a minijack for external-AC hookup, and standard 1/4-inch phone jacks for input and output connections. It costs \$89.

CIRCLE 143 ON PAGE 127

BASICS OF RECORD CARE

A. Heat and Storage

Moving records from cold to hot conditions, and playing records at temperatures in excess of 90° Fahrenheit, will accelerate both record wear and distortion. Records stored "up and down" like books are often leaning and develop a long term warp. Unless discs are padded into a perfectly vertical storage condition, your albums are much better stored in a horizontal position.

B. Humidity and Storage

Some record treatments have a humidity-gathering formula, and humidity is often suggested to reduce static. Unimpeachable research shows that humidity in any form encourages special kinds of vinyl aging, and moisture alone provides the vital link for microbial growth which literally breaks down record surfaces. Records in the

E. The "Cleaning Problem"

After all the wild claims and mythology are blown away, it is a simple fact that the Discwasher Laboratories are responsible for the new language of record care. The terms "micro-dust", "microbial contamination", "lipid contamination" and "stabilizer extraction" are now used by many other companies. As a leader, Discwasher bases its philosophy of record care on scientific research and has found that—

- A properly integrated cleaning system of scientific fluid, plus an absorptive, directional micro-fiber pad will clean measurably better than any adhesive roller, or dry-fiber method.
- Cleaning ability and safety of fluids are very crucial to record survival. The Discwasher Labs have performed more research on record chemistry, balanced fluid safety and cleaning ability than any other (record cleaning) company in the world.

We wish you and your musical investment a long life through the use of intelligent record care.

ESSENTIALS OF SAFE CLEANING

I. DON'T "PLAY" OVER MICRO-DUST

The Problem:

The greatest cause of record degeneration is micro-dust. All records possess a static charge which attracts a very fine, virtually invisible micro-dust from room air. A record may "look clean" but contain a fine coating of micro-dust. When you play over this coating, even at one gram of stylus pressure, you grind the micro-dust into the record walls, often forever. Your record then gets "noisy."

Common Errors:

Most record cleaners are "pushers", and simply line up dirt without removing it from the disc. Skating a pusher off the record only spreads micro-dust into a tangent line of danger. Extra arm devices and all cloths are too coarse to do anything but pass over micro-dust—or gently spread it out.

An Answer From Research:

The exclusive Discwasher System removes micro-dust better than any other method.

tropics can turn green with mold, but humidity in your home will do the same thing. Records should be kept as dry as possible, and treated with D3 solution to protect against microbial contamination.

C. Beware of a "Clean" Stylus

A stylus may look clean, but can be glazed with contamination after playing two or three records. This glaze holds dust which abrasively destroys records. Discwasher's SC-1 Stylus Cleaner is the best way to keep your clean-but-dirty stylus really clean.

D. Do Not Replay Records Quickly

Playing a record more than once every hour causes chemical and physical stress to the vinyl that will eventually destroy the album.

1. The slanted pile lifts up rather than lines up debris. The pile fibers are fixed in the fabric better than any other record cleaner, and "track" record grooves rather than scrape them (see figure 1).

2. Alternating "open rows" of highly absorbent backing hold micro-dust taken off the record, and demonstrate Discwasher's effectiveness over long term use (see figure 2).

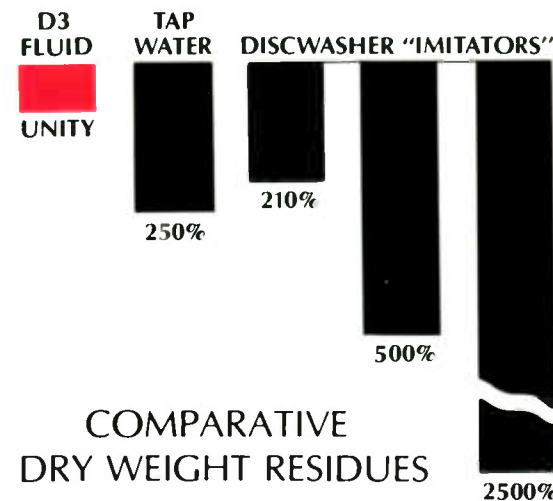
3. The inherently safe D3 fluid delivery system and capillary fluid removal allows the most researched record cleaner to be the world's best.



Fig. 1 Line of micro-dust removed from a "clean" record.



Fig. 2 Accumulated micro-dust from long, effective use of the Discwasher System.



COMPARATIVE DRY WEIGHT RESIDUES

II. AVOID STICKY COATING

The Problem:

No vacuum device, duster machine or wonder cloth can remove fingerprints, jacket particles or dust containing smog/smoke from your records. Yet such contamination ruins records.

A chemically correct fluid can pull these ruinous contaminations into solution, but record preservation requires lifting both fluid and problems off the record without leaving residues.

Common Errors:

In spite of much written advice and wild claims, most disc cleaning liquids (also soap and water) gum up record grooves. This sticky problem has two origins: high dry weight residue in the fluids; plus the actual chemical affinity of most cleaners for vinyl. Even the use of tap water causes a deposit on vinyl and a loss of high frequency definition.

An Answer From Research:

Use a system that cleans and removes contamination safely. The most researched and chemically non-adhering fluid is D3 by Discwasher, which includes an anti-static formulation that does not stick. See the table for actual dry weight residues of tap water and "record cleaners" costing over \$11 each. D3 is chemically "active" only against common record contaminants—not the vinyl, and D3 literally lifts contamination off the record surface without coating.

Properly used as a system, D3 and the Discwasher brush draw all contaminants and fluid off the disc by the capillary action of micro-fibers into the absorbent fabric backing. Nothing is left on the record except encoded sound.





III. DON'T AGE YOUR VINYL

The Problem:

Record vinyl contains additives—chemical stabilizers—which protect the vinyl from aging and breakup during both pressing and playback. If stabilizers are extracted from the record surface, then the life of the vinyl is shortened, and the vinyl surface begins to break down during playback because of chemical weakness. (Typical stylus pressures exceed 16 tons psi, even with the finest equipment.) Long-term record life is very much dependent on leaving bound stabilizers in the vinyl.

Common Errors:

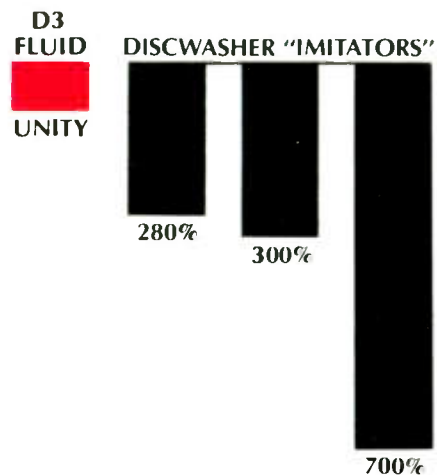
Large amounts of almost any liquid (even water) on the record surface will extract tiny amounts of stabilizers. But large amounts of these precious stabilizers are extracted with a "cleaning operation" that uses liquids containing large amounts of alcohols, common detergents, alkaline soaps, or many standard anti-static agents. All of these compounds, very common in record cleaners, are much more destructive to record vinyl when combined with a physical brushing action.

An Answer From Research:

The exclusive Discwasher System is chemically buffered, tested, and designed to preserve record vinyl. D3 fluid is "targeted" to remove record contamination but not stabilizers from the vinyl surface. This patented chemistry, developed at the Discwasher laboratories, allows the directional fibers of the Discwasher pad to pick up both debris and solubilized contamination. All without shortening vinyl life. Only Discwasher has this perfect combination of safety and function.

A GUIDE TO RECORD CARE

COMPARATIVE STABILIZER EXTRACTION



discwasher, inc.
 1407 N. Providence Rd.
 Columbia, Missouri 65201

THE PHONOGRAPH DISC combines maximum fidelity with the most reproducible and cost effective music storage system yet developed.

YOUR RECORD COLLECTION represents huge investments of purchase time, personal involvement and money.

PRESERVATION of your investment is possible. Not by gadgets, mythology or wild claims. Preservation is a result of applied Science and Research.

THE AUDIOPHILES AT DISCWASHER hope this Guide will benefit you and your musical investment.



Record Ecology

-for the person who needs everything

DiscKit is a milled walnut tray and dust cover that includes Discwasher brand products in the kit at a savings (\$50 versus \$55 separately).

DiscKit includes: 1) The Discwasher System Record Cleaner with D3 Fluid, 2) the Zerostat anti-static pistol and test light, and 3) the SC-1 Stylus Cleaner.

But you'll save more than money. You'll save your rec-

ords from imbedded micro-dust, your cartridge stylus from abrasion and your ears from a lot of static.

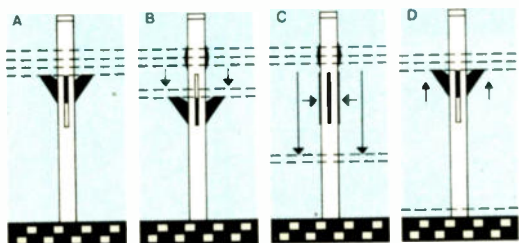
Record Ecology from Discwasher—a substantial bargain.

(Walnut tray and dust cover are available separately as the Discorganizer, \$12.50.)

All from Discwasher, Inc., 1407 N. Providence Rd., Columbia, Missouri 65201.

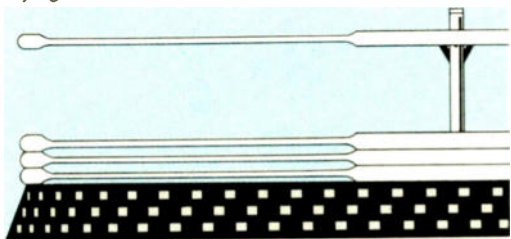


If you'd like to hear an hour or more of uninterrupted music, don't let a few old myths stop you.



Dual's exclusive elevator-action. A) Records are supported entirely by platform. B) Bottom record is lowered away from stack above which is held in place by soft neoprene pads. C) Platform retracts, gently releasing record to platter. D) Platform rises to engage stack.

No need to worry about record grooves touching when stacked. Records are made with raised edges and centers which place an air cushion between the playing surfaces.



Records stacked on Dual's multiple-play spindle are handled with extraordinary care. Before the bottom record is released to the platter, it is gently lowered away from those above. Nothing is ever forced. This is Dual's famous "elevator-action" system. And since all records are made with raised edges and centers, an air cushion keeps the grooved surfaces from ever touching.

In the single-play mode, the short spindle rotates with the platter. This patented design permits more precise centering of the record, an important touch in achieving extremely low wow and flutter specifications. Another touch of Dual precision is the vertical tracking angle control; there's an optimum setting for single play and multiple play.

But one very important thing hasn't changed. Dual reliability. Backed by a two-year limited warranty, today's Duals are made to last just as long as the 1009 and its successors (the 1019 and 1219) which are often found to be worth more in trade than their original purchase price.

So if you'd like many years of uninterrupted pleasure from your next turntable, select one of our multiple-play models. (They start at less than \$180 for the CS1237.)

Unless, of course, you prefer old myths to future legends.

Myths die hard. Those about all multiple-play turntables compromising performance are no exception, despite the achievement of the legendary Dual 1009.

Before then, serious music lovers were understandably reluctant to entrust their records to the heavy-tracking, vinyl-chewing automatic tonearms of the day.

We therefore felt the need to prepare for the 1009's introduction by asking cartridge manufacturers and independent test labs to put it through the most demanding tests they could devise.

The manufacturers reported that the 1009 tracked flawlessly with their "professional-type" cartridges. The test labs found the 1009 matched the best of the manuals in rumble, wow and flutter—and they quickly adopted it as one of their reference-standard turntables.

Since then, of course, Dual has added refinement after refinement. The tonearms of *all* current Dual turntables are mounted in four-point gyroscopic gimbals, widely acknowledged as the finest suspension system available.

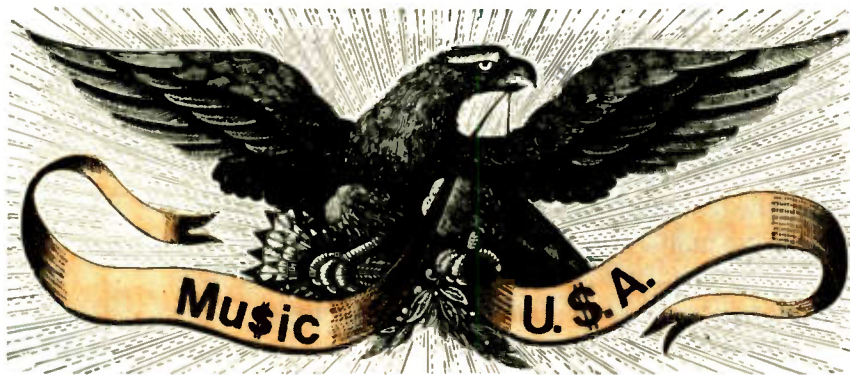
During play, Dual automatic tonearms are completely free-floating. They are engaged by the cycling mechanism only when being moved to or from the record.



For the life of your records

Dual®

United Audio, 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, NY 10553



20. War Songs: Bathos and Acquiescence

by Gene Lees

THE PROFOUND WAY in which popular music in the U.S. both reflects and shapes public opinion is nowhere more vividly illustrated than in war songs. World War I rang with songs of enthusiasm for the carnage in Europe. During the Vietnam war, Sgt. Barry Sadler's "Ballad of the Green Berets" stood alone amid a barrage of antiwar songs; the government and military were subject to strong public antiwar sentiment that was both expressed in and generated by popular music.

But Americans have traditionally gone to war singing. The Revolution, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War each produced its share of songs—some good, but a lot of them saccharine and silly. "My Sweetheart Went down with the Maine" celebrated an event that most Americans at the time were convinced was an act of provocation by a bellicose nation. The best-known song of the Spanish-American War was "Break the News to Mother," which was more an expression of heroic-romantic bathos than of protest. But whatever their artistic value, the popular war songs were usually enthusiastically for or at least acquiescent in U.S. intercession.

World War I produced an astonishing number of songs. The classic one was "Over There," full of bumptious confidence that the Yanks would settle things forthwith and with min-

imal fuss upon their arrival. It was the work of George M. Cohan, who was given a Congressional Medal of Honor for his patriotic music. His "Give My Regards to Broadway," actually written before the war, gained a sort of honorary war-song status.

Close behind "Over There" in popularity were "K-K-K-Katy," "When the Boys Come Home," and Irving Berlin's "Oh, How I Hate to Get up in the Morning." The last of these was touched with realism, since it voiced objection to military life, but it was a good-natured gripe at most. The British songs "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" and "Pack up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag" were warmly adopted by American troops.

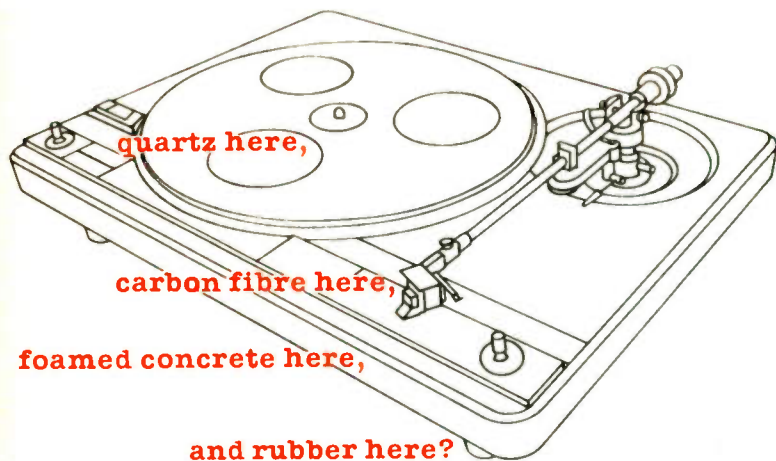
The optimism of the time is evident in "Keep Your Head Down, Fritzzy Boy," "I'd Like to See the Kaiser with a Lily in His Hand," and "We'll Knock the Hell out of Heligoland." A horrible pun can be found in "We Don't Want the Bacon. What We Want Is a Piece of the Rhine" and classic kitsch in "If He Can Fight like He Can Love. Good Night, Germany." Incidentally, the distinction of having the longest title of the war belongs not to the latter, but probably to "Just like Washington Crossed the Delaware, General Pershing Will Cross the Rhine." (Actually, Pershing didn't. That honor went to some of George Patton's men a quarter-century later.) Interservice rivalry

was apparently an issue even then: perhaps irked by all the publicity the Army was getting, some pro-Navy songwriter petulantly asserted, "The Navy Took Them over, and the Navy Will Bring Them Home."

Love had its moments in "My Belgian Rose" and perhaps the most beautiful tune to come out of the war, "Roses of Picardy." Among the most lugubrious, and certainly one of the most successful, was "Rose of No Man's Land," which was sung around player pianos all over the U.S. ("Through the war's great curse stands the Red Cross nurse; she's the rose of no man's land.")

In somewhat the same class was "Hello, Central, Give Me No Man's Land." In 1901, during the early days of the telephone, Charles K. Harris wrote the tearjerker "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven," about a little girl trying to reach her dead mother on the phone. It was a huge hit, inspiring several "Hello, Central" songs. At the very utterance of these words, audiences duly wept. But wistfulness was generally kept to a minimum in the songs of the First World War. It was a simplehearted, matter-of-fact, naive, and rural America that went off to the seeming great adventure. Possibly the title most representative of the roots of the soldiery was "Goodbye Ma, Goodbye Pa, Goodbye Mule." (more)

What do you get when you put



ADC THE FIRST LOW-MASS, TURNTABLE.

ADC is in the business of building breakthroughs.

First, we brought you the innovation of the low mass cartridge. Then the remarkable computerized Accutrac® turntables. Next, the State-of-the-Art Low Mass tonearms.

And now, our engineers have combined the latest advancements of tonearm technology and turntable construction to reduce mass and resonance to new lows.

Result: new benchmarks of high performance.

Finally, the integration of a carbon fibre design tonearm. The famous ADC LMF Carbon Fibre tonearm was the model for the sleek black anodized aluminum

tonearm found on the ADC 1700DD. In fact, until now you had to make a separate investment in an ADC tonearm to achieve this level of performance.

A level of performance never before available on an integrated turntable.

It is statically balanced with a lead-filled decoupled counterweight, and the headshell is molded carbon fibre, long known for its low mass to high tensile strength ratio.

Furthermore, the headshell is connected to the arm with gold plated computer terminal pins. And the main bearing cradle is made of sintered aluminum. The pivot system utilizes micron polished instrument bearings which are hand picked and matched perfectly to both the inner and outer races, for virtually frictionless movement.

The viscous cueing is a gentle 4mm/sec., and the tempered spring anti-skate adjustment is infinitely variable to 3.5 grams.

The design, the materials and the details interact to provide incomparable performance for a tonearm on an integrated turntable system.

In fact, the tonearm alone is worth the price of an ADC 1700DD.

Finally, resonance conquered.

The technical know-how that conquered the problems of the tonearm mass, also conquered the problems of turntable resonance.

The ADC 1700DD reduces resonance to levels so negligible they are virtually nonexistent.

The achievement lies in the innovative construction formula for the turntable base that incorporates the latest advancements from European engineers.

The base is constructed with two dissimilar materials that are resonance-cancelling. First, the outer frame of the base is molded, and then a composition of foamed concrete is injected to absorb and neutralize resonance and feedback.

LOW RESONANCE

Beyond even this foamed concrete anti-resonance breakthrough, the base is isolated by energy absorbing, resonance-tuned, rubber suspension feet.

This is as close as technology has ever come to defying the physical laws of resonance.

The motor in the ADC 1700DD is also present standard of excellence: Direct Drive Quartz Phase-Locked Loop. The quartz is used in the reference oscillator of the motor.

An electronic phase comparator constantly monitors any variance in the speed, making instantaneous corrections. Even when out of the Quartz-Locked mode, the optical scanning system keeps drift at below 0.2%.

In fact, to check the speed at a glance, we've engineered the 1700DD with a pulsed LED strobe display for your convenience.

Low-mass. Low-resonance. High performance.

What is the result of all these breakthroughs? Pure pleasure.

The pleasure of enjoying your favorite music with less distortion and coloration than you may have ever experienced before. Now you can truly appreciate the integrity of the original recording.

Our engineers have reduced record wear and music distortion to a point where rumble is -70dB Din B, and Wow and flutter less than .03% WRMS.

In the history of audio technology, significant breakthroughs have been made over the past four years with the development of Quartz Lock Direct Drive, carbon fibre tonearm design, foamed concrete anti-resonance construction. And now, ADC is the first to bring them all together in the 1700DD. We invite you to a demonstration of this and the other remarkable ADC turntables at your nearest franchised ADC dealer.

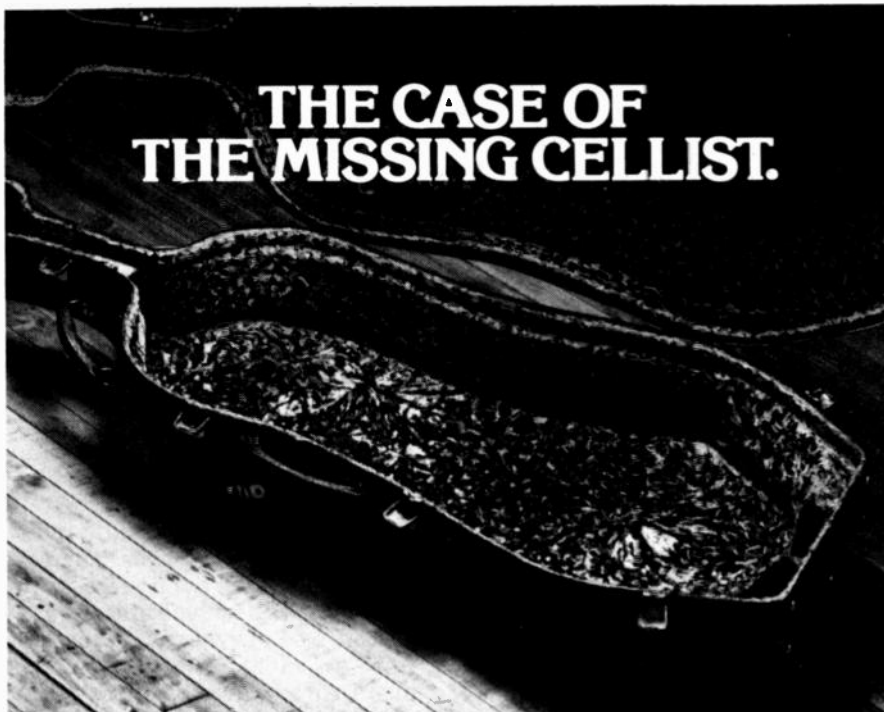
Or, if you'd like, write for further information to: ADC Professional Products, a division of BSR Consumer Products Group, Route 303, Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913.

Low-mass. Low-resonance. We think you'll be highly interested.

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THE CASE OF THE MISSING CELLIST.



Here one second, gone the next. This is clearly a case of brutality by a low definition cartridge. But an ADC cartridge can rescue him. The ZLM and its unique ALIPTIC[®] stylus, combines exciting sound reproduction with less wear to your records and flawless stereo imaging. Fact is, it has an ultra linear frequency response of ± 1 dB 10Hz to 20kHz and $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ dB to 26kHz, and tracks at $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ grams. So bring back the cellist and other musicians. Invest in something that understands them, and protects them. An ADC cartridge.



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Among today's stereo receivers, there is one — the Advent Model 300 — that is clearly different. No flashing lights, gold inlays, or massive handles. Just sound quality comparable, within its power capabilities, with the best — including a phono preamp rated better than an \$1,800 separate preamp by a super-critical audio publication. This, together with excellent FM reception, comes for \$279.95* in a com-

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HF-12/78

The country and its music grew much more sophisticated in the time between the two great wars. It was the era of Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Vincent Youmans, and Cole Porter. Berlin too had evolved as a composer, using more complex harmonies, subtler melodic lines, and more literate lyrics. It was to be expected that World War II songs would be different from those of the previous conflict, but the difference was unexpectedly great. Those meant to inspire patriotic fervor seemed contrived, compared with the former heartfelt outpourings. The best-known songs of this kind were "Ballad for Americans," "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition," "The Ballad of Rodger Young," "Any Bonds Today?," and "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere." They sounded as if they had been written at the request of the Office of War Information, and some were. Whatever the frequency of their performance, it is questionable how much grass-roots popularity they had. Can anyone remember hearing "Any Bonds Today?" sung by any but professional singers?

For the most part, the songs the people chose to sing and dance to had a melancholy cast to them, such as the Kern-Oscar Hammerstein "The Last Time I Saw Paris" and "I'll Be Seeing You"—which also was about lost Paris, as one discovers on hearing the seldom-sung verse. Woven deeply into the fabric of the war's mood were "When the Lights Go on Again All over the World," "Goodbye Sue," "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire," "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," "The White Cliffs of Dover," and "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square," an import from England.

The most popular songs were about loneliness and disruption. Many made no direct reference to the war, but its hovering presence was implicit in the lyrics. Even such cheerful songs as "Don't Sit under the Apple Tree" centered on the separations caused by the war. Johnny Mercer had fun with the argot of the period in the clever "The GI Jive," and "They're Either Too Young or Too Old," by Frank Loesser and Arthur Schwartz, described the limited romantic choices of the girls left at home.

And that was the end of it. Never again would the U.S. produce genuinely popular songs that were gungho for the glories of war. Why? Important social forces were at work, including revolutionary forms of communication. These I will examine next month.

Ohm's Law 4:

It is possible to make a loudspeaker that doesn't sound like a loudspeaker.

According to the traditional laws of loudspeaker design, a small driver can't reproduce bass notes, and a large driver can't reproduce high notes.

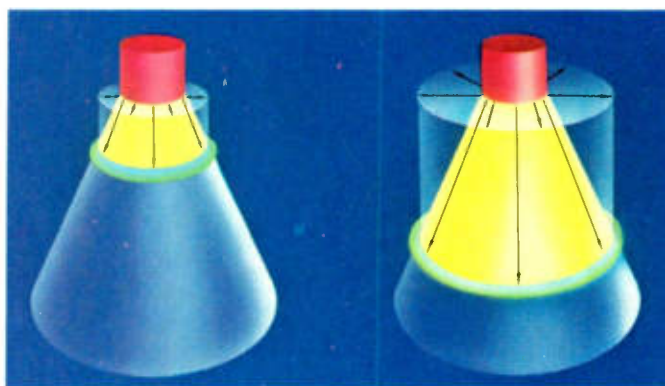
So most loudspeakers use two or more piston-like drivers of varying sizes (woofers, midranges, and tweeters), to achieve wide frequency response.

Unfortunately, large drivers respond more slowly to the audio signal than small drivers. So "time delay" distortion is added to the music.

And time delay distortion is what makes a loudspeaker sound like a loudspeaker.

But Ohm F loudspeakers boldly defy the traditional laws of loudspeaker design. They employ a *single* patented Walsh Transmission Line Driver that not only reproduces all audible frequencies, from the lowest lows to the highest highs, but it does it without adding time delay distortion to the music.

That's why, when you listen to music with Ohm F



Since all frequencies radiate in a 360° pattern from a single driver in the Ohm F, there is perfect horizontal dispersion with no time delay distortion.

loudspeakers, you hear the music, not the loudspeakers.

When audio critics listened to music with Ohm F loudspeakers, here's what



they wrote about the experience:

Hifi Stereophonie (Germany):

"The most important aspect of the Ohm F's performance is its freedom from phase and time errors, i.e., its coherent sound. The Ohm F's are in a class by themselves."

Stereo Review:

"With one of the larger

power amplifiers...the sound began to warrant the use of such words as awesome. The low bass, too, was extraordinarily clean and powerful...It should be apparent from the foregoing that we include the Ohm F among those few speakers we have tested that achieves state-of-the-art performance." (Copyright 1973 by the Ziff-Davis Publishing Company. Reprinted from *Stereo Review*, October, 1973, by permission. All rights reserved.)

The FM Guide (Canada):

"They have one great quality, a quality that puts them right in the front line of desirable speakers. *They sound musical.* A pair of Ohm F's can recreate a live musical performance free of the usual spatial limitations imposed by conventional speakers."

Stereo Buyer's Guide:

"Judging loudspeakers,

no matter on what principle it has been designed, should always be on its sound quality, and we are happy to report that the Ohm F system is amongst the very best we have heard."

Complete Buyer's Guide to Stereo/Hifi:

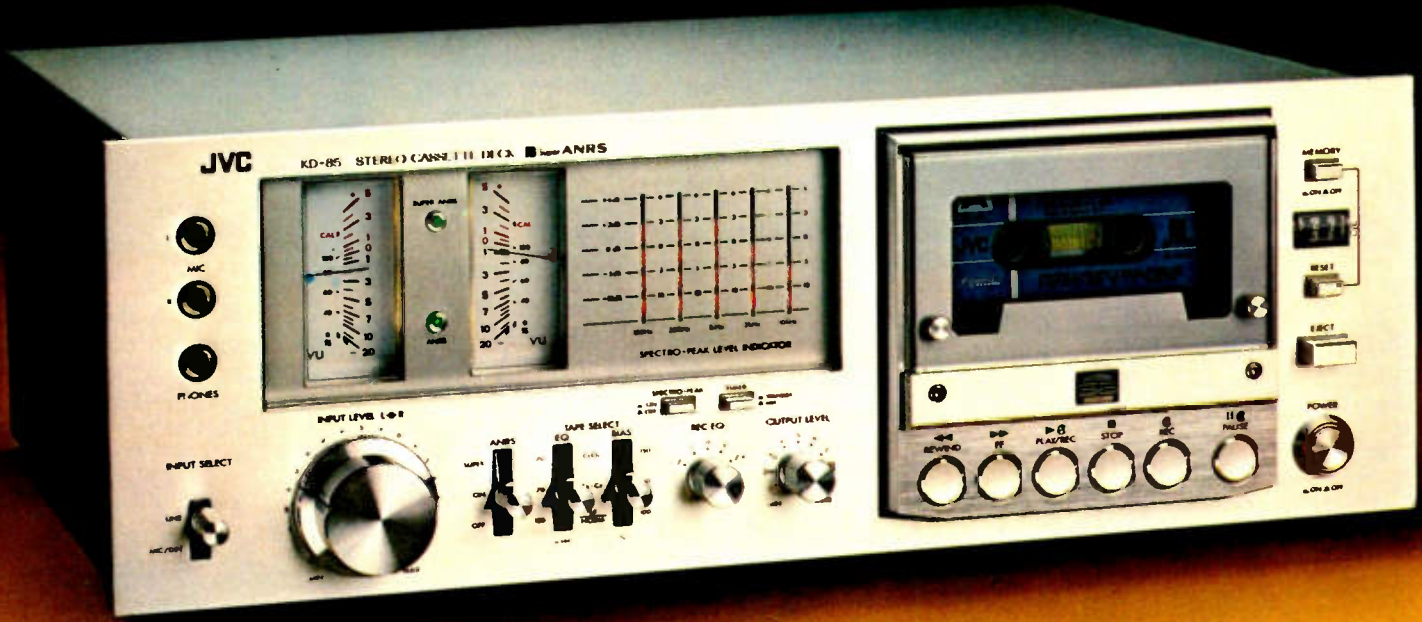
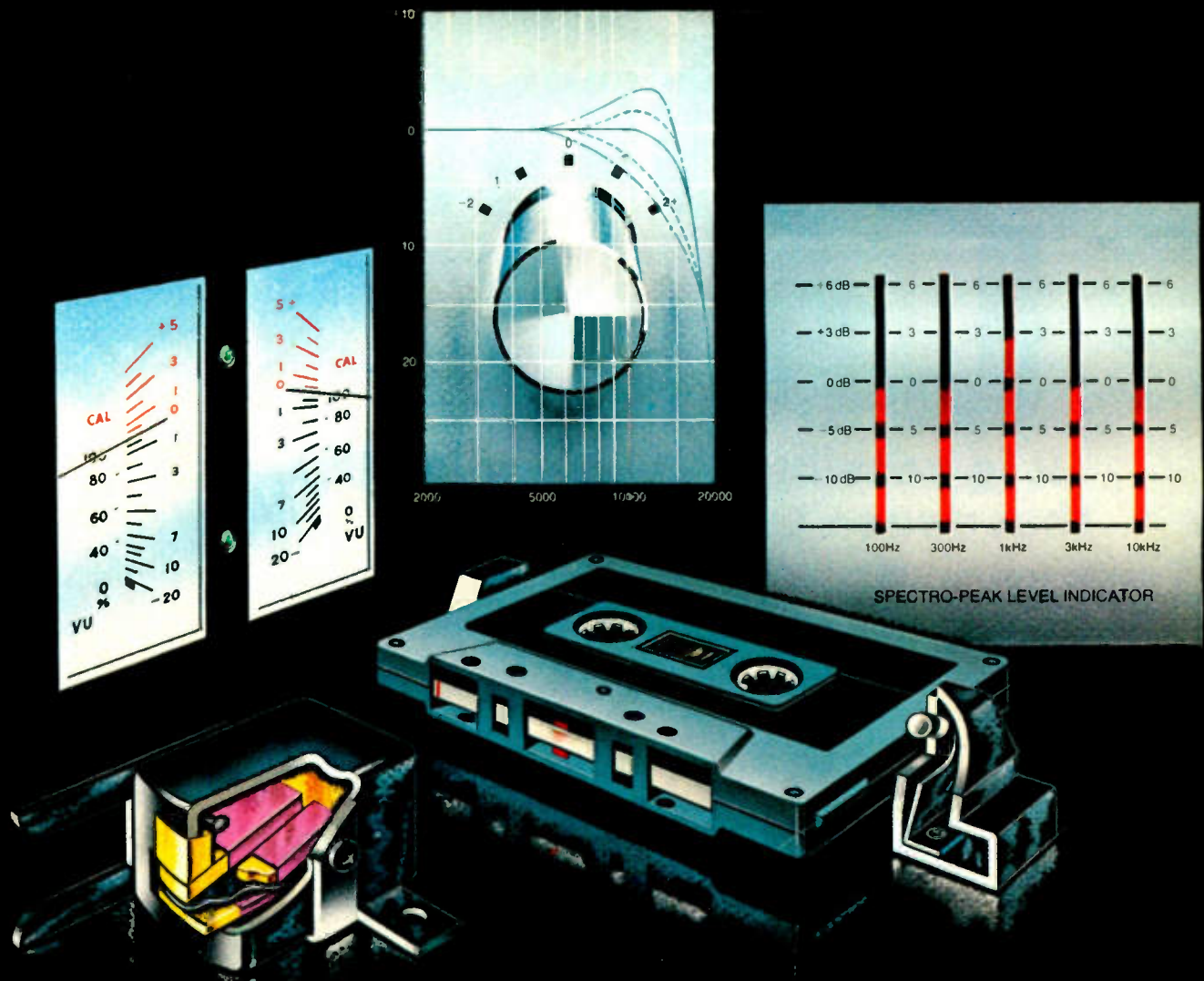
"The Ohm F is an extraordinary loudspeaker. The 'coherent' sound produced by this speaker is clear, full, and undistorted. It may well be the finest speaker on the market, and is certainly without a doubt among the top few. Given the proper associated electronics, the Ohm F is capable of providing almost absolute realism in the listening room."



For 13 complete reviews, and full specifications, please write us at: Ohm Acoustics Corp., 241 Taaffe Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11205.



We make loudspeakers correctly.



THE JVC CASSETTE DECK.

It gives you more of what other decks wish they could.

Some day there'll be totally automatic, absolutely foolproof, distortion-free cassette deck recording. And when it happens, JVC will develop the technology to achieve it. But until then we've come mighty close to it. Our new collection of quality cassette decks embodies exclusive and advanced features that thoroughly reinforce our reputation for innovative thinking.

EXCLUSIVE SPECTRO PEAK INDICATOR SYSTEM

The new KD-85 and KD-65; for example, offer more positive recording control than ever before. The reason is the newly developed and exclusive JVC Spectro Peak Indicator system. With almost recording studio vigilance, 25 instant-responding LED indicators offer you fail-safe protection against distortion produced by tape over-saturation. For the first time, you can constantly visually monitor the levels of five low-to-high frequency ranges. Then, on playback, the Spectro Peak Indicator display lets you actually see how successfully you reproduced the music.

EXPANDED DYNAMIC RANGE AND BETTER NOISE REDUCTION

If you've ever had difficulty recording without distortion the sudden high peaks of a piercing jazz trumpet or the head-snapping clash of cymbals, you'll appreciate the value of our Super ANRS. Developed exclusively by JVC, it applies compression in recording and expansion in playback to improve dynamic range at high frequencies. But it doesn't stop there. Super ANRS is a highly effective noise reduction system that reduces tape hiss by boosting the signal-to-noise ratio as much as 10dB over 5,000Hz.

NEW HEAD DESIGN

Most other makes of cassette decks opt for either permalloy or ferrite tape heads. JVC gives you the best of each with our own Sen-Alloy head. It combines the sensitive performance of permalloy with the extreme longevity of ferrite.

GET THE MOST OUT OF ANY TAPE

JVC also gives you freedom of choice in the tape you use. Because whichever type you select, you'll extract the most performance from it with our matchless recording equalizer circuit.* This unique JVC feature lets you fine tune different combinations to get optimum high level response from any tape on the market.

These innovations alone set JVC cassette decks apart from all others. Then, when you consider our other refinements like the precision ground capstan, independent drive mechanism,* or our gear/oil damped cassette door, plus top-performance specifications, you can understand why JVC gives you more of what other decks wish they could.

JVC America Company, Div. of US JVC Corp., 58-75 Queens Midtown Expressway, Maspeth, N.Y. 11378. Canada: JVC Electronics of Canada, Ltd., Ont.

JVC

KD-85 (featured at left). Below: KD-65, KD-55 & KD-25 (top row); KD-10, KD-1770II & KD-1636II (bottom row). Not shown: KD-2, KD-2020, KD-3030 & KD-S201



Unboxed Sound

Introducing minimum diffraction loudspeakers™ by Avid.

In the quest for accuracy, cabinet loudspeakers, regardless of price, still generally suffer from a common failure — they still sound like loudspeakers, or more precisely their sound obviously comes from a box.

Your brain hears the box.

Without going too deeply into psycho-acoustics, cabinet speakers tell us their sound is emanating from a box because the brain has been conditioned to recognize the characteristics... size, shape, etc... of any sound source.

What creates the boxy effect? Diffracted or reradiated sound waves, those that bounce off the sharp edges of the speaker and grille assembly, are the clues interpreted by the brain as "box-like."

No diffraction, no box.

The problem is graphically illustrated in the drawings. By eliminating sharp cabinet edges and grille panel obstructions, you reduce diffraction effects... which means you eliminate the boxiness of the sound. And that's exactly what we've done with our new line of Avid Minimum Diffraction Loudspeakers™

To open the box, we closed the cover.

The solution was deceptively simple.

By engineering the drivers, cabinet enclosure and, importantly, the grille assembly to create a totally integrated acoustic system, we eliminated cabinet diffraction and the boxy sound quality inherent in typical cabinet loudspeakers.

Our new tweeter and midrange drivers have specially engineered coupling devices (we call them Optimum Dispersion Couplers™) which transmit sound waves with minimum diffraction.

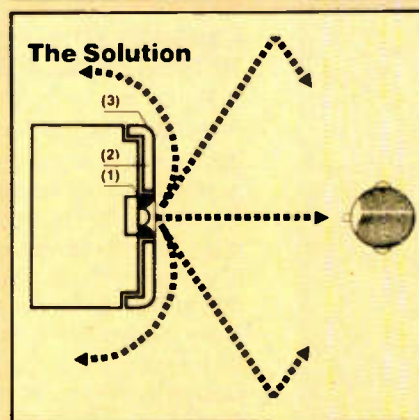
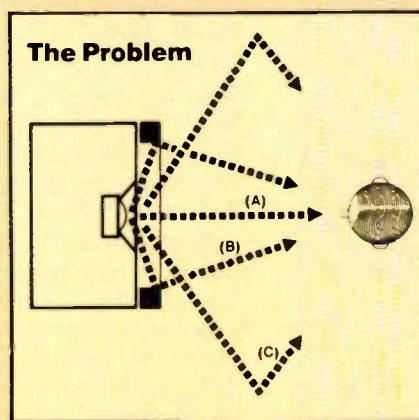
"Solid front" grille panels perfectly mate with each coupler eliminating grille panel diffraction. And, the grille panels have rounded edges creating a smooth, gradual transition from the grille to the cabinet, significantly reducing cabinet edge diffraction — a major cause of boxy sound.

These three simple, but audibly significant, features, coupled with Avid's critically acclaimed accuracy, assure you a new level of performance and sense of reality.

Of course there's a lot more to the Avid story — like our new drivers and Q-Span testing. Write us for literature and a full description. We invite your comparison.



Unwanted cabinet/grille diffraction effects (B) give listener clue as to the size/shape of sound source — in this case a box. First arrival signals (A) locate source, while brain uses delayed room reflections (C) to identify listening environment.



The careful integration of special engineered Optimum Dispersion Couplers™ (1), and solid front grille panels (2) with rolled edge design (3), significantly reduces the unwanted cabinet diffraction effects — a principal contributor to "boxy" sound. These design principals are incorporated in all Avid Minimum Diffraction Loudspeakers™

AVID.
10 Tripps Lane
East Providence
R.I. 02914

"Where the bright Seraphim in burning row/Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow," musicassette connoisseurs surely will gather in adoration. For some long-awaited review samples immediately establish the new series' processing standards, and further study of the fifty-item debut release list reveals the extraordinary programmatic range of the Seraphim cassette catalog. Besides reissues of outstanding late mono- and early stereo-era masterpieces, there are appetizing recent European recordings, with many examples of both types appearing for the first time in any tape format. Individual cassettes are listed priced at \$4.98; all are Dolby-encoded; all that's lacking are program notes.

The wide roster of artists is dominated by Old Sorcerer Stokowski in what we now realize was his second Golden Age (after Philadelphia) under the Capitol label. His first stereo Bach-transcriptions program (4XG 60235) is a touchstone exemplar: The original 1958-59 performances and recordings are still incredibly impressive, while the scorings themselves flaunt the art of the Hyphenated Stokowski at both its incomparably thrilling best and its aesthetically controversial worst. There is more Bach and much else in a two-cassette Stokowski miscellany (4X2G 6094, \$9.96) and the first cassette tapings of such early stereo-era Stokowskiana as his Holst *Planets*, Ibert *Escapes*, Orff *Carmina Burana*, Shostakovich *Eleventh Symphony*, and the coupled Stravinsky *Firebird* and *Petrushka Suites*.

Another unique musician, Sir Thomas Beecham, is well represented here by such distinctively individual achievements as his 1956 Puccini *Bohème* starring Victoria de los Angeles and Jussi Bjoerling (4X2G 6099, \$9.96) and his best-known orchestral works of Delius (*Brigg Fair*, etc.—4XG 60185). These Delian enchantments don't work for every listener, but if you're at all susceptible, you'll be spellbound.

But there also are seraphic resurrections of an infinitely more distant musical past in one of the finest of the many legacies of David Munrow/*Early Music Consort*: "The Art of Courtly Love" (4X3G 6092, \$14.94). Grandly boxed with an elaborate texts-and-notes booklet, this has two cassette sides devoted mainly to Machaut; two to Dufay, Binchois, and the fifteenth-century Burgundian School; and two to the startling avant-garde creations of late-fourteenth-century Avignon Papal Court composers. All the main types of period vocal-solo and small-ensemble works are represented, along with piquant-

by R. D. Darrell

The Tape Deck

timbred accompanying and solo instruments, in what are far more than historical documents. This is indescribably imaginative, eloquent, and electrifying music-making!

The real Magyar McCoy. A further batch of the Hungaroton musicassettes (\$7.98 each) I first sampled last September presents familiar music newly illuminated to throw into higher relief its quintessential nationalistic quirks and traits. Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*, for example, are almost unbelievably metamorphosed when we hear the complete set of twenty-one in their orchestral scorings played by the Győr Philharmonic under János Sándor (MK 1009). Although Győr is a city not as big as Schenectady, New York, its relatively small local orchestra plays—in music like this, at least—not only with expected stylistic authenticity, but with quite unanticipated lilting grace and infectious relish. It is vividly recorded, too, if in (quite appropriate) somewhat lightweight sonics. Then the not merely decorative, basically Hungarian nature of Kodály's amusing *Háry János Suite* and intoxicating dances from *Galánta* and *Marosszék* is captured far more idiomatically by the Budapest Philharmonic under János Ferencsik (MK 1003) than in the more pretentiously virtuoso but less spicy and humorous international versions we usually hear.

Pianists' master classes. Two of the four "Horowitz Collection" musicassettes (RCA Red Seal ARK 1-2716 through 1-2719, \$7.98 each) probably will appeal only to devout aficionados, but every connoisseur of supreme keyboard virtuosity will cherish the fabulous "Concert Encores" (ARK 1-2717) and the more substantial "Concert Favorites" that include Mendelssohn's *Variations sérieuses* and Schumann's *Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck* (ARK 1-2719). The 78-rpm and early-LP originals still sound remarkably bright in generally first-rate reissues, but even the usual lack of notes can't excuse the omission of specific datings (mostly back in the Forties and Fifties). And no mention whatever is made of the

obvious fact that everything here is mono.

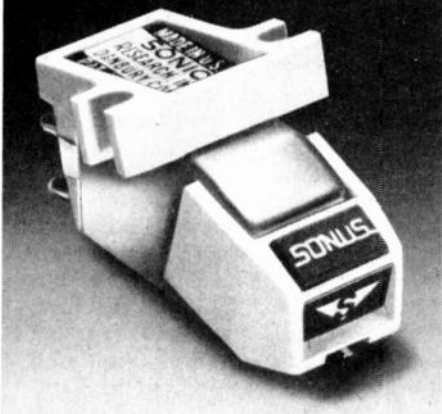
Oddly enough, the latest taping of the five Beethoven piano concertos by Alfred Brendel and the London Philharmonic under Bernard Haitink (Philips Prestige Box 7699 061, three cassettes, \$26.94; also including the Op. 80 Choral *Fantasia*) doesn't yet augment the disc-set entry in SCHWANN. Nor, for that matter, has SCHWANN yet entered Brendel's much older Vox set, with various orchestras, as taped in CCC/Orion 4 and 17, \$7.98 each. But both sets do exist, providing an illuminating documentation of Brendel's artistic growth in a comparison of the two, while the sonically far superior new release is outstanding in its own right for its beautifully lucid, truly "classical" readings and as an aesthetic foil for the more romantically extraverted approach of Vladimir Ashkenazy with the Chicago Symphony under Georg Solti in their 1973 London set (CSA5 2404). Personally, I still prefer the latter, not least for its communicative elation, but I do find the Brendel/Haitink First and (perhaps especially) Second Concertos the most suitably small-scaled, leisurely relaxed, and elegantly graceful of any recorded versions to date.

Busy Barclay-Crocker open-reel production currently features Desmar's most ambitious recording project: the now widely celebrated 1976 Stokowski/Royal Philharmonic program of the Vaughan Williams *Tallis Fantasia*, the Purcell "Dido's Lament" transcription, and Dvořák's *String Serenade* (Desmar/B-C D 1011, \$7.95). Since these were first taped in cassette format by Advent (E 1047, "Tape Deck," April 1977), audiophiles have a new comparative test of the relative technical merits of deluxe chromium cassette and top-notch open-reel processings. Again, I predict that one's decision will depend more on the qualities of one's playback equipment than on those of the well-nigh flawless tapings.

The c. 1969 disc release of Mozart's all-woodwind *Serenades Nos. 11 and 12* by the Musica Viva Ensemble under James Boole seems to have attracted little if any attention, but in open-reel format (Musical Heritage/B-C C 0841, \$6.95) this first-ever taping of this delectable music is a true sleeper. It's played with contagious zest as well as skillful deftness, while the David Hancock recording might have been made just this morning, so freshly and naturally does it capture the bracing open-air timbres drawn from an octet of paired oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns. ●

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High Definition Phono Cartridges



Too Hot to Handle

J. R. Ashley, in his June article ["Bi-amplification: The Third Loudspeaker Revolution?"], concludes that "for bi-amplification, the amplifiers should be designed for equal power output, assuming equal efficiency in the drivers." Since the widespread use of "super-power" amplifiers seems to be for the purpose of providing adequate acoustic output and "headroom" at low frequencies, must I really pump 200 watts per channel into my tweeters as well? Even granted that most tweeters are more efficient than most woofers (and hence, that the power requirement for the high-frequency amplifier could be reduced proportionately), his comments suggest the need for quite a lot of high-frequency power. Is it really necessary?—Scott Marovich, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

For a crossover at the point indicated in the article, the amps should have equal power.

I have a tuner with the standard 75-microsecond de-emphasis to which I would like to hook my outboard Dolby unit since the FM station that I listen to almost exclusively broadcasts a Dolby signal. However, I can't find a compensator for the 25-microsecond Dolby FM pre-emphasis. Few local audio equipment dealers even know what I am talking about.

I did show a dealer your April 1975 review of Switchcraft's Dolby FM compensator, and he was kind enough to order one. Switchcraft would not sell in lots of fewer than ten, however, and the dealer was unwilling to make that kind of purchase. What do I do now?—Kenneth B. Knowles, Dayton, Ohio.

The Switchcraft equalizer is listed in the Lafayette Radio catalog, so you can order it by mail.

I am in the market for a good cassette deck (about \$400). I had thought that Dolby was the best noise-reduction system for cassettes until I came upon the JVC KD-75, which has ANRS. The dealer claims that ANRS surpasses Dolby in performance. Is this true?—Robert Giallo, Rockville, Md.

Although the circuit currently used by JVC in the ANRS differs from that used in Dolby-equipped decks, the results are interchangeable in all respects. Early versions of ANRS were not fully compatible with the Dolby system, and JVC's most recent innovation, the switchable Super-ANRS option, adds a compander for the high-level, high-frequency signals (to prevent overload without compromised S/N ratios—a feature particularly useful with some types of rock) to the basic Dolby-compatible processing.

It seems that all available stereo receivers have outputs for two or more sets of speakers

but that there is only one volume control. What option is there for someone driving speakers of different efficiencies who wishes to adjust the volumes independently?—Mark Hauge, Minneapolis, Minn.

The simplest and cheapest solution is to connect a pair of so-called L pads between your receiver and the more efficient set of speakers. An L pad is a tandem rheostat wired so that the impedance seen by the receiver remains constant. Impedance ratings vary; choose one that matches the speaker impedance. If the volume of each of the speaker sets is to be controlled independently, remote from the amplifier, each of the speakers will require its own pad. They can be bought at electronics supply houses.

The trouble with L pads is threefold. They are usually limited in power-handling capability, 3 to 10 watts being typical. (This is a continuous-power rating, however. On music signals, they will likely handle much more depending on how far they are turned up.) They also consume power, robbing the amp of some of its stuff. Finally, since they insert resistance between the amplifier and the speaker, the speaker is left essentially undamped, and that adversely affects low-frequency response.

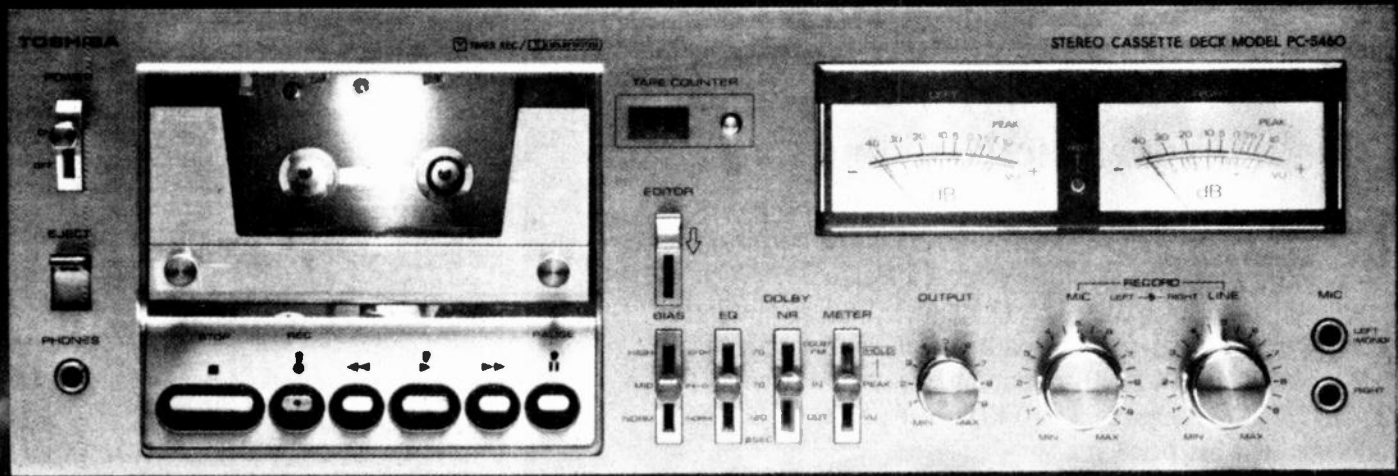
The more elegant solution to your dilemma is to use separate power amps (with volume controls) for each set of speakers. But that is, as they say, passing the buck—to your friendly dealer.

Will harm come to my component system if I use it too often—say, two hours straight per day, seven days a week? I have always had rather bad luck when it comes to electronic equipment, and my stereo is, above all, the thing that I do not want to have break down.—Scott G. Wexlin, Gladwyne, Pa.

Not to worry. Your usage of your equipment is rather moderate. Besides that, audio equipment is not as delicate as you imply. If all the components are kept within ratings and heat-producing units are properly ventilated, 24-hour-per-day operation should produce no significant aging of the electronics. Mechanical parts like turntable or tape drivers are, of course, subject to wear.

I have a Pioneer SX-1050 receiver driving a pair of KLH Four 16-ohm speakers in two corners of the room. I recently tried to add a pair of 8-ohm acoustic suspension speakers in the other two corners. Used in this combination, the 8-ohm systems are too loud, so I installed a wire-wound L pad on each speaker. Now the receiver's protective relays open intermittently on loud passages, even at moderate volume. Pioneer recommends that the combined load be no less than 8 ohms; adding the

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Of course, almost every cassette deck has Dolby these days. But few have Dolby FM as well. Toshiba does, with a switchable MPX filter circuit. So you can feed Dolby FM broadcasts through the 5460 to get cleaner sound. Whether or not you're recording.

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the three-function meter plus LED peak indicator. And our new edit/fade control.

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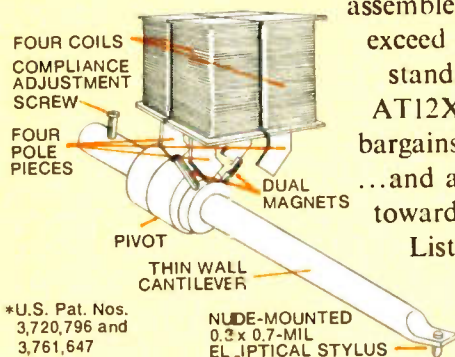
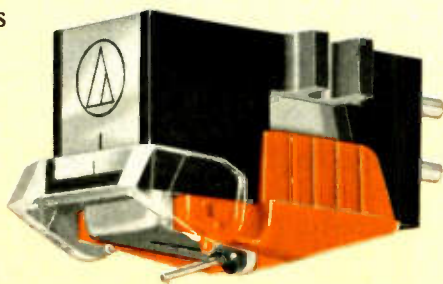
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CIRCLE 9 ON PAGE 127

8-ohm pair apparently reduces the combined impedance below the safe limit. Other than discarding the KLH speakers—which are still too good for that and which I cannot afford to replace—is there a solution that would balance the four speakers and still create no problem for the receiver?—A. Douglas Wauchope, Brevard, N.C.

We wonder, first of all, why you want to run speakers in four corners of the room, which hardly seems conducive to a good stereo image. Assuming that the 8-ohm speakers are of good quality, we would suppose they would play as loud alone as when combined with the KLHs, but without overloading the amplifier. Since any use of an L pad or other resistive impedance-correcting device deprives the associated speaker of amplifier damping, the bass performance of the 8-ohm pair may be a good deal sloppier than necessary. And other things being equal, 16-ohm speakers are not a good match for a solid-state amp.

If, however, you feel committed to your present setup, connecting an 8-ohm power resistor (rated at 20 watts or so) in series with each of the 8-ohm speakers will simultaneously reduce their output by about 3 dB and raise the impedance to 16 ohms, which should represent a safe amplifier load (nominally, 8 ohms) in parallel with the 16-ohm KLH speakers.

I have been a happy user of a two-speed AR manual turntable since about 1964, but—despite my babying of records and stylus—the stylus has become worn and needs replacing. Since cartridge technology has progressed so far in recent years, however, it seems worthwhile to replace the entire cartridge. Virtually all pickups these days appear to have been designed for use on turntables with antiskating, which my AR lacks.

I talked with one man who had replaced his cartridge with a modern one having an elliptical stylus, and within about six months the stylus was so badly worn that he had to substitute a different brand of cartridge. In a comparatively short time the cantilever became warped and delivered badly distorted reproduction. Can you suggest current brands or models for use on older turntables without antiskating devices?—Frank N. Moyer, Albuquerque, N.M.

Cartridges are not designed to "require" antiskating force per se. The need for antiskating stems from the design of the arm. Pivoted arms (as opposed to tangent-tracking models) tend to "skate" inward on the record, thus increasing the force on the inner groove wall and reducing it on the outer one. The amount of force required to counteract this tendency is a small fraction of the tracking force; lack of it certainly won't wear out a stylus prematurely or twist the cantilever.

If you wish to replace the cartridge on your present turntable, we'd suggest one that can be tracked in the range of 1½ to 2 grams and using it toward the upper limit of its recommended range. The lack of antiskating compensation is most apparent at the low end of the range, where slight imbalances in the groove-wall forces can elicit mistracking.

We regret that, due to the volume of reader mail we get, we cannot give individual answers to all questions.

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The A-800 uses a combined record/playback head in which both elements are incorporated into a single housing. What's more, the playback head is a unique "Delta" design which incorporates both magnetic and non-magnetic ferrite materials which assures minimum feedthrough from the record head and eliminates low



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Wow & Flutter: 0.03%
Frequency Response: 20-8,000 Hz
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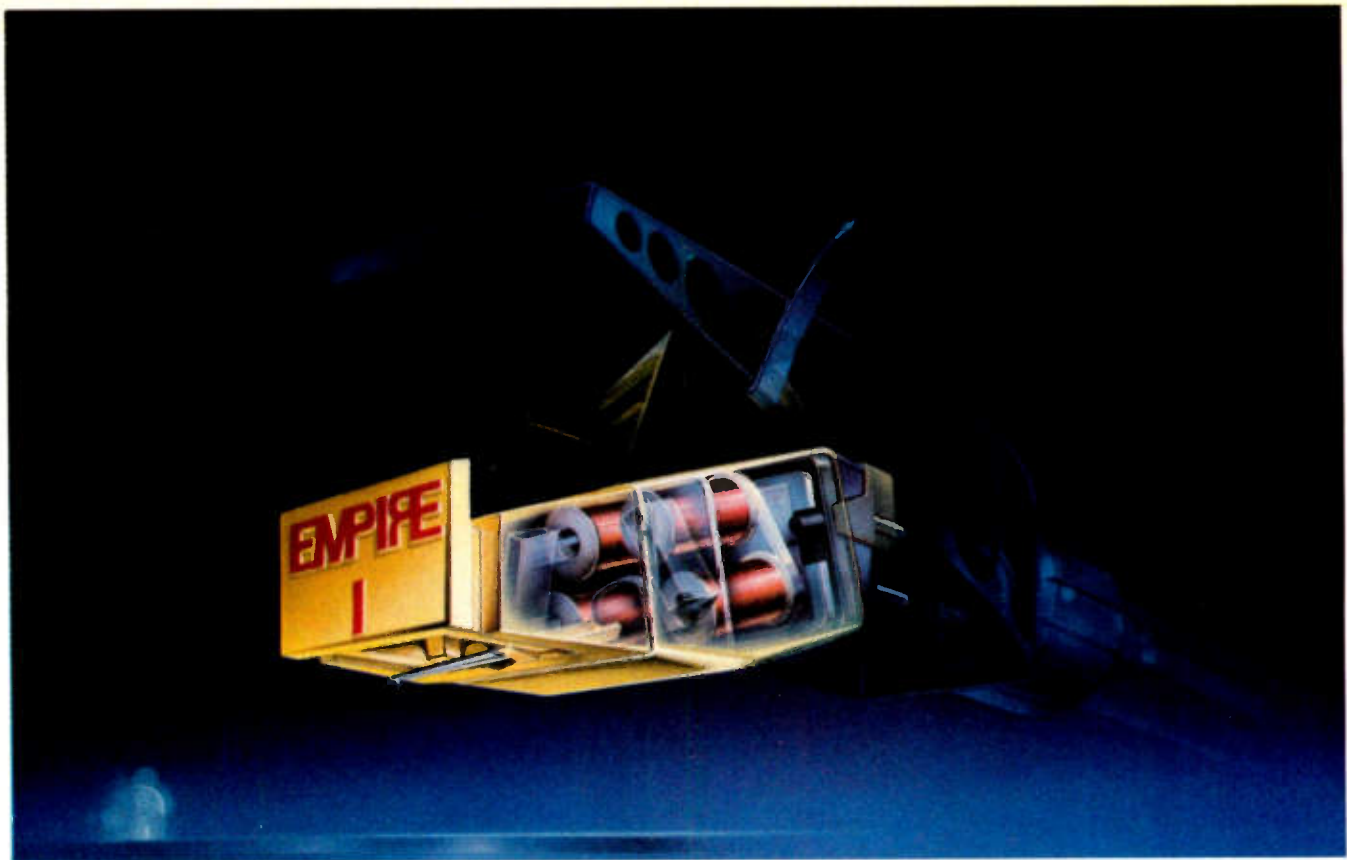
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Features	Details	Benefits
Unique Fixed Unidirectional Three-Magnet Structure	Every Empire cartridge uses 3 high energy ferrite magnets in the cartridge body to provide a high level of unidirectional flux.	Higher and more linear output signal, immunity to bi-directional magnetic distortion, and improved hum and microphonic rejection.
Molded Four-Pole Magnetic Assembly	Every Empire cartridge employs a four-pole magnetic assembly that is precisely aligned and locked in place by a high pressure injection molding process... providing a uniform and orthogonal magnetic field.	Improved crosstalk and reduced distortion that is insensitive to tracking force.
Tubular moving Iron Design	By using a tubular high magnetic saturation iron armature we obtain an optimum ratio of output level to effective tip mass.	Improved tracking ability and widened frequency response.
Four Coil Hum Bucking Assembly Plus Electromagnetic Shielding	Using custom designed computer controlled machines, a precision drawn copper wire (thinner than human hair and longer than a football field) is wound onto a symmetrical 4 bobbin structure. By using 2 coils per channel a symmetrical electrical circuit is formed.	Improved rejection of hum and stray noise fields.
Aluminum Alloy Cantilever	The Empire computer designed tubular cantilever provides optimum coupling of the diamond tip to the moving magnetic system resulting in minimum effective stylus tip mass.	Superb low level tracking, reduced tracking distortion... plus enhanced wideband separation characteristics.
Precision Ground Oriented Diamond Tips	Empire diamonds are precision ground, polished and inspected in house, using sophisticated television cameras and powerful microscopes to ensure accurate angular orientation.	Reduced tracing phase distortion, together with reduced wear of both the record and the diamond tip.

For the full story on Empire cartridges we suggest you "test-listen" to one at your local Empire dealer, and for information on our full line of cartridges, write for our brochure "How to Get the Most Out of Your Records": **Empire Scientific Corp.**, Garden City, N.Y. 11530

EMPIRE

This is a no-holds-barred digitally controlled preamp. The "basic" system comprises three packages. The control and power modules can be rack-mounted; the separate phono preamp module can be situated near the tone arm. Ideally, the power module should likewise be placed away from the control module to obviate hum induction. Because of its high current capacity (note the AC-outlet listing at the head of this report), the power module comes with a 20-amp line cord whose plug does not mate with a standard wall outlet, but the supplied adapter cable converts this termination to the standard three-wire configuration.

Crown DL-2 Control Preamp System

Output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)

L ch	12 volts
R ch	12 volts

Frequency response (at 0.5 volt)

±0 dB, 20 Hz to 40 kHz
+0, -¼ dB, 10 Hz to 80 kHz

RIAA equalization* ±½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

Input characteristics (re 0.5 V; noise A-weighted)

	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono*	0.16 mV	82 dB
mike*	0.21 mV	82 dB
inputs 1-8	52 mV	>95 dB
ext. processors	52 mV	>95 dB

Phono overload (clipping point)* 36 mV at 1 kHz

THD + N (at 2 V output) 0.003%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

IM distortion (at 2 V output) 0.002%

Low filter -3 dB at 22, 33, 55, or 110 Hz; 18 dB/octave

High filter -3 dB at 4.1, 6.8, 12, or 20 kHz; 18 dB/octave

*Measured through Phono Module A

The phono preamp features a choice of input resistances and an extremely low parallel capacitance (less than 5 picofarads), and short jumpers connect it to the tone-arm jacks—all of which tends to minimize pickup of radio-frequency interference. It is left to the user to add whatever capacitance is required to load the phono cartridge properly. The gain of the phono preamp is adjustable—separately for each channel—over a 20-dB range centered on a nominal gain of 40 dB. The 36-millivolt overload point reported in our lab data box refers to operation at highest gain and should vary with the setting to 360 millivolts at minimum gain. The present phono module is designed for fixed-coil pickups; a moving-coil preamp (Phono Module B) is expected shortly—perhaps by the time you read this report—though the A model delivers enough gain for some moving-coil designs. The phono preamp can double as a microphone preamp when the RIAA equalizer is switched out.

Since the phono preamp raises the cartridge output to line level, no special phono input is needed on the control chassis, and all eight input pairs are essentially identical. As the unit is shipped, the first two are designated for phono use. Three pairs are logically connected for tape-recording application

and are matched by tape-output jacks. The inputs and outputs for the third recorder are duplicated on the front panel (with phone jacks) for temporary hookups. These three also interface with the tape-monitor and with the tape-copy switching. Any source can be recorded simultaneously onto all three recorders, and you can duplicate from any one of the three to both of the other two. Tape dubbing is independent of the program being monitored via the main output. Two external-processor loops are available with separate switching for each; a third button places the processors either before or after the tape outputs so that the signal processing will affect either the recording or the monitoring alone.

Input selection is made via reed relays activated by front-panel touch buttons, which can be remotely controlled. The user can select more than one input at a time, producing signal mixing on the input buss; LEDs indicate which have been selected. The MUTE (which is total) and POWER buttons function similarly and are also remotely controllable. The control-module power button might better have been called STANDBY since the DL-2 remains active in a reduced-power state until the main switch on the power module is turned off. One peculiarity of the design is that all outputs are phone jacks, though the standard pin jacks are used for all inputs. Depending on the number of tape decks and signal-processing devices you use, you may need more than the adapters supplied with the DL-2, but when you come to reconnect a system built around it you are unlikely to confuse inputs with outputs.

The volume and balance are controlled digitally, providing two advantages: remote-control capability and perfect tracking of the channel balance throughout a 63½-dB range. The gain of each channel is controlled with individual pairs of buttons, one raising the gain in ½-dB steps, the other lowering it. Once channel balance is achieved, a third pair of buttons raises and lowers the gain of both channels simultaneously while maintaining the balance; digital displays tell you the gain of each channel (in dB) and indicate when the extremes of the range have been reached. The ½-dB steps produce a virtually continuous change in volume. A quick flick of the button creates a one-step change; if the button is held down, the level continues to change—first slowly, then with increasing rapidity.

The LOUDNESS knob serves as an adjunct volume control, decreasing the level in 5-dB steps while simultaneously inducing a bass boost conforming to the ISO curves from 100 to 55 phons. (No treble boost is mandated.) Since the 100-phon position is the unboosted reference level, "correct" operation involves adjusting the volume for a very loud listening level (ideally equal to the 100-phon level if equipment is available with which to measure it) and subsequent reduction to comfortable levels via the compensated LOUDNESS knob.

There are four cutoff frequencies on both high and low filters; the -3-dB points measure very close to the nominal frequencies, and the steep slope makes the filtering exceedingly efficient. The tone control section is, in reality, a mini-equalizer. The two channels are controlled independently via three 13-position slide switches. The total control range of ±15 dB affects relatively narrow frequency bands, whose centers can be adjusted upward or downward by one octave from the nominal centers: 40, 800, and 10,000 Hz. Data taken at CBS indicate that almost the full ±15-dB range is provided by each control and that the Q of each filter increases with the center frequency selected; for example, the MIDRANGE control affects a greater number of octaves when it is centered at 400 Hz than it does centered at 1,600 Hz. The controls' markings could be clearer: Frequency adjustments are indicated by multipliers rather than actual frequencies, and there is no differentiation of bass, midrange, and treble sliders.

The *pièce de résistance* of the DL-2 is a set of three dual-concentric AUDIO-IMAGING knobs that serve to blend the left and right channels and create shifts in the stereo image. The function of the controls is too complex to explain fully in a review, but a few brief examples may suggest their usefulness. Following Crown's nomenclature, the left-main input is designated A, the right-main input is designated B.

One concentrically paired control (NORMAL) adjusts levels in the left (A→L) and right (B→R) channels. Used by itself, therefore, the NORMAL control simply serves as a VOLUME knob. The second concentric pair feeds the A (left) input into the right output (A→R) and vice versa (B→L). This REVERSE therefore flips the stereo image left-to-right if used by itself.

When both controls are set to the same value, A goes in equal proportions to the left and right outputs, and the image is mono. But since the controls are adjustable, any image from full stereo through mono to reverse stereo can be achieved; and, since separate controls are provided for each input channel, it is possible to move either the left or right side in toward the center while leaving the other alone or to create two-channel mono from either input.

As if that weren't sufficient, a third set of controls (CROSS-FEED) serves as a mixer. These controls establish the amount of one input (X) fed into the left channel and the amount of another input (Y) into the right. These are two totally separate inputs connected through back-panel jacks. For example, you can play electric guitar into the X input and sing (via a micro-

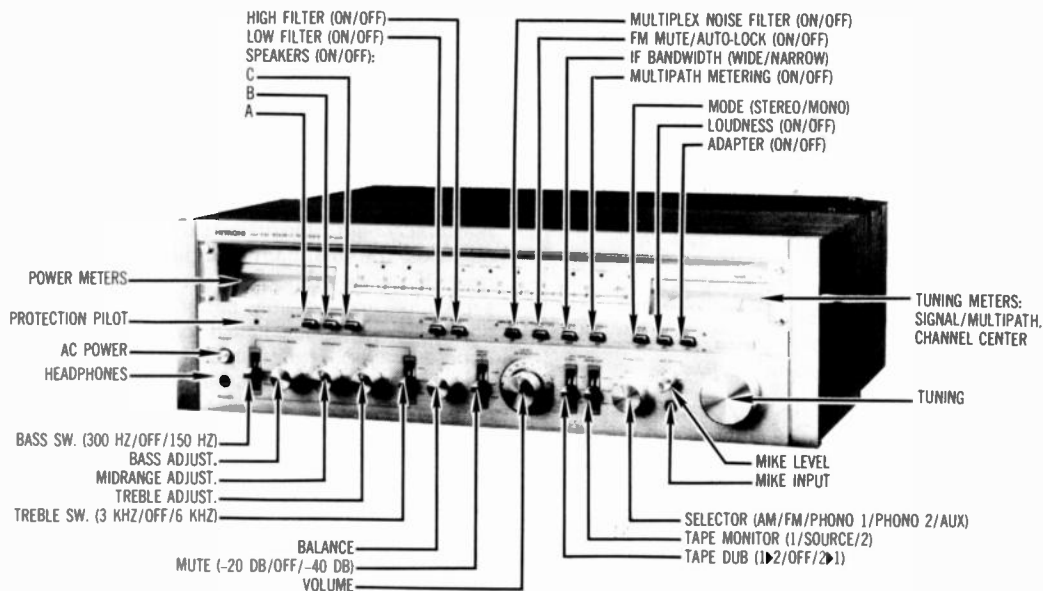
phone) into the Y input along with a backup that, say, stems from a tape-recorder input. The singing, playing, and soundtrack will be blended by the DL-2 with the guitar on the left, the voice on the right, and the soundtrack in between—anywhere you like it. The possible combinations afforded by the audio-imaging controls are virtually endless.

The data taken by CBS suggest virtual sonic perfection, and perfection—the absence of discernible effects—is what the ear hears. The phono preamp is utterly quiet and—once we terminated the phono cartridge with the proper external capacitance—we extracted the last iota of performance from it. With the reasonably sensitive cartridge we used, we decreased the phono gain suitably to prevent overload.

To those accustomed (as we are) to rotary or slider volume controls, the digital approach of the DL-2 takes some getting used to. The digital readouts fascinated us to the point that we were tempted to "play roulette with the computer," trying to get it to stop at a certain number—a feat that takes practice once the control speeds up. Yet when the novelty wears off, one is left with the system's real qualities: its adjustment accuracy and repeatability. The novelties, features, and flexibility of the DL-2 naturally have an impact on its price, which will precipitate a good deal of soul- (and savings-account-) searching in many prospective purchasers. But for technical ingenuity and sonic integrity, this is an exceptional product to which conventional cost-effectiveness yardsticks don't apply.

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Class G Receiver "Doubles Your Fun"



Hitachi Model SR-2004 stereo FM/AM receiver in wood-veneer case. Dimensions: 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ by 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (front panel), 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$1,195. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor; "limited," five years for transistors. Manufacturer: Hitachi, Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Hitachi Sales Corp. of America, 401 W. Artesia Blvd., Compton, Calif. 90220.

The extraordinary music-handling capability of this receiver, the top of Hitachi's line, is characterized by the phrase "dynamic headroom," which is relatively new to both high fidelity and HF. Rated at 200 watts (23 dBW) per channel into 8-ohm loads, the SR-2004 is no slouch at delivering continuous power either, but it will supply twice that level for brief periods. This is, in fact, the express design goal of the Class G am-

Hitachi SR-2004 Receiver

Tuner Section

Capture ratio	1 dB		
Alternate channel selectivity	77 dB*; 44 dB		
THD + N	L ch	R ch	mono
80 Hz*	0.16%	0.15%	0.17%
1 kHz*	0.07%	0.08%	0.095%
10 kHz*	0.36%	0.40%	0.18%
80 Hz	0.19%	0.19%	0.17%
1 kHz	0.11%	0.12%	0.08%
10 kHz	0.29%	0.30%	0.18%
IM distortion	0.12%		
19-kHz pilot	-66 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-68 dB		
S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)			
stereo	66 dB		
mono	73 dB		
Frequency response	+1, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
Channel separation	>40 dB, 200 Hz to 3 kHz*		
	>40 dB, 65 Hz to 10 kHz		

*These measurements made in the narrow IF mode.

Amplifier Section

Manufacturer's rated power	23 dBW (200 watts)/ch.	
Power output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)		
L ch	23½ dBW (240 watts)	
R ch	24 dBW (245 watts)	
Dynamic headroom (at 1 kHz)	3 dB	
Frequency response	+0, -½ dB, 40 Hz to 20 kHz	
	+0, -3 dB, 13 Hz to 50 kHz	
RIAA equalization	+¼, -1 dB, 40 Hz to 20 kHz	
	+¼, -2½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Input characteristics (re 0 dBW (1 watt); noise A-weighted)		
	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	0.195 mV	73½ dB
mike	0.225 mV	72½ dB
aux	11.0 mV	79½ dB
tape 1, 2	9.6 mV	78½ dB
Phono overload (clipping point)	225 mV at 1 kHz	
Damping factor at 50 Hz	75	
High filter	-3 dB at 7.4 kHz; 12 dB/octave	
Low filter	-3 dB at 80 Hz; 12 dB/octave	

NEW MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

In making comparisons between current reports and those published in the past, readers are cautioned to pay particular attention to the reference levels and similar test criteria cited. S/N ratios for electronics, in particular, are measured very differently now that we have adopted salient features of the new IHF amplifier-measurement standard. While we believe that the new technique (which also implies a saner approach to loading of all inputs and outputs) will result in measurements that more perfectly reflect audible, in-use effects, they cannot be compared directly to the numbers resulting from the former, more conventional laboratory measurements.

plifier used in this and other current Hitachi products. Since music is by nature composed of brief bursts of sound interspersed among periods of relative quietude, the Hitachi has sonic muscle equivalent to 400 watts (26 dBW) per side. In a functional sense at least, that gives it a shot at first place in the receiver power race.

Briefly, the Class G Dynaharmony circuit uses two sets of power supplies and twice the normal number of output transistors. During typical operation, the lower voltage supply delivers the requisite output power; but, on high-level peaks, the second supply jumps in to do its share. Lab data taken at CBS Technology Center verify the full 3 dB of dynamic headroom implied by Hitachi's specs, meaning that the receiver will indeed deliver a dynamic-power (momentary) output of 400 watts per channel.

On a continuous-power basis, the SR-2004 easily meets its rating with a wide margin of safety. THD is well under the 0.08% claimed over most of the band. At lower power-output levels, the distortion components appear to be submerged in the residual noise. Intermodulation measurements suggest a trace of crossover distortion at low levels, but it never exceeds 0.05%. The damping factor is fully adequate for good loudspeaker control.

The flat and extended frequency response expected in electronics is evident, except that the low-frequency rolloff point is slightly high—an effect not likely to be apparent in listening, considering the general dearth of program material and loudspeakers that would try such capability. Phono equalization is, for the most part, dead flat; the low-end rolloff amounts to -1½ dB at 30 Hz. We presume that Hitachi's goal was conformity with the new European recommendation for phono equalization, not adopted, as yet, by the RIAA.

In addition to a midrange control with a ±4-dB range between 1 and 2 kHz, the SR-2004 offers choices of turnover frequency on both bass and treble controls. On the low end of the spectrum, the data indicate a shelving action with either turnover point and a maximum range of +7 dB to -12 dB. The treble control has a range of +7 dB to -10 dB at the lower turnover and +6 dB to -12 dB (at 20 kHz) at the higher one. The loudness contour affords both bass and treble boost.

The tuner section matches the level of performance that we have come to expect from high fidelity components. Sensitivity remains quite uniform across the band and is close to the state of the art even in the wideband mode. Capture ratio is very good, and the selectivity (in the narrow-band mode) is reasonably high. Unusually, except at the highest audio frequencies, the total harmonic distortion is less with the narrower IF bandwidth. So, except for the slightly better stereo separation and possibly better capture ratio, we see little point in forgoing the added discrimination offered by narrow-band operation. Frequency response is notably flat in either mono or stereo, and subcarrier products are well suppressed.

For a receiver with so much music capacity, the Hitachi SR-2004 generates little heat. Even after hours of use its heat sinks are barely warm to the touch, and this bodes well for longevity. Of the multiplex "noise filters" we have used on tuners and receivers, the Hitachi's ranks near the top of the list. It provides a substantial quieting on stereo channels of marginal signal strength while preserving a reasonably good stereo image. We also find the multipath indication (which shares the signal-strength meter) more sensitive than the average of those we have used.

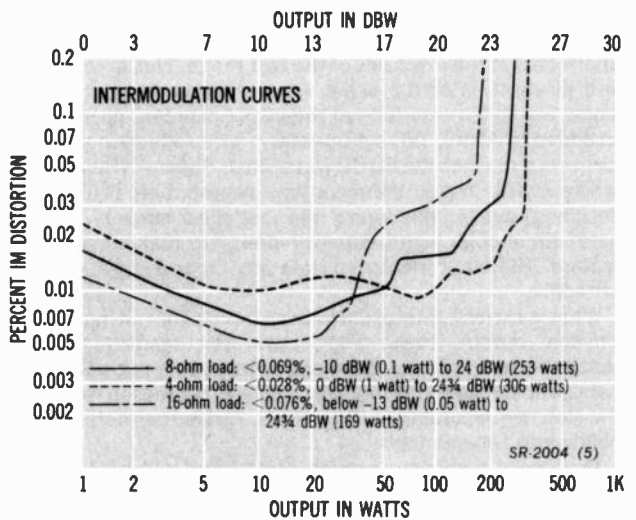
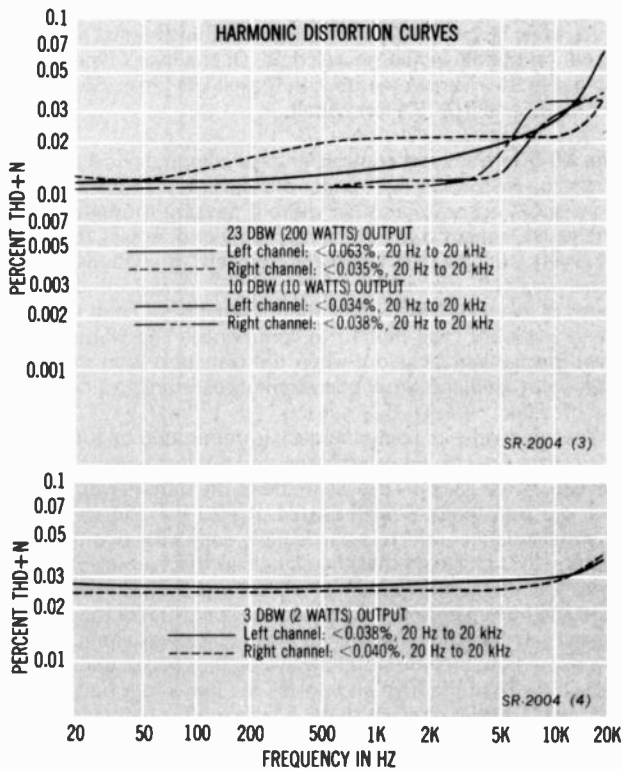
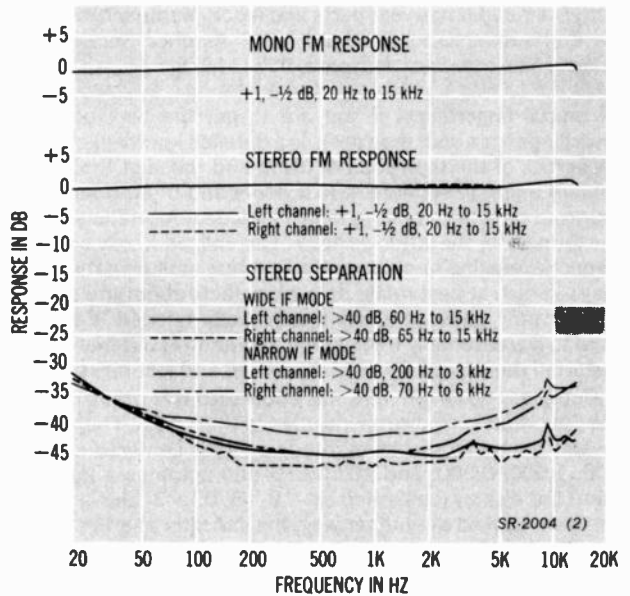
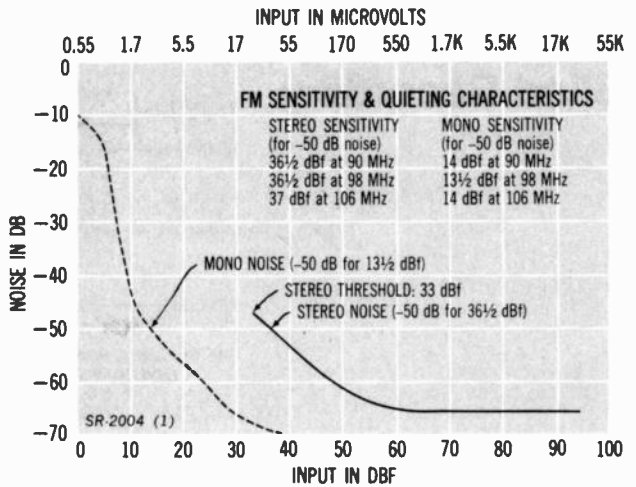
In practice, the sensitivity of the tuner is quite good—especially in the narrow-band mode. In our home-listening area, the selectivity in that mode adequately differentiates between all but one pair of stations, one of which is much stronger than the other. A fairly substantial signal is required to un-

mute the receiver—which of course implies that those stations that do come out of mute produce music, not hash. But if you choose to defeat the mute and receive weaker stations, you must forgo the advantages of Hitachi's Auto-Lock (AFC), activated by the same switch as the muting.

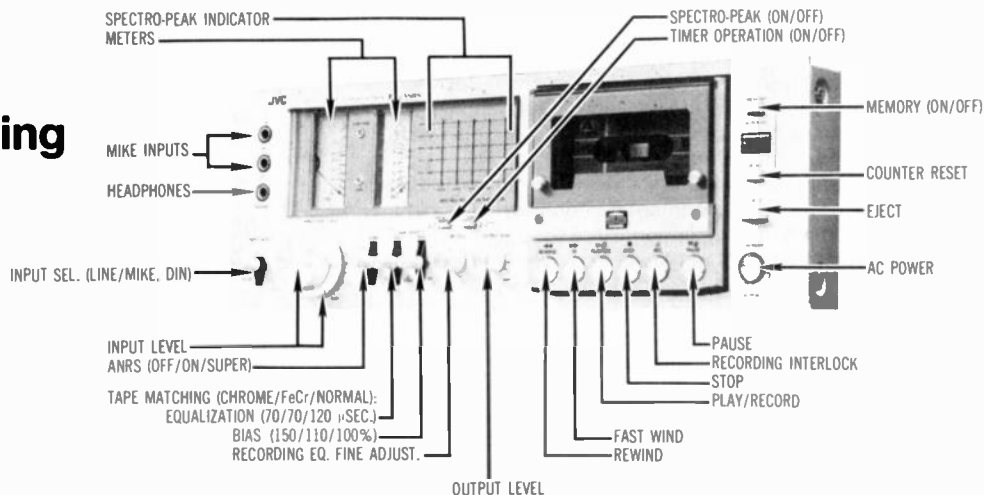
The phono section seems to mate well with our cartridge, with no sign of overload or detrimental interaction. The high-frequency reproduction is exceptionally clean and the noise level barely perceptible right at the speaker. The tone-control contours are much to our liking—adequate in scope, flexible, and with sufficient detail. On the other hand, we find the low-filter cutoff frequency needlessly high, removing much of the lower musical register along with any infrasonic signal or rumble that might be present. The high filter also has a very audible effect—but this, after all, is its *raison d'être*.

Needless to say, the Hitachi SR-2004 leaves little to be desired in the way of power capacity. It is a receiver that will take even a low-efficiency speaker system in stride, and we'd have to stretch our imagination to conceive of a home situation in which higher sound levels would be desired. By coupling this brawny amp with a tuner that is above average, Hitachi has created a strong contender in its SR-2004.

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An End to Blind Recording



JVC Model KD-85 stereo cassette deck in metal case. Dimensions: 18¾ by 5¾ inches (front panel), 11½ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$499.95. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Victor Co., Japan; U.S. distributor: JVC America, Inc., 58-75 Queens Midtown Exp., Maspeth, N.Y. 11378.

Of crucial importance, if you are to get the best possible recordings from your tape deck, is a detailed knowledge of the properties of the tape you are using and those of the signal you are trying to squeeze onto it. More and more references (our own tape tests among them) provide information about the former; for the latter we have been obliged to rely on a variety of averaging or peak-reading meters or illuminating displays—which at best relate only gross facts about the signal. Some canny guesswork has always been needed if signals were to be reasonably free of tape hiss and yet not marred by distorted peaks, compressed dynamics, and lost highs.

But guess no longer. JVC has addressed this problem with the Spectro-Peak indicator included in the KD-85. This device divides the audio spectrum into five bands centered at 100, 300, 1,000, 3,000, and 10,000 Hz and actuates a five-segment bar display (calibrated at -10, -5, 0, +3, and +6 dB) for each. Looked at another way, the indicator is a five-band, five-level real-time analyzer, which—while hardly sophisticated as far as laboratory instruments go—is a healthy chunk more informative than the deck's conventional metering system.

Viewed in terms of its basic performance, the KD-85 is an impressive machine. Accuracy of the record/playback speed is acceptable at a normal AC power-line voltage and is virtually unaffected at the extremes of the test range. Flutter in record and playback is at the same very low level as in playback alone. Signal-to-noise ratio of the deck (including the 9 dB or so added by ANRS, JVC's proprietary noise-reduction system) just about reaches the 60-dB watershed; Super ANRS (which, unlike ANRS, makes the recording incompatible with Dolby decoding) pushes this figure into first-class territory for signals with enough high-frequency energy to make use of the feature. The other measured data are, by and large, equally attractive.

What is extremely unusual in the KD-85 is that all input sensitivities, output levels, and instrument readings match exactly between the two channels. Unless your program material is unbalanced to begin with, there is no reason to offset the clutched recording level controls. Fades therefore match neatly into two channels.

Frequency response through record and playback is flat and extended for all three tape types—ferrics, ferrichromes, and chrome/ferricobalts—that the KD-85 can handle. Even at

15 kHz, the three curves do not differ much although the recommended ferrichrome gives the most extended highs. (A slight imbalance between the two channels, exacerbated when ANRS or Super ANRS is switched in, may be a characteristic of our sample.)

Some decks allow for differences between tape brands—and batch-to-batch variations in a given tape type—by means of a control that tweaks the bias for best frequency response. Contending that this technique may produce less than optimum results with respect to distortion, JVC has substituted adjustable recording EQ via a five-position switch that affects response at 10 kHz by about 1½ dB per step. We spot-checked the guidelines given in the instruction manual with a two-tone method (recording sensitivity at 1 kHz compared with that at 10 kHz at -20 VU) and found them accurate to within 1 dB according to the deck's own meters. Of course, if you have a test oscillator available, you can experiment and find the best setting for any cassette you use.

The guidelines in the three-language manual are helpful but list many tapes that are obsolete or otherwise unavailable here, while ignoring tapes introduced within the last year or more. An update would be welcome. Of the listed types, the lab made the measurements with Maxell UD ferric, Sony ferrichrome, and TDK SA ferricobalt.

The KD-85's transport controls engage solenoids and are actuated by reasonably light finger pressure. It is possible to go from one function to another without passing through STOP. The PAUSE leaves no gap in the recording and, unless the music is very loud, creates hardly any transient. It engages in the usual way but, like some other solenoid decks, requires a touch of PLAY/RECORD (rather than a second touch of PAUSE) when you want tape motion to commence. The oil-damped eject mechanism locks out when the transport is in motion. Memory rewind and timer operation of recording or playback are provided.

The experience of using the deck is dominated by the presence of the Spectro-Peak indicator, and not just because of its novelty. About the only use we made of the meters was to see that our test tones were recorded at -20 VU and to check channel balance—which is particularly easy with side-by-side meters. JVC suggests that the signals in the four lower (left-most) bands go no higher than +3 dB and those in the highest band no higher than -5. Should the spectrum of the music permit you to accomplish both of these objectives at once, you are home free, but you won't always be that lucky. Some music will overload the high end unless the lower four bands are held well below 0 or even -5 dB. Contrary to what you might think, even with the meters reading a wimpish -18 to -20 VU, this will not necessarily net you an excessively noisy record-

ing. As long as the level of high-frequency energy is reasonably constant, the tape hiss, which occurs in the same part of the spectrum, is quite effectively masked.

Interestingly, the Spectro-Peak allowed us to make recordings on ferricobalt, ferrichrome, and ferric tape that sounded virtually identical except for noise content—which was slightly higher for the ferric, whose less severe equalization does not suppress hiss as much. We simply kept the levels low enough to avoid high-frequency overload. Dubbed copies of discs were almost identical to the originals, and telling which is which was not easy. Generally, we found Super ANRS advantageous for program material rich in highs, though to a slight degree rapid attacks may seem excessively so, with a bit of artificial "crispness" in the sound.

Actually, we found playing with the KD-85 so entertaining (as well as educational) that we finally had to tear ourselves away. While its performance may not be the ultimate in every way, it's a solid cut above what is usually available for its price. The No. 1 feature has to be the Spectro-Peak indicator, which virtually opens a window onto the world of the tape. Possibly the most attractive property of the system is that you are not bound to "standard" recording levels as a matter of course. The indicator permits the user to play off his own high-frequency hearing against his sensitivity to noise. This really is what one is always doing with a cassette deck, but the KD-85 supplies enough information to allow it to be done intelligently. It is not unreasonable to suppose that after some practice a recordist might get better results with the KD-85 than with decks of higher basic performance—and cost. That alone seems like grounds for calling it a winner.

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JVC Model KD-85 Cassette Deck

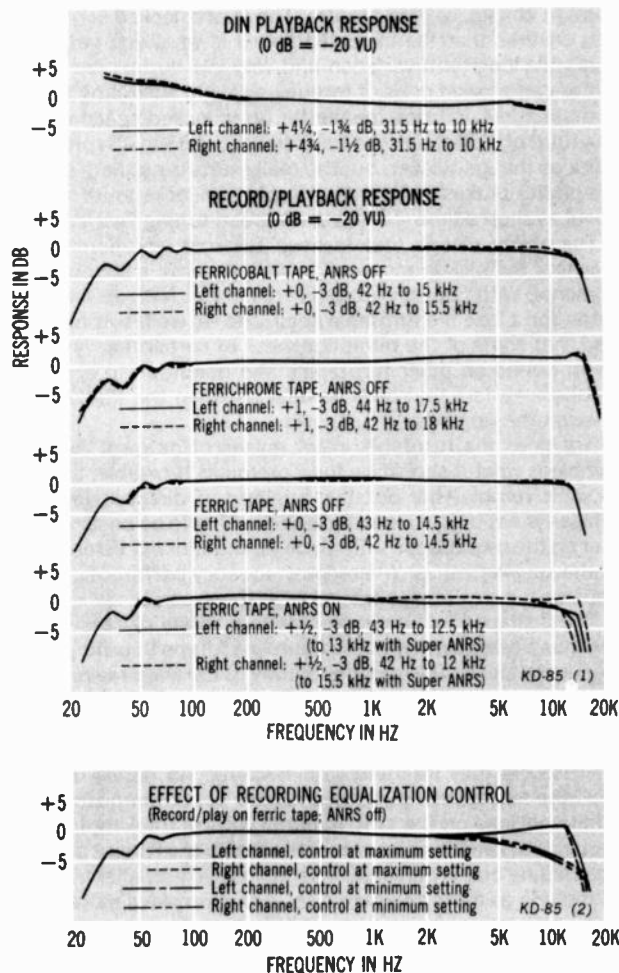
Speed accuracy	0.80% fast at 105 VAC	
	0.83% fast at 120 VAC	
	0.83% fast at 127 VAC	
Wow and flutter	playback: 0.030%	
	record/play: 0.030%	
Rewind time (C-60 cassette)		65 sec.
Fast-forward time (same cassette)		65 sec.
S/N ratio (re DIN 0 VU, ANRS off; CBS weighting)		
playback	L ch: 55½ dB	R ch: 55½ dB
record/play	L ch: 50½ dB	R ch: 50½ dB
Erase (333 Hz at normal level)		72 dB
Channel separation (at 333 Hz)		
record left, play right		45 dB
record right, play left		44½ dB
Sensitivity (re DIN 0 VU)		
line input	L ch: 130 mV	R ch: 120 mV
mike input	L ch: 0.32 mV	R ch: 0.32 mV
Level-indicator action (re DIN 0 VU)		
meter	L ch: 5½ dB high	R ch: 5½ dB high
peak indicator	L ch: 3 dB high	R ch: 3 dB high
Total harmonic distortion (at -10 VU)	<2.0%, below 50 Hz to 5 kHz	
	<1.2%, 50 Hz to 1 kHz	
Maximum output (re DIN 0 VU)		
	L ch: 0.92 V	R ch: 0.92 V

Meters—How Many Are Too Many?

The Spectro-Peak indicator (and its associated pair of conventional meters) on the JVC deck reviewed here raises again a question posed a few years back when Advent offered (in its Model 201) a single meter that could be switched to show signal values in the left channel, those in the right channel, or the higher of the two. That design precipitated outraged mutterings from traditionalists, plaudits from us. Just because so-called professional equipment adopts a habit—in this case, the use of separate meters for each signal channel—doesn't mean that consumer equipment should do likewise, we argued. And since the signal is quicker than the eye, which simply can't assess the readings of two conventional meters simultaneously, Advent's innovation struck us as a blow for sanity and utility.

Now JVC has minimized the problems of dual meters by keeping them close together and, more important, using a single Spectro-Peak display to tell the user what he most needs to know: the higher of the values for the two channels. The recordist's response to an excessively high reading on the display is, naturally, to turn down *both* channels; he neither knows which actually is delivering the higher level (since the display doesn't tell him) nor cares (since to maintain stereo balance he must reduce the level in both equally).

Yet the majority of decks still require the user to struggle along with dual meters (and often small, poorly damped ones, spaced farther apart than need be) in the guise of "professionalism." While we have come to accept the habit as a fact of life, we still deplore it. Thanks to those few courageous souls who have dared to design the exceptions.



(more)

Quartz Lock in a Jewel of a Turntable



Sony Model PS-X7 fully automatic single-disc turntable. Dimensions: 17½ by 14¼ inches (base), 5¾ inches high with cover closed; 11 inches clearance needed at top with cover open. Price: \$350. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Sony Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sony Corp. of America, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

Sony's line of quartz-lock turntables represents the technological first introduced several years ago—in the PS-8750, at a cost of \$900—and now available at more affordable prices. The PS-X7 stands at the summit of the current line. The first stepdown model gives up the carbon-fiber tone arm; the second also lacks the PS-X7's optical arm-return trigger and electronic touch controls.

The rotation of the PS-X7 is as obdurate and insensitive to external influences as that of any turntable we've encountered. It doesn't care about power-line voltages, load (short of outright abuse), or temperature. The quartz-locked servo system ensures that the indicated speed is what you get, with negligible long-term variation and very low flutter. The drive motor can provide gobs of torque—enough, according to the manufacturer, to bring the platter up to locked speed within one-third of a rotation. The transition from 33 to 45 rpm is as quick as that or quicker, but the really surprising thing is that the platter brakes down from 45 rpm and locks to 33 in just about as short a time. There are no speed-tuning "verniers."

The ability of this unit to keep external vibrations from reaching the pickup mounted in its tone arm is simply phenomenal. With Sony's viscous-filled support feet, heavy footsteps don't faze the turntable at all, and we were surprised to find that some of the bumpiness of certain heavy bass-drum pulses on other turntables had been due to acoustic feedback—a fact that became obvious when the PS-X7 suppressed the ringing and hangover.

Nor does the turntable inject noises of its own. Audible rumble is what it should be for a premium turntable, and infrasonic rumble—the putative bugbear of direct-drive turntables—is not present in sufficient quantity to be observed either on the oscilloscope with which we monitor our listening or at the speaker cones. Where low-frequency perturbation was apparent, it was always traceable to the record.

The S-shaped carbon-fiber tone arm, while of reasonably low mass, resonates (with the Shure V-15 Type III pickup) at a frequency just on the upper boundary of the warp region. Fortunately, the amplitude of the peak is very small, and the resonance is barely detectable in practice. Warp signals from discs could be observed on our scope (and speaker cones), but in no case did they interfere with tracking. An optical sensor trips the automatic return mechanism without imposing any additional load on the arm; minimal vertical tracking force is required to keep the stylus in contact with the runout groove. Antiskating bias is nonlinear—a progressively smaller fraction of the VTF as the latter increases—and it provides more compensation than average through most of its range. One instance of mistracking was corrected by decreasing the antiskating bias by about 40%.

Sony PS-X7 Turntable

Speed accuracy no measurable error, at either speed, at 105, 120, or 127 VAC

Weighted peak flutter (ANSI/IEEE)
average 0.045%
max. instantaneous 0.075%

Stylus-force gauge accuracy no measurable error

Audible rumble (ARLL) -61½ dB

Tone-arm resonance
vertical 1½ dB rise at 7 Hz
lateral 1½ dB rise at 6 Hz

Arm friction negligible

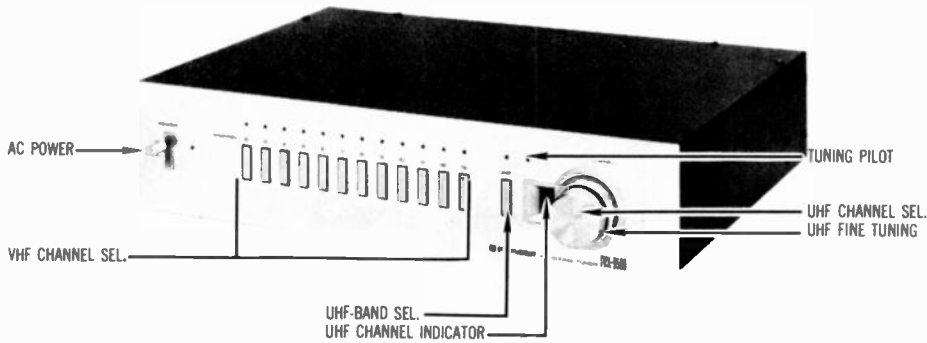
The electronic touch controls that actuate START/STOP and REPEAT offer a touch of sensory luxury while virtually assuring that finger pressure will not vibrate the ensemble. A straightforward selector switch for indexing the arm to various sizes of discs and dual pushbuttons for speed selection make the turntable very simple to operate.

The only dues that a user will have to pay are in initial setup. Balancing the arm is no problem, as the cueing mechanism will free it at a point about ¾ of an inch from the outside of the platter if it is swung there manually. Adjusting overhang is a different matter, however; in our sample, at least, the arm could not be freed over the platter without energizing the drive system. It was necessary, therefore, to push the arm downward with enough force to overcome the upward push of the cueing device in order to make the stylus contact the reference point on the overhang template. This is not really difficult to do but requires a deft touch—and courage.

Whether the difference in sound we heard when the Sony was connected to our system is a result of superior isolation, reduced flutter, suppression of arm resonances through carbon-fiber construction, or to all of the above and more besides, we really can't say, but we are quite sure it exists. The sound has an unusual clarity, especially in the bass, and the stereo image seems to possess an extra measure of solidity.

In our opinion, anyone with a taste for engineering will be an admirer of the Sony PS-X7—not only for the sophistication of its design, but also for its realization of the seemingly paradoxical goals of luxury performance and a spare, no-frills approach in which the engineering remains the servant of music reproduction. Sony has done this and, at the same time, provided elegant cosmetics and convenient operation at a price that seems very reasonable. In our view, it has what it takes.

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Pioneer's Unique TV-Sound Tuner

Pioneer Model TVX-9500 television-audio tuner, in metal case. Dimensions: 16½ by 3½ inches (front panel), 12 inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$250. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronic Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., 85 Oxford Dr., Moonachie, N.J. 07074.

Of all the travails that beset the seeker after good TV sound, the want of appropriate equipment probably is second only to the want of good program material. Both ills are susceptible to cure. TV sonics have improved markedly in some departments (thanks, largely, to PBS) in recent years; now Pioneer has jumped into the breach with the first high fidelity TV-audio tuning section we have been able to acquire for testing in years. Several manufacturers have talked of such a product, and some have even announced production; others have offered half-measure adapters. But this, folks, is the real thing. Feed the TVX-9500 from your TV-antenna system, and it will deliver the audio portion of the broadcast as two-channel mono, appropriate for reproduction via your stereo system.

If you're used to listening to TV audio on a standard TV receiver, the results will be a revelation—not always a pleasant one, depending on the program material and the station's engineering practices, but full of delights nonetheless. In particular, home recordists who are not ready for full video-taping will find many opportunities for saving eminently relistenable fare that will prove more enjoyable sonically with the Pioneer than with any setup we've used before.

Like the TV medium itself, the tuner is basically VHF-oriented. The front panel has separate selector buttons for Channels 2 through 13 plus a UHF button and a knob-style UHF selector and fine-tune ring. The fine tuning for the VHF channels is beneath the unit, at the back, together with an AFC-unlock switch that also defeats the muting. Once the VHF channels are on target (the center-tune pilot on the front panel is used for this operation as well as for manual UHF tuning), you are to reinstate the AFC and forget the VHF tuning controls.

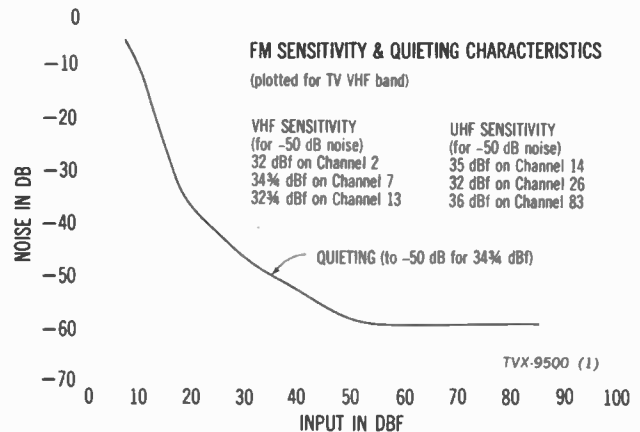
In urban and suburban areas—or in more remote ones with a good cable system—this is possible, though the muting threshold (as measured by CBS on Channel 7, the setting for all measurements not otherwise identified in the data) is at 54 dBf (270 microvolts). Thus weak signals can be received only with the AFC/muting switch turned off. It's quite evident that Pioneer looks on this product, not unreasonably, as one specifically for listeners who are fussy about audio quality (and will feed it via a first-rate antenna system) and will not want to hear degraded sound through it. Therefore the muting waits until almost the full measure of quieting has been achieved before allowing the audio to pass. But a front-panel muting switch might have been nice for borderline signal areas.

In looking at the data, incidentally, you must not expect the sort of figures we have become used to (spoiled by?) in FM

gear, though they are presented here in much the same way. For example, the 70-plus dB of signal-to-noise ratio that we often encounter in mono with FM equipment would be squandered on the TV medium, where—even in symphonic or operatic broadcasts—limiting and compression are ruthlessly employed. The dynamic range of the Pioneer is thus considerably greater than that of any broadcast we have been able to feed it. Its S/N ratio doesn't quite reach the 60-dB benchmark of "top quality" audio, but its performance should be compared instead to that of a TV receiver.

And there is no comparison. Whether with music or dramatic presentations, the verisimilitude that the tuner makes possible blows away the severely colored, highly distorted, blurred-transient sound that comes from the built-in speaker of any receiver we know of. The stereo system (particularly the speakers) to which the TVX-9500 is attached must take some of the credit, of course, and could do its thing with those few TV receivers that have offered audio outputs for the purpose. Failing such a model (even assuming that it has a good sound section), the listener/viewer who wants quality sound has little choice but the 9500, and probably none that's as good.

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Pioneer TVX-9500 TV-Audio Tuner

Capture ratio	1½ dB		
S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)	59½ dB		
THD + N	100 Hz	1 kHz	6 kHz
	0.13%	0.13%	0.33%
Frequency response	+0, -1 dB, 70 Hz to 20 kHz +0, -3 dB, 36 Hz to 20 kHz		

(more)

Stalking the Denon Pickup

Denon DL-103D moving-coil stereo phono cartridge with elliptical stylus. Price: \$267; optional AU-320 transformer, \$135. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor (plus half-price replacement of units damaged by user). Manufacturer: Nippon Columbia Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: American Audioport, Inc., 1407 N. Providence Rd., Columbia, Mo. 65201.

It happens suddenly—the advanced audio hobbyist's realization that he has become a collector of phono pickups. Slowly, hardly noticing it, he has resorted to more and more exotic fare in search of specimens that suit his demanding auditory apparatus. The less dedicated fail to understand his Parsifalian quest, noting that the sonic differences between the various choices are very small, to say the least. The collector excuses the philistinism and continues to choose this or that pickup to complement the recording at hand, sometimes making changes just for novelty or to get a different auditory perspective on an overly familiar record.

For those afflicted with this disease, Denon moving-coil cartridges have been tantalizing rare birds, with tales of sonic virtuosity filtering through the audiophile community at a rate unmatched by the flow of product. All of that has changed; the Denons finally are arriving in some force.

Our normal practice in reviewing such low-output moving-coil cartridges is to measure via the booster (head amp or transformer) that the manufacturer would normally expect to be used with that pickup, substituting a gain device of our choice only in the absence of a specific recommendation. American Audioport supplied the Denon AU-320 stepup transformer, which, from the 40-ohm primary tap used for this cartridge, delivers a voltage gain of 20 dB and an impedance step up of 100:1. All laboratory measurements were made through the transformer.

When the pickup was connected to a system for listening evaluation, the transformer was used in alternation with our own head amp. With the exception of the higher hum level that comes from the transformer when the volume is advanced to extreme levels—far beyond those that could be tolerated in practice—there was no discernible difference in sound between the two. A lab check of the transformer confirms that it is excellent; in no way does it seem capable of compromising the inherent properties of the pickup. Still, since head amps are generally preferred to transformers these days (partly, no doubt, because of the shortcomings of earlier designs), we did most listening via the head amp.

The Denon, which uses a modified elliptical stylus, is one of those pickups whose sound is difficult to relate to its measurements. For example, while the frequency response curve shows the familiar high-end peak, centered in this case between 20 and 30 kHz, the top of the DL-103D sounds exceptionally smooth. (The 1-kHz trace shows ringing—all ultrasonic—at what appears to be more than one frequency.) We were somewhat surprised to find that another moving-coil cartridge with a similar response curve and comparable distortion sounded considerably brighter and almost harsh by comparison in A/B tests.

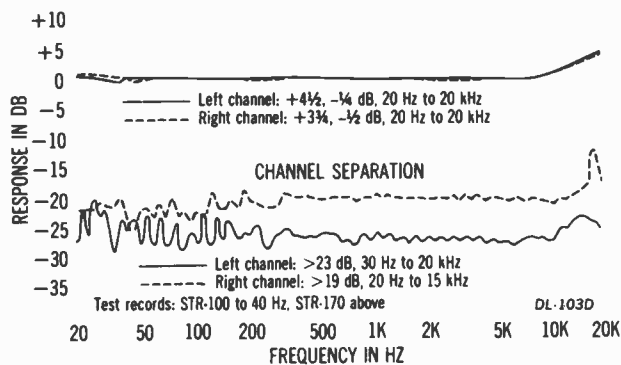
Quite unusually, the Denon shows channel separation that is modest in absolute value but extremely consistent; no serious degradation occurs until well above 15 kHz. This seems to be reflected audibly in the excellent stability of the stereo image: The oft-encountered tendency of instruments to wander as they change pitch is notably absent.

Set to the recommended tracking force, the cartridge seems to keep its stylus in good contact with the record groove walls. No audible evidence of breakup was encountered with any of a variety of discs, including some direct-cut and some digitally mastered. The only real shortcoming with respect to tracking performance stems from the low-frequency resonance, which is somewhat poorly placed in frequency and of very high amplitude for a modern cartridge as measured in the SME arm. And shifting the resonance to a "better" part of the spectrum is difficult to accomplish since the cartridge itself is so massive that running it in a low-mass arm will not have very much effect.

Furthermore, adding mass to lower both its resonant frequency and its amplitude increases the probability of its running afoul of high-amplitude warps. Yet, in average arms, sensitivity to floor shock is likely to cause greater problems than warps do. Corrective measures might include the addition of tone-arm damping (DiscTraker), more turntable isolation—and walking very carefully in the listening room. Fortunately, the resonance is low enough to obviate feedback of music.

Does the performance of the Denon justify its cost—and that of the required ancillary hardware? The answer depends on the prospective purchaser. We would expect the Denon pickup to appeal most to the type of buyer who is experienced enough to realize that, while it does not sound much different from other fine pickups—or even necessarily from some considerably cheaper ones—what differences there are offer a unique and estimable "view" of the music. Fine wines and fine artists are expected to be neither identical nor dramatically dissimilar. Normally what we demand of them is a well-balanced sense of completeness and consistency. If this standard of evaluation can be extended to phono cartridges, the Denon DL-103D is, in our opinion, one that measures up.

CIRCLE 133 ON PAGE 127



Denon DL-103D Phono Pickup

Sensitivity (at 1 kHz)	
at pickup, into transformer load	0.12 mV per cm/sec
at transformer output	1.20 mV per cm/sec
Channel balance (at 1 kHz)	± ¼ dB
Vertical tracking angle	18°
Low-frequency resonance (in SME-3009 arm)	
lateral and vertical	8 Hz; 11½ dB rise
Maximum tracking level (re RIAA 0 VU) at 1.5 grams VTF	
300 Hz	> +18 dB
1 kHz	+12 dB
Weight	7.55 grams
Tip dimensions	6.266 by 12.531 micrometers

"at their price, they are simply a steal!"

THE AUDIO ADVISOR **AUDIOGRAM**

Volume 1,

Number 7

This is the full text of the review of the Polk 10's which appeared in the AUDIOGRAM, a discerning and independent audiophile journal which is entirely supported by its readers and accepts no manufacturer's advertisements. Subscriptions are available for \$15.00 per year.

POLK MODEL 10 LOUDSPEAKER

POLK AUDIO
1205 South Carey Street
Baltimore, MD 21230

When we heard the Polk speakers at Summer CES we knew we had to test them. We were so impressed that we could not believe the prices. But first let us say that there are a few factors that might make us prejudiced in their favor. The Polk people use the Sendor as a reference. They like the sound of ARC tubes. They are the East coast distributors of the Formula 4 tone arm. We, at AUDIOGRAM, share so many likes with the folks at Polk that it is hard for us not to like their speakers. And the company is a local one that has made good — the pride of Baltimore and Washington.

Nonetheless, the sound coming forth from the Model 10 "monitors" is something really special. It is a sound that is open, well defined and very low in coloration. One does not generally expect such low coloration in a modestly priced box speaker, and certainly not anything like the definition exhibited by these speakers. How does Polk do it? We think it is mostly execution. They hear very well and they care.

The Model 10 uses a 1-inch soft dome tweeter, two 6 1/2-inch plasticized midrange drivers and one 10-inch sub-base radiator (which is really a passive radiator). Polk calls the crossover between the bass and midrange drivers "fluid-coupling". It occurs at 60 Hz and provides fourth order Butterworth loading for the energizing cones.

We auditioned the speaker on the optional stand which Polk sells. The stand, or one like it, is highly recommended. It tilts the front of the speaker slightly back from the listener, providing better phasing between drivers and reducing undesirable floor-coupled resonant effects. We would say that the sound of most bookshelf speakers currently placed on the floor would certainly be improved by such a stand.

Inasmuch as Polk had indicated that they use the Sendor as a reference and inasmuch as we had one on hand, we compared the Model 10 to this speaker. In fact, we have compared many speakers to the Sendor and most of them have sounded extremely colored by comparison. (The only speaker systems that have been able to make the Sendor sound colored have been a

well-tuned Fulton J and the Rogers LS3/5A's.) Although the Sendor did manage to make the Model 10 sound a trifle nasal, we were amazed at the similarity of sound — and that's good.

But the Sendors cost upwards from \$700 a pair (if one can find them), will not handle much power and cannot reproduce the bass of the Polks. It really isn't fair to compare the Model 10 to a reference monitor. It should be compared with other modestly priced speakers. However such a comparison is no fairer than the Sendor comparison. Other \$200 speakers simply do not come close to the standards set by the Model 10. In fact the Polks compare very favorably with the Magnepan and Dahlquist DQ 10's. Bass response of the Model 10 surpasses that of the DQ 10. Definition is almost on the par with the Magnepan (stereo imaging is better). Driver blending is excellent, the midrange is open and exceptionally clear, and there is much less hint of boxiness than that which is found in most box speakers.

If we had to fault the Model 10's, we would say that they are slightly bright and just a little fat in the low end. However, they are extremely neutral throughout most of their range. Only in comparison with some of the world's best speaker systems do they sound the least bit colored. They are a high definition speaker system deserving the very best associated electronics. And at their price, they are simply a steal.

AUDIOGRAM is published by
The Audio Advisor, Box 27406
St. Louis, Missouri 63141

THE POLK AUDIO MONITOR SERIES



Polk Audio Monitor Series Loudspeakers, priced from less than \$100 each, are available at the finest audio salons. Write us to find out your nearest dealer.

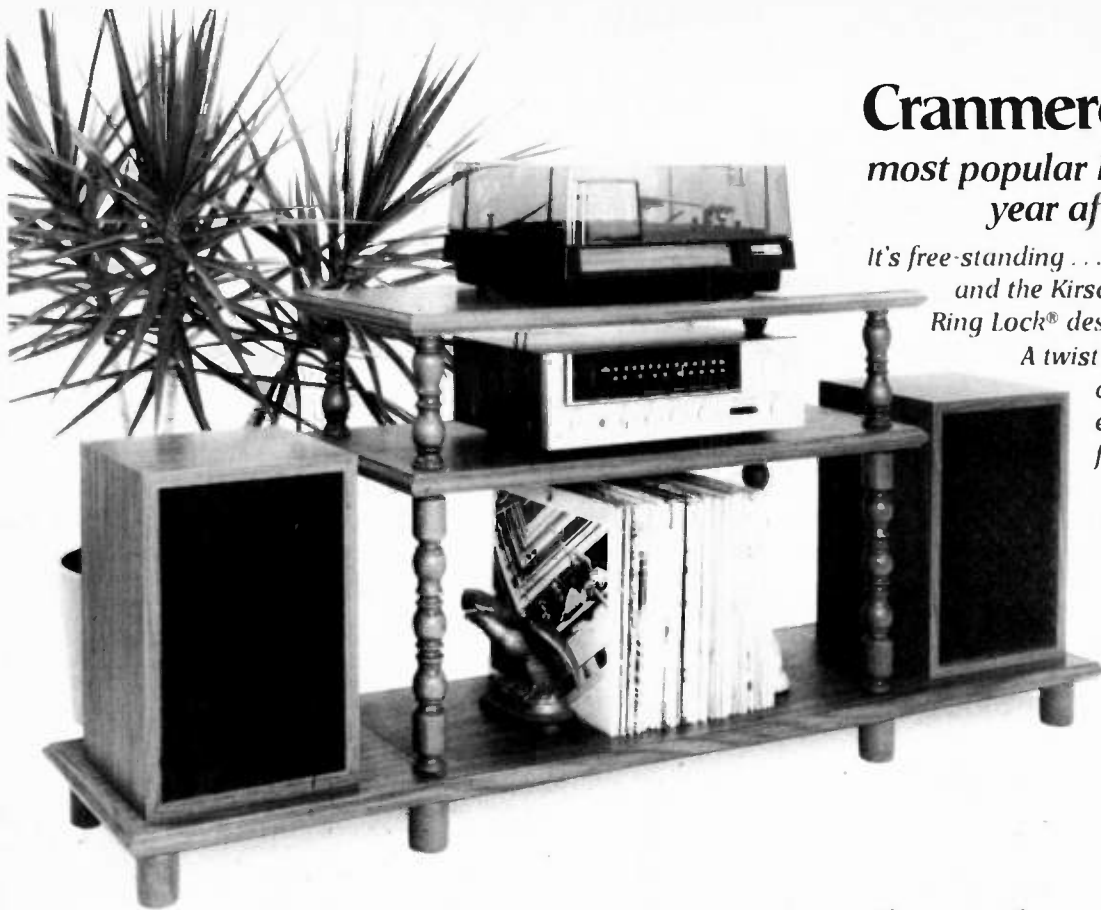
polkaudio

1205 South Carey Street
Baltimore, Md. 21230
Dept. A11

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Kirsch

Special Supplement

A Buying Guide to Home-Video Recorders and Blank Video Tapes

This special section of home-video recorders and blank tape is based on the latest information supplied by manufacturers. It includes only VCRs intended for home use and not open-reel recorders or video cassette units sold primarily for commercial, industrial, or educational applications. Video cameras are included where available as accessories for VCRs.

Blank-tape listings comprise only those tapes appropriate for the listed VCRs. *Format* refers to the VCR system, such as VHS, Beta, etc., for which a particular tape is intended. *Playing time* is referenced to the current status of VHS and Beta VCRs. Some recorders offer only a single (high) transport speed; others offer both the higher and lower speed (so-called 2-hour and 4-hour modes, respectively). The current Beta machines (known as Beta II) offer only a low speed, although older Beta (I) equipment ran at twice this speed, sometimes offering the slower speed as an option. For VHS decks, time is given for the higher speed (playing time at the lower speed is twice that at the higher); for Beta, time is for the lower speed (and therefore twice the playing time at the higher speed, should it be used). Prices are suggested retail.

William Tynan Editor

Edith Carter Copy Editor

Marion Thompson Assistant to the editor

AKAI
Akai America, Ltd.
2139 E. Del Amo Blvd.
Compton, Calif. 90224

VT-350

Model	VT-350
Price	\$2,195
Dimensions	5H x 10¼W x 11½D
Format	VHS
Tape width	½"
Capability	B/W
Half-speed	No
Resolution	270 lines
Video S/N	41 dB
Audio response	100 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N	43 dB
Automatic timer	No
Off-air tuning	No
Editing/pause	Yes
Monitor CRT	Optional (\$205, Model VM 300)
TV hookup	Optional (\$85, Model VRU)
Battery power	Yes
Slow-motion	Yes
Stop-motion	Yes
B&W camera	Yes
Color camera	No
Features	Electronic editing; auto-repeat; still frame; modular camera; 14½ pound battery-operated video cassette recorder, 3" attachable monitor (optional)

VT-300 series

Model	VT-300 series
Price	\$1,595 to \$1,995 (depending on model)
Dimensions	5H x 10¼W x 11½D
Format	VHS (30 mins)
Tape width	½"
Capability	B/W
Half-speed	No
Resolution	270 lines
Video S/N	41 dB
Audio response	100 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N	43 dB
Automatic timer	No
Off-air tuning	No
Editing/pause	No
Monitor CRT	Yes (\$1,995 model)
TV hookup	Optional (\$85, Model VRU)
Battery power	Yes
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	Yes
B&W camera	Yes
Features	Pause; still frame; 3" monitor (some models); camera adapter



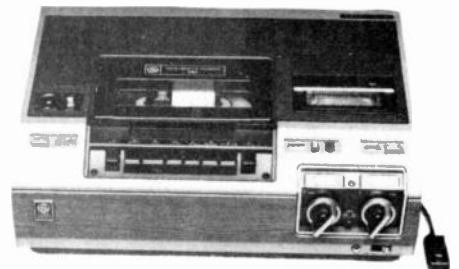
Akai VT-300



Betavision 5305



Curtis Mathes C648R



GE 1VCR-9000W



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JVC
HOME ENTERTAINMENT DIVISION
US JVC CORP

58-75 Queens Midtown Expressway
Maspeth, N.Y. 11378

TV reception simulated

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BETAVISION
Sears Roebuck Co.
Sears Tower
Chicago, Ill. 60684

5305

Model 5305
Price \$985
Dimensions 7 7/10H x 19 4/5W x 15 4/5D
Format Betamax
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines color; 250 lines B/W
Video S/N 43 dB (lum); 35 dB (chr.)
Audio response 50 Hz to 7 kHz, +3 dB, -4.5 dB
Audio S/N 40 dB
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning No
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera Optional (\$297.50, Model 5390)
Color camera No
Features One-button recorder; front-mounted controls and clock timer; works with any TV; Remote pause control

CURTIS MATHES
Curtis Mathes Sales Co.
One Curtis Mathes Parkway
Athens, Texas 75751

C648R

Model C648R
Price \$4,000
Dimensions 6 3/4H x 19 1/8W x 15 1/2D
Format VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed Yes
Resolution 240 lines color; 270 lines B/W
Video S/N 40 dB
Picture flutter 0.003%
Audio response 100 Hz to 8 kHz (SP); 100 Hz to 6 kHz (LP); ±3 dB
Audio S/N 42 dB
Audio flutter 0.18%
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Yes
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera No
Color camera No

GENERAL ELECTRIC
General Electric Co.
1 College Blvd.
Portsmouth, Va. 23705

1VCR-9000W

Model 1VCR-9000W
Price \$995
Dimensions 6 3/8H x 19 1/4W x 15 1/2D
Format VHS
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 42 dB
Audio response 100 Hz to 8 kHz, +6 dB
Audio S/N 42 dB
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Yes
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera No
Color camera No

HITACHI
Hitachi Sales Corp. of America
401 W. Artesia Blvd.
Compton, Calif. 90220

VT-4200

Model VT-4200
Price \$995
Dimensions 6 3/8H x 18 3/4W x 13 1/4D
Format VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed Yes
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 46 dB standard; 43 dB 1/2 speed
Audio response 50 Hz to 10 kHz, +3 dB
Audio S/N 43 dB
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Yes
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion Simulated
Stop-motion Yes
B&W camera Optional (\$350, Model VKM 200)
Color camera Optional (Model VK C500)
Features Simulated slow & fast motion; picture freeze; remote control

JVC
JVC America Co.
58-75 Queens Midtown Expressway
Maspeth, N.Y. 11378

HR-3600

Model HR-3600
Price \$1,335
Dimensions 5 3/4H x 17 1/4W x 12 3/4D
Format VHS
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 45 dB

Audio response 50 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N 40 dB
Audio flutter 0.5%
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion Yes
Stop-motion Yes
B&W camera No
Color camera No
Features Remote pause; still frame; double-speed play

HR-4100

Model HR-4100
Price \$1,180
Dimensions 5 1/2H x 13 3/4W x 13D
Format VHS
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 45 dB
Audio response 70 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N 40 dB
Audio flutter 0.5%
Automatic timer No
Off-air tuning No
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power Yes
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion Yes
B&W camera No
Color camera No
Features Portable (21 lbs.); standard accessories include battery, built-in switchable RF adapter; AC/battery-charger adapter

HR-3300

Model HR-3300
Price \$1,050
Dimensions 5 3/4H x 17 1/2W x 12 3/4D
Format VHS
Tape width 1/2"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines (color)
Video S/N 45 dB
Audio response 50 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N 40 dB
Audio flutter 0.5%
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera No
Color camera No

MAGNAVOX
Magnavox Consumer Electronics Co.
1700 Magnavox Way
Fort Wayne, Ind. 46804

8200

Model	8200
Price	\$1,075 to \$1,095
Dimensions	7½H x 19½W x 15D
Format	VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color
Half-speed	No
Resolution	230 lines
Video S/N	40 dB
Audio response	100 Hz to 18 kHz (SP); 100 Hz to 6 kHz (LP); ±3 dB
Audio S/N	40 dB (SP)
Automatic timer	Yes
Off-air tuning	Yes
Editing/pause	Yes
Monitor CRT	No
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$299, Model 8210)
Color camera	Optional (\$895, Model 8220)
Features	Rewind button; fast-forward button; pause button; DEW indicator; digital time display; tape counter and rest button; memory switch; AFT switch; mike-input terminal for optional mike; audio dubbing button; input-signal selector

PANASONIC

Matsushita Electric Co.
One Panasonic Way
Secaucus, N.J. 07094

PV-1000A

Model	PV-1000A
Price	\$1,095
Dimensions	6½H x 19½W x 15½D
Format	VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color; B/W
Half-speed	Yes
Resolution	240 lines
Video S/N	42 dB
Picture flutter	0.003%
Audio response	100 Hz to 8 kHz, ±6 dB
Audio S/N	42 dB
Automatic timer	Yes
Off-air tuning	Yes
Editing/pause	No (No roll because of muting)
Monitor CRT	No (RF modulator for TV)
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$299.95, Model WV-450A)
Color camera	No

PHILCO

GTE Consumer Electronics
700 Ellicott St.
Batavia, N.Y. 14020

V-1000

Model	V-1000
Price	\$995

QUASAR

Quasar Electronics Co.
Division of Matsushita Electric Corp. of America
9401 West Grand Ave.
Franklin Park, Ill. 60131

VH-5000

Model	VH-5000
Price	\$1,100
Dimensions	6¾H x 19½W x 15½D
Format	VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color; B/W
Half-speed	Yes
Resolution	300 lines B/W; 240 lines color
Video S/N	45 dB
Audio response	50 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N	43 dB
Automatic timer	Yes
Off-air tuning	Yes
Editing/pause	No
Monitor CRT	No
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$299.95, Model VK100)
Color camera	Optional
Features	Dual hot-pressed-ferrite video head; "M"-load tape system; audio over-dub control; remote pause control

VR-1000

Model	VR-1000
Price	\$995
Format	VHS
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color; B/W
Half-speed	No
Resolution	300 lines B/W; 240 lines color
Video S/N	45 dB
Audio response	50 Hz to 10 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N	43 dB
Automatic timer	Optional (\$49.95, Model VT100)
Off-air tuning	Yes
Editing/pause	No
Monitor CRT	No
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$299.95, Model VK-100)
Color camera	Optional
Features	Built-in video head dehumidifier; Alphascan single video head; memory-set play/record; remote pause capability

SANYO

Sanyo Electric, Inc.
1200 W. Artesia Blvd.
Compton, Calif. 90220

VTC-9100A

Model	VTC-9100A
Price	\$995

Dimensions	7¾H x 19½W x 14½D
Format	Betamax
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color; B/W
Resolution	250 lines B/W; 240 lines color
Video S/N	43 dB
Audio response	50 Hz to 7 kHz, ±3 dB
Audio S/N	40 dB
Automatic timer	Yes
Off-air tuning	No
Editing/pause	Yes
Monitor CRT	Optional
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$995, Model VC1400)
Color camera	No
Features	Instant stop/start with remote control for on-the-air editing; built-in all-channel tuner; built-in connector to any TV set; simple one-finger operation; video inputs and outputs; automatic shut-off with "sleep" switch; audio output jack for stereo play; instant replay capabilities

SELECTAVISION

RCA
600 N. Sherman Dr.
Indianapolis, Ind. 46201

VCT-400

Model	VCT-400
Price	\$1,200
Dimensions	7H x 19½W x 15½D
Format	VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width	½"
Capability	Color
Half-speed	Yes
Automatic timer	Yes
Off-air tuning	Yes
Editing/pause	Yes
Monitor CRT	No
TV hookup	Yes
Battery power	No
Slow-motion	No
Stop-motion	No
B&W camera	Optional (\$299.95, Model BW003; \$399.95, Model BW004)
Color camera	Optional (Model CC001 or CC002)
Features	Remote pause switch with 20' cable; digital channel display using electronic TV tuners with push-button channel selection; any 4 programs on any received TV channels can be selected for unattended recording during a one-week period; in fast-forward mode, the unit will stop automatically at start of each recorded program; unit will automatically revert to TV mode when VCR power is off

VCT-201

Model	VCT-201
Price	\$1,075
Dimensions	7H x 19½W x 15½D
Format	VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width	½"

Capability Color
Half-speed Yes
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera Optional (\$299.95, Model BW003; \$399.95, Model BW004)

Color camera Optional (Model CC001 or CC002)
Features Remote pause switch with 20' cable; unit can be timed to turn on automatically for unattended recording

VCT-200

Model VCT-200
Price \$1,000
Dimensions 7H x 19¼W x 15½D
Format VHS (2/4 hr.)
Tape width ½"
Capability Color
Half-speed Yes
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No

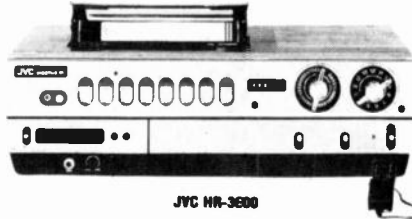
B&W camera Optional (\$299.95, Model BW003; \$399.95, Model BW004)
Color camera Optional (Model CC001 or CC002)
Features Remote pause switch with 20' cable; unit can be timed to turn on automatically for unattended recording



Hitachi VT-4200



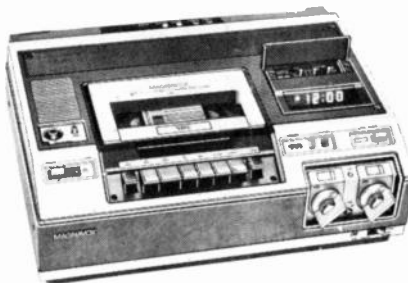
RCA SelectaVision VCT-400



JVC VR-3600



Sanyo VTC-9100A



Magnavox 8200



Sony SL-8600



Panasonic PV-1000



Sylvania VC-2450

SONY BETAMAX

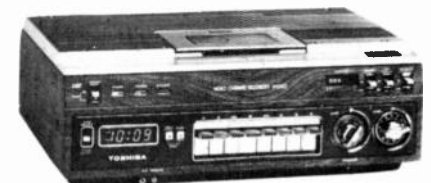
Sony Corp. of America
 9 West 57th St.
 New York, N.Y. 10019

SL-8600

Model SL-8600
Price \$1,095
Dimensions 18¾H x 7¼W x 16¼D
Format Betamax
Tape width ½"
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 45 dB
Audio response 50 Hz to 8 kHz, ±3dB
Audio S/N 40 dB
Audio flutter 3%
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning No
Editing/pause Yes
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera No
Color camera No



Philco V-1000



Toshiba V-5318



Quasar MA-5000



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Format Betamax
Tape width $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 240 lines
Video S/N 42 dB
Audio response 50 Hz to 8 kHz, ± 3 dB
Audio S/N 42 dB
Automatic timer Built-in
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Pause only
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup No
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera No
Color camera Optional (\$1,700, Model IK12)
Features Audio dubbing (voice over pix); built-in remote pause

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Capability Color; B/W
Half-speed No
Resolution 250 lines ± 20 monochrome; 240 lines ± 10 color
Video S/N 40 dB
Audio response 50 Hz to 80 kHz, ± 3 dB
Automatic timer Yes
Off-air tuning Yes
Editing/pause Yes
Monitor CRT No
TV hookup Yes
Battery power No
Slow-motion No
Stop-motion No
B&W camera Optional (\$395, Model JC500)
Color camera Optional (\$2,895, Model VCS150S)



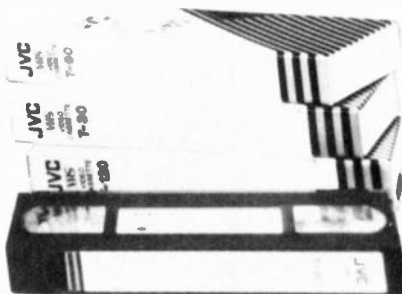
Akai VK-30



AmpeX L-250



Fuji T-60 and T-120



JVC T-30, T-60, and T-120

Raw Video Tape

AKAI
Akai America, Ltd.
2139 E. Del Amo Blvd.
Compton, Calif. 90224

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
VK-30	$\frac{1}{2}$ -in. Cassette (black & white)	30 min.	Ferric oxide	\$18.00
VTC-25C	$\frac{1}{4}$ -in. Reel (color)	26 min.	Ferric oxide	\$13.00

AMPEX
Ampex Corp.
401 Broadway
Redwood City, Calif. 94063

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
L-250	Beta	60 min.	Ferric oxide	\$13.49
L-500	Beta	120 min.	Ferric oxide	\$16.95

BASF
BASF Systems, Inc.
Crosby Dr.
Bedford, Mass. 01730

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
L-500	Beta	120 min.	Super chrome	\$16.95
L-750	Beta	180 min.	Super chrome	\$20.95
L-60	VHS	60 min.	Super chrome	\$17.95
L-120	VHS	120 min.	Super chrome	\$24.95

CURTIS MATHES
Curtis Mathes Sales Co.
One Curtis Mathes Parkway
Athens, Texas 75751

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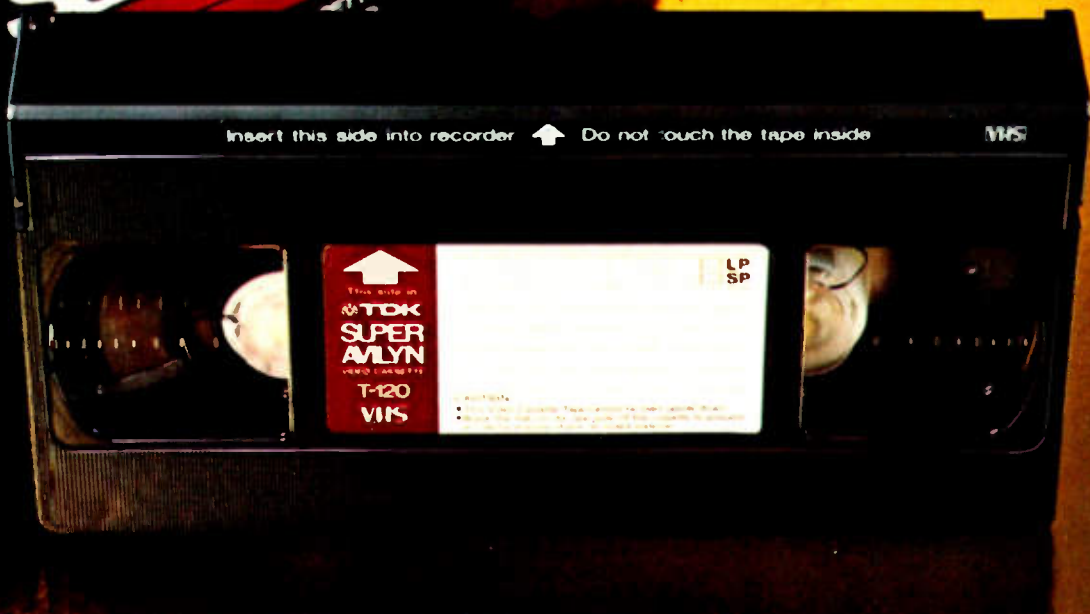
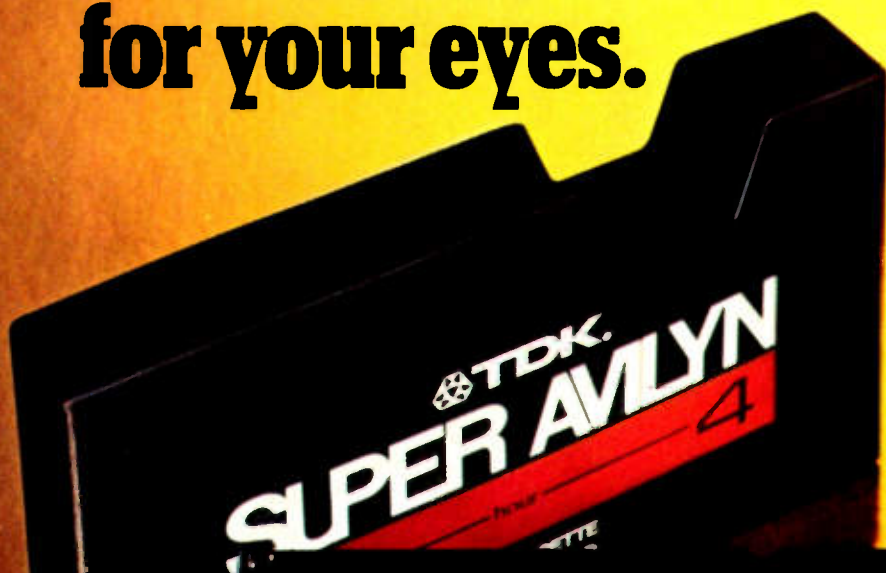
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T-120	VHS	120 min.	Beridox	\$28.50

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Batavia, N.Y. 14020

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
SC-2100	VHS	60 min.	Ferric oxide	\$17.95
(T-60)				
SC-2101	VHS	120 min.	Ferric oxide	\$24.95

SONY BETAMAX
Sony Corp. of America
9 West 57th St.
New York, N.Y. 10019

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L-205V	Beta	60 min.	Chrome	\$12.45
L-500V	Beta	120 min.	Chrome	\$16.95
L-750V	Beta	180 min.	Chrome	\$20.95

SYLVANIA
GTE Consumer Electronics
700 Ellicott St.
Batavia, N.Y. 14020

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
SC-2100	VHS	60 min.	Ferric oxide	\$17.95
SC-2101	VHS	120 min.	Ferric oxide	\$24.95
(T-120)				

TDK
TDK Electronics Corp.
755 Eastgate Blvd.
Garden City, N.Y. 11803

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
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L-500	Beta	60 min.	Chrome-compat. ferric oxide	\$16.95
VK-125	VHS	60 min.	Chrome-compat. ferric oxide	\$17.95
VK-250	VHS	120 min.	Chrome-compat. ferric oxide	\$24.95

TOSHIBA
Toshiba America, Inc.
280 Park Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10017

Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
L-250	Beta	60 min.	Chrome	\$12.95
L-500	Beta	120 min.	Chrome	\$16.95
L-750	Beta	180 min.	Chrome	\$20.95

ZENITH
Zenith Radio Corp.
1000 Milwaukee Ave.
Glenview, Ill. 60025

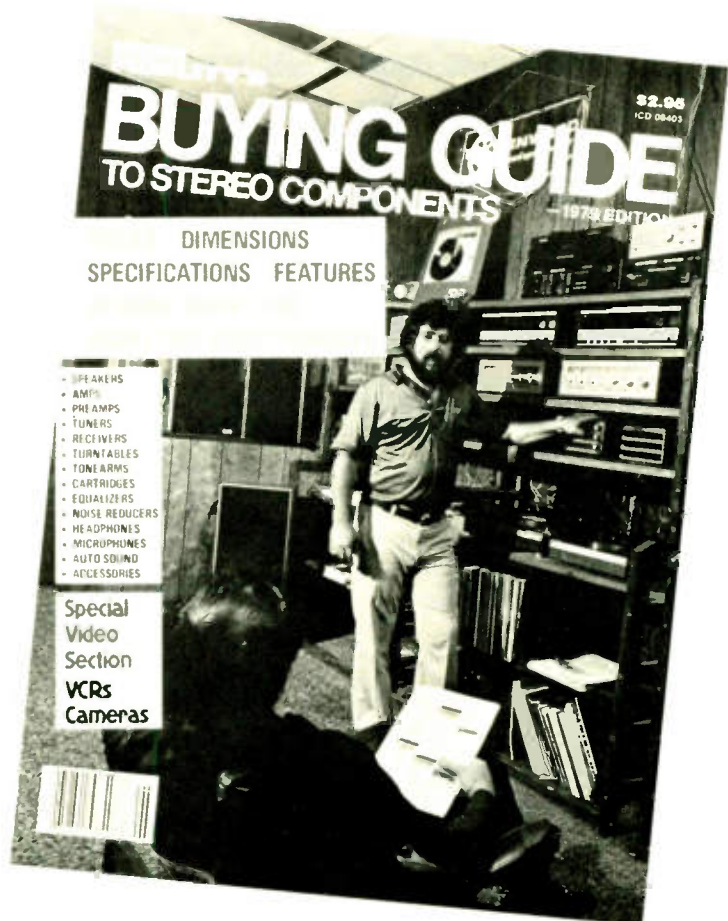
Tape Name	Format	Playing Time	Magnetic Coating	Price
L-500	Beta	120 min.	Chrome	\$16.95
L-750	Beta	180 min.	Chrome	\$20.95

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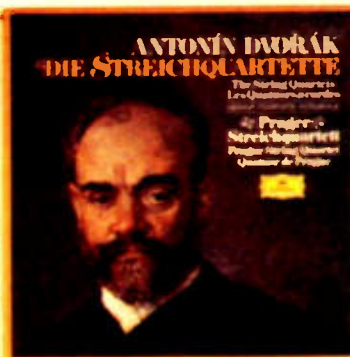


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The Eleventh Annual High Fidelity International Record Critics Awards

BEETHOVEN:
Sonatas for Violin
and Piano (10).
Itzhak Perlman,
Vladimir Ashkenazy.
LONDON
CSA 2501 (5).



DVOŘÁK:
Quartets for Strings
(complete).
Prague Quartet.
DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON
2740 177 (12).
Some of these
performances are
available in the
U.S. on single discs.

JANÁČEK:
Kátya Kabanová.
Elisabeth Soderstrom,
Petr Dvorský,
Charles Mackerras.
LONDON
OSA 12109 (2).



VERDI:
Simon Boccanegra.
Mirella Freni,
José Carreras,
Piero Cappuccilli,
José van Dam,
Nicolai Ghiaurov,
Claudio Abbado.
DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON
2709 071 (3).

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Peter Cossé, *Austria*
Edward Greenfield, *England*
Harry Halbreich, *France*
Ingo Harden, *Germany*
Alfred Hoffman, *Romania*
Leonard Marcus, *U.S.A.*
Bengt Pleijel, *Sweden*

Nominating Committee

John Ardoin, *Dallas Morning News, U.S.A.*
José-Luis Perez de Arteaga, *Revista Musical Ritmo, Spain*
Luigi Bellingardi, *Nuova Revista Musicale Italiana, Italy*
Milton Caine, *American Record Guide, U.S.A.*
Dominique Chouet, *La Tribune de Genève, Switzerland*
Peter Cossé, *Salzburger Nachrichten and Fono Forum, Austria*
John Crabbe, *Hi-Fi News & Record Review, England*
Staff of *Diapason, France*
Marcel Doisy, *Revue des Disques, Belgium*
Thor Eckert, *Christian Science Monitor, U.S.A.*
Edward Greenfield, *Guardian and Gramophone, England*
Harry Halbreich, *Harmonie, France*
David Hamilton, *Nation, U.S.A.*
Ingo Harden, *HiFi Stereophonie and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany*
Paul Hertelendy, *Oakland Tribune, U.S.A.*
Staff of *HiFi Stereophonie, Germany*
Staff of *HIGH FIDELITY, U.S.A.*
Antony Hodgson, *Records and Recording, England*
Alfred Hoffman, *Muzica and Romania Literara, Romania*
Roger Hofmans, *Spectator, Belgium*
Shirō Horii, *Stereo Geijutsu, Japan*
Jan de Kruijff, *Disk, Netherlands*
Robert Layton, *BBC and Gramophone, England*
Robert C. Marsh, *Chicago Sun-Times, U.S.A.*
Umberto Masini, *Musica, Italy*
Bengt Pleijel, *Musikrevy, Sweden*
Wolfgang Seifert, *Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Germany*
Albert de Sutter, *Gazet van Antwerpen, Belgium*
Ken Terry, *Cashbox, U.S.A.*
Hewell Tircuit, *San Francisco Chronicle, U.S.A.*
Kenji Tsumori, *Asahi Shimbun, Japan*
Michael Walsh, *San Francisco Examiner, U.S.A.*
Daniel Webster, *Philadelphia Inquirer, U.S.A.*
Tilden Wells, *Columbus Dispatch, U.S.A.*
Gerhard Wienke, *Süddeutscher Rundfunk, Germany*
Ornella Zanuso, *Discoteca, Italy*
Dimiter Zenginov, *Bulgarska Musica, Bulgaria*

Other Nominated Recordings

BACH: Brandenburg Concertos (6), S. 1046–51. Leonhardt Consort. ABC CLASSICS/SEON AB 67020 (2).

BEETHOVEN: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra (5). Alfred Brendel, Bernard Haitink. PHILIPS 6767 002 (5).

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano, Nos. 28–32. Maurizio Pollini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 072 (3).

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (9). Herbert von Karajan. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2740 172 (8).

BEETHOVEN: Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120. Alfred Brendel. PHILIPS 9500 381.

BRAHMS: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B flat, Op. 83. Maurizio Pollini, Claudio Abbado. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 790.

BRAHMS: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 77. Itzhak Perlman, Carlo Maria Giulini. ANGEL S 37286.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 5, in B flat. Herbert von Karajan. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 101 (2).

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 9, in D minor. Carlo Maria Giulini. ANGEL S 37287.

DVOŘÁK: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 33. Sviatoslav Richter, Carlos Kleiber. ANGEL S 37239.

GRANADOS: Goyescas. Alicia de Larrocha. LONDON CS 7009.

HAYDN: Orlando paladino. Arleen Auger, George Shirley, Benjamin Luxon, Antal Dorati. PHILIPS 6707 029 (4).

MOZART: La Clemenza di Tito. Janet Baker, Yvonne Minton, Stuart Burrows, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 6703 079 (3).

MUSSORGSKY: Boris Godunov. Martti Talvela, Bozena Kinasz, Nicolai Gedda, Jerzy Semkow. ANGEL SDLX 3844 (4).

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30. Andrei Gavrilov, Alexander Lazarof. MELODIYA/EURODISC 28354KK. Not available in the U.S.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30. Vladimir Horowitz, Eugene Ormandy. RCA RED SEAL CRL 1-2633.

SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 944. Carlo Maria Giulini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 882.

SIBELIUS: Symphonies (7). Colin Davis. PHILIPS 6709 011 (5).

VARÈSE: Amériques; Arcana; Ionisation. Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 34552.

VERDI: La Traviata. Ileana Cotrubas, Plácido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, Carlos Kleiber. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 103 (2).

WALTON: Belshazzar's Feast. Benjamin Luxon, Georg Solti. LONDON OS 26525.

BENITA VALENTE: Song Recital (Mozart, Wolf, Schubert, Brahms). Richard Goode. DESMAR DSM 1010.

Judgment at Salzburg

by Leonard Marcus

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA—For the first time since we launched these annual awards eleven years ago, two albums won on the first ballot. To explain what this means, perhaps I should briefly outline our procedure.

We poll our nominating committee, composed of a cross-section of the world's major record critics and record-journal editors, asking them to name twenty favorite albums released for the first time during the twelve months ending May 1. We tabulate these ballots to get a final list that represents the international critical community's choices of the year's best recordings. Since a worthy recording may not have been distributed widely enough to make the finals by this process, each of our judges may add one.

It is from this list that the judges select the best of the best. (For nine years we met in collaboration with the Montreux Music Festival, last year with the Berlin Festival, and this year with the cooperation of the Salzburg Festival.) On the first ballot, we vote for three recordings. If one appears on a majority of ballots, it is declared a winner. Seldom does an album win so early in the deliberations, and it was surprising when both Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová* (Elisabeth Söderström in the title role and the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Charles Mackerras) and the complete Beethoven violin sonatas (performed by Itzhak Perlman and Vladimir Ashkenazy) won majorities.

I was enthusiastic about them—both, incidentally, from Decca/London. The Beethoven set is easily the best available, considering the virtuoso performances (I should warn you that I am a rabid fan of the old Heifetz set), the musical thinking, and the sound; it is arguably the best complete set ever made. The *Káťa* album could—should—by itself make this Czech opera part of the standard international repertory. Also, not only is it the first authentic recording, but as our new French judge and expert on Czech music, Harry Halbreich, pointed out, it makes all sorts of subtle instrumental details audible—a hushed viola d'amore, for instance—that are lost in the opera house. (David Hamilton made a similar point in his review in these pages last January.) So much for the theory that the highest accolade one can give a recording is always that it sounds like a live performance.

Harry, by the way, may be the most international of us all. A contributor to every issue of the French record journal *Harmonie* since the first, he was born in Germany of a German father and an English mother forty-seven years ago, was raised in Switzerland, and now lives in Belgium while working and teaching five days a week in France. Harry organizes contemporary-music festivals and has written a book about the twentieth-century Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů. He confessed to us that on similar deliberating bodies he is generally considered a pain in the neck; indeed, at one point he seemed about to walk out on us because of the unadventurous makeup of our final list (certainly the most conservative we have ever had). All in all, I don't see how we ever got along without him. A superb addition to our panel, as was the young Austrian, Peter Cossé.

Back to the voting: After the first ballot, I was ready to call it a day. But most of the judges felt otherwise. There seemed to be great sympathy for two DG albums, the Scala-derived *Simon Boccanegra* and the complete string quartets of Dvořák by the Prague Quartet. When our Romanian judge, Alfred Hoffman, pointed out that the Verdi masterpiece was unknown to much of the music world—that he had never heard it before listening to the present album!—and that the exceptionally fine recording should, along with the opera itself, be brought to international attention, enough votes were garnered to take it across the finish line.

The twelve-record Dvořák set presented its own problem. It contains not only fourteen string quartets, but a muted *Andante appassionato*, two waltzes, a fragment, and *Cypresses*, all scored for string quartet. Yet only the better-known quartets are available in the United States, and no one argued that these performances are the finest on record. They are, in fact, a bit rough, although some of the judges expressed a preference for this type of Slavic playing in music by the Czech composer. But the previously unknown, primarily early works! If you haven't heard them (and you probably haven't), you are in for a wonderful surprise when DG decides to release them here in these lively performances by the Prague Quartet. (At least I trust that's a when, not an if.)

In the end, both albums received the required number of votes, and the majority of judges also decided to award them grand prizes, equal to the Beethoven and Janáček recordings. "What a present we are making to the Czech people," Harry interjected at this point, alluding to the two albums of Czech music by predominantly Czech artists, "on the tenth anniversary of the Russian invasion of their country."

We are also the judges of the Koussevitzky International Record Award, given annually for a premiere recording of an orchestral work (at least sixteen instruments) by a living composer. While record companies once were relatively adventurous in issuing contemporary orchestral works—granted, usually with the financial backing of foundations or other patrons—this year seemed to hold slim pickings indeed. The only recording that came close to competing with Jesús Villa Rojo's *Formas y fases* was Roger Sessions' cantata *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd*, with Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra on New World Records. John Corigliano's oboe concerto on RCA, which begins like an orchestra tuning up, attracted some. The most unusual candidate, and one that would have been a strong contender if it had maintained the interest of its beginning, was the RCA recording of the symphonic suite John Williams made of his music for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Before disbanding, the judges voted to recommend to the KIRA people in New York that the official name of the award be modified to honor the gentle, strong-willed lady who died last January and who did even more than her husband to establish its international significance. Upon my return to the States, I reported the judges' wishes and the prize will henceforth be the Serge and Olga Koussevitzky International Record Award. "SOKIRA," our Spanish judge and this year's chairman, José-Luis Perez de Arteaga, pronounced the acronym. "It will sound Japanese. But it's worth it."

The Judges Present the Awards

Margot Handtke, once
Richard Strauss's
secretary, accepts
the Decca/London
awards: for
Katya Kabanova
from Harry
Halbreich and
for the Beethoven
Violin Sonatas
from José-Luis
Pérez de Arteaga.



Ingo Harden presents
the prize for the
Dvořák String Quartets
album to DG's
Claudia Hamann

and Alfred Hoffman
does the same
for DG's Simon
Boccanegra.



Representing Czechoslovakia,
Prague's Dr. Leo Jehus
accepts an award from
Leonard Marcus for the
Dvořák set, which was
a joint production of DG
and the Czech firm Supraphon.

At the Salzburg Party



Soprano Lucia Popp, Margot Hedeltke, and Tecca/London producer Christopher Raeburn.



Composer Sir Michael Tippett with Sally Groves, daughter of British conductor Sir George Groves.



Marcus Tecca/London classical product manager, David Rickerby, and Christopher Raeburn.



Judako Bengt Pleijel and Edward Greenfield.



John Edwards, manager of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with Lucia Popp.

Behind The Scenes

Otello 'n' Cav. In August RCA finally realized one of its more talked-about projects of recent years—Verdi's *Otello* conducted by James Levine—and the result should be available as you read this; a late fall rush release was planned. Amid *Otello* sessions (in London's Walthamstow Town Hall), the *Otello* and *Desdemona*, Plácido Domingo and Renata Scotto, temporarily became Mascagni's *Turiddu* and Santuzza for RCA's new *Cavalleria rusticana*, also with the National Philharmonic conducted by Levine. Sherrill Milnes, the Jago in *Otello*, was not available for *Cav* (his time was well filled with a run of Salzburg Don Giovanni and his EMI remake of *Rigoletto*—with Beverly Sills as Gilda, Alfredo Kraus as the Duke, Mignon Dunn as Maddalena, Samuel Ramey as Sparafucile, and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Julius Rudel), and so the Alfio is Pablo Elvira. Filling out the *Cav* cast, Levine had the excellent mezzos from his Met cast last season: Isola Jones as Lola and Jean Kraft as Mamma Lucia. Richard Mohr produced both recordings.

Scotto and Domingo, incidentally, had been scheduled the month before to record *Cav*'s twin, Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*, for EMI with Riccardo Muti and the Philharmonia, but Domingo—who was in the midst of a run of *Otellos* in Paris—found himself over-committed and withdrew. (Muti is certainly having his problems of late; at last word his Verdi Requiem, re-scheduled for completion in June, is still incomplete.)

Monsieur Domingo. Domingo had other business in Paris last summer: In June he taped the title role in Gounod's *Faust* for EMI, with Mirella Freni as Marguerite, Nicolai Ghiurov as Méphistophélès (his second), Thomas Allen as Valentin, and Opéra forces under Georges Prêtre. In addition, Domingo seems to have become DG's house French tenor, with such projects in various stages as *Carmen* with Claudio Abbado (due for release shortly), Berlioz' *Damnation de Faust* with Daniel Barenboim (see our June report), Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila* with Elena Obraztsova and

Barenboim, Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Massenet's *Werther*. Latest word on the latter has Teresa Berganza as Charlotte and Franz Grundheber as Albert, with Seiji Ozawa conducting.

... and Mlle. Freni, M. Ghiurov. EMI's other *Faust* principals (none of them, note, French) also had other commitments on behalf of French opera. EMI itself has been talking seriously about recording Freni as another Gounod heroine, Mireille.

Meanwhile Ghiurov, who in recent years has made no secret of his desire to record the title role in Massenet's *Don Quichotte*, has found a taker in Decca/London; sessions were scheduled for Geneva in September, with Gabriel Bacquier as Sancho Panza and Régine Crespin as Dulcinée. The Polish conductor Kazimierz Kord, familiar from a varied repertory at the Met, records his first complete opera; the orchestra is the Suisse Romande.

The other Otello. Speaking of *Otello* (as you may recall we were some time back), José Carreras has now followed his illustrious countryman Domingo in taking up the part of the Moor—but fortunately not (at least not yet) Verdi's. Philips was set to make the long-awaited premiere recording of Rossini's *Otello* in September, with Frederica von Stade as *Desdemona* and Jesús López-Cobos conducting.

Philips' Verdi. In July, Carreras added a more standard hero to his Philips discography: Riccardo in Verdi's *Ballo in maschera*. His colleagues are Montserrat Caballé (Amelia), Ingvar Wixell (Renato), and Sona Ghazarian (Oscar); Colin Davis conducts Covent Garden forces.

This foray into Verdian "standard rep" should not be taken as any lessening of Philips' commitment to the pre-*Rigoletto* operas. Now awaiting release is *La Battaglia di Legnano* (with Katia Ricciarelli, Carreras, Matteo Manuguerra, Nicola Ghiuselev, and Austrian Radio forces under Lamberto Gardelli); next in line is the intriguing and still hardly known opera that immediately preceded *Rigoletto*: *Stiffelio*.

Britten futures. As David Hamilton noted last month in his feature review "Rounding Out the Britten Legacy," Decca/London's active championing has produced a remarkably full and satisfying documentation of the composer's work. But it may be even more

(Continued on page 126)

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CIRCLE 35 ON PAGE 127

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Separates for Your Car

by Robert Angus

In increasing numbers, names associated with home componentry crop up on similar units designed for the road. But, along with its benefits, the car stereo boom has brought the consumer a few problems.

HAD YOU WANTED a stereo tape system for your car a year or two ago, chances are it would have cost \$100 and you'd have shopped for it at your unfriendly local discount store—or at Al's Tape City or someplace like that. Well, big changes came to car stereo last summer. For one thing, the cost of a single loudspeaker can approach the total cost of last year's system. For another, you're likely (if wise) to use as much time shopping for and considering options for a car system as you would for a home system. An additional difference is that, rather than shopping with Al and his ilk, you're apt to patronize the same sort of store where you bought the home rig. And to make you feel right at home when you get there, you'll find such familiar brands as Jensen, Pioneer, Marantz, KLH, Advent, Mitsubishi, Ultralinear, Visonik, Sound Concepts, and EPI.

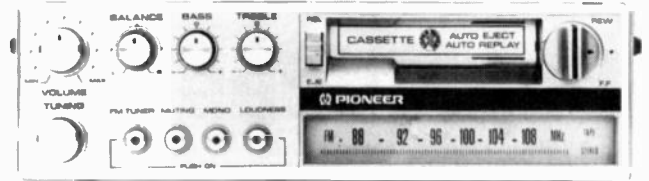
The marketplace for car stereo has become a veritable beehive, swarming with new components manufactured by companies that have traditionally produced components for the home; long-time suppliers of car stereo equipment—Audiovox and Kraco, Craig and Clarion, Roadstar and AFS/Kriket—have hitched their wagons to components too. And when mobile audiophiles talk about components, they mean just that—woofers, tweeters, acoustic-suspension speaker systems, equalizers, power amps, tape decks, tuners, and even digital time-delay systems. Even the combination AM/FM/tape/amp/preamp units so ubiquitous in car stereo today boast outputs of 20 to 50 watts per channel—say, around 15 dBW—compared to 2 to 5 watts (10 dB less) last year. Through the judicious application of money, the interior of your two-

year-old Malibu can be converted into an acoustic likeness, if not of Carnegie Hall, then at least of your listening room.

While the world of car stereo may resemble the world of components you're used to, things aren't exactly the same. Since the passenger compartment of your car is considerably smaller than your home listening environment, it theoretically requires less acoustic power for a satisfactory listening level. But road noise, wind noise, and the mechanical noise of your car can, when you roll down the windows during the summertime and start hitting 55 mph, reach 80 to 90 dB—the latter level representing the federal limit for noisy factories. Whatever the wisdom of overriding such noise levels—at least potentially fatiguing to the ear—with even louder music, manufacturers are equipping you to do so—and resorting to ever more powerful amplifiers as the means.

It's worth noting that the rules governing specs for home equipment don't always apply to car systems, so while the numbers may look the same, they may not mean the same thing. (See "Spooks in the Specs?", page 90.) In the case of power output, for example, the Federal Trade Commission has set forth exactly how measurements shall be taken and how power must be described in advertising and spec sheets. That rule doesn't apply to car stereo, which leaves each manufacturer on his own—and on his honor. Some use the "rms" continuous power approved by the FTC, together with data on total harmonic distortion and power bandwidth. Others may specify continuous power while forgetting about bandwidth or distortion. Still others combine the outputs of both channels, apparently doubling the power ratings of their units. And there are manufacturers who use music power, peak power, and other tricks outlawed by the FTC for home equipment to make their power ratings as impressive as possible. Careful readers

Robert Angus, whose "Auto Sound" column appears in our quarterly sister publication Stereo, will initiate a bi-monthly column on the same subject in HF next month.



will note that the power specs given in this article come from the manufacturers and cannot always be compared directly with those supplied for home components.

Electronics

There are two schools of thought on organizing electronics into so-called head ends: The get-it-all-together school believes in incorporating everything into a single unit, but using the very best ingredients; the component-purist approach prefers separate tuner and tape deck, power amp, and equalizer, plus separate woofers, midrange drivers, and tweeters.

Marantz and Jensen, two of this season's entries into car stereo electronics, have several all-in-one models. The Marantz CAR-410, a 20-watter with a sendust head in the cassette deck, a quartz-locked tuner with digital frequency readout, and a clock display, is priced at \$340. Two less expensive models, the CAR-350 and CAR-300, offer somewhat less in terms of features and performance but fit a wider range of cars. Jensen claims that its R-410 (cassette) and R-310 (cartridge) systems are among the world's smallest. Each costs \$300 and delivers 5 watts per channel. The R-420 and R-320 are biamplified 10-watters costing \$370 each. All four have Dolby decoders and are for in-dash use.

The Sanyo FT-1650, a \$370 AM/FM outfit with cassette deck and 28-watt amplifier, also includes a digital quartz clock, an elapsed timer, and variable sensitivity. Concord's AM/FM/cassette HP-350 claims a power output of 20 watts, tape frequency response of 40 to 15,000 Hz, a Dolby circuit, and bass and treble boost/cut of ± 10 dB, at a price of \$250. Five pushbuttons for station selection stand out on the faceplate of Clarion's PE-751A, a \$340 unit with a Dolby cassette deck.

Then there's Grundig, with the GCV-2700, a \$548 AM/FM/cassette setup containing an amplifier section rated at 20 watts per channel and designed for in-dash installation. Panasonic's in-dash CQ-8520 not only has digital readout of FM frequencies and a built-in digital clock, but an electronic tuning system with a memory that allows

you to preselect up to six AM and six FM stations. The amp is rated at 25 watts, and the cassette deck reverses automatically. Motorola's latest is the 8-watt Model TC-887AX (\$230), whose cassette transport can be run forward or backward to stop automatically at the nearest blank space on the tape.

A new development this year is the so-called combination preamp—a tuner/tape-deck combo plus a low-power amplifier designed for use with an external amplifier of much higher power. In some cases, the effect is no more than that of adding a power booster to an old-style tuner/deck/amp whose output falls in the under-5-watt range—which means that the booster amp magnifies not only the signal from the head end, but also the distortion. In designs specifically intended for mating, however, the result generally is high output power with low distortion. Pioneer may not have invented the idea, but its KE-2000, priced at \$270, is a perfect example. The tuner features a pulse-synthesizer frequency generator and preselection of five AM and five FM stations; the cassette deck has automatic replay and specs like frequency response of 30 to 12,000 Hz and less than 0.25% flutter. The unit accepts any power amp.

Marantz and Jensen have based their top-of-the-line models on this idea. The Jensen R-430 and R-330, priced at \$470, are essentially Models 410 and 310 with add-on 25-watt power amps. The Marantz CAR-420, at \$400, comes with an amp rated at 40 watts continuous total output into 4 ohms; otherwise it is virtually identical to the single-piece Model 410. Royal Sound's RS-2550, for \$400, claims tuner sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts and adjacent-channel selectivity at 95 dB, with total harmonic distortion for both the tuner and the cassette deck of 0.1%; the Dolby circuit is built in. The Audiovox LD-700/CP-750 is a two-piece system (AM/FM/cassette and power amplifier) selling for \$300.

Power amps range in price from about \$40 for Pioneer's GM-12, at 6 watts per channel, to \$495 for Laser Acoustics' 250 watts per channel. Some amps, like Automatic Radio's new 40-watter, include an equalizer; others, like Sparkomatic's GE-



Three basic approaches to in-auto componentry are discernible here. Clarion's matched modules (far left) include an in-dash tuner/cassette "front end," an equalizer/power-booster unit that may be mounted under the dash or in the glove compartment, and a three-way loudspeaker panel designed for rear-deck mounting. The all-in-one Pioneer unit bears an obvious resemblance to home components and mounts below the dash. So does the Sanyo (this page), though it retains much more of the traditional automotive styling elements.

500, feature visual monitoring of output (take care it doesn't distract you). Kraco's entry is the 120-watt KE-7, with a seven-band equalizer and a price tag of \$160. Recoton, a name new to car stereo, recently introduced the SE-50 graphic equalizer and power amplifier. The Fujitsu Ten PA-150F is a four-channel model rated at 20 watts continuous power per channel into an 8-ohm load, 20 to 40,000 Hz, with total harmonic distortion of 0.7%, for a mere \$152.

Actually, that's only one of a whole family of car components from this relatively unknown company. The roster includes a component cassette deck priced at \$195: the SP-710, with a rated frequency response of 30 to 14,000 Hz, flutter of less than 0.3%, signal-to-noise ratio of greater than 50 dB, and automatic reverse. The companion tuner is the AT-7831, an AM/FM model priced at \$202 (a virtually identical FM-only model, the AT-372/EX-1, costs about \$20 less), which uses phase-locked-loop circuitry and an FET front end. The control amp of the line can handle up to four different program sources and incorporates bass and treble controls, a level attenuator, and a dynamic sound system, all for \$104.

And Fujitsu Ten isn't the only company offering such an assortment. Clarion's EQB-300, an equalizer-booster with 30 watts of output and light-emitting diodes to show power output of each channel, costs \$170. Sound Concepts offers a time-delay system, the Concert Machine, for \$300. According to the company, the system takes the ambience information from the source and distributes it throughout the car's interior, using two built-in 10-watt amplifiers to power the back channels. Fujitsu Ten's answer is a \$180 model without amplifiers, the RV-130. Its controls are similar to those on the Concert Machine.

Mitsubishi is not yet a familiar name to car stereo shoppers, but the company hopes to change that with a line that includes an under-dash FM tuner, a power amp, two cassette decks (one with auto eject, the other with automatic reverse), and speakers. Royal Sound's Custom Series includes a \$400 tuner/cassette deck, the RS-2550, which can be used with either of two power amplifiers: the

RA-4000, a 40-watter selling for \$140, and the \$300 RA-6000, claiming 60 watts. Panasonic, Craig, and a number of others also offer component tuners, preamps, equalizers, power amps, control centers, and other electronic components.

Tape Decks

In the early days of car stereo, about thirteen years ago, virtually all of the tape decks in use were of the cartridge type, and as recently as eighteen months ago cartridge decks outsold car cassette players by about five to one. By this past summer, the ratio had shifted to more like 1:1; in so-called hi-fi car installations, the ratio was more like 4:1 in favor of cassettes. In fact, when it comes to decks without tuners or control centers it's hard to find cartridge equipment at all. What has also happened is that the best car cassette decks today feature many of the technological improvements that grace home tape players—most notably Dolby noise reduction, equalization adjustment, ferrite and sendust heads, and the like. The resulting fidelity compares favorably with that of car FM.

Some of the new combination units incorporating cartridge decks also feature the Dolby circuit and one or more other improvements (high and low filters, tape-selector switch, and so on), but these are very recent developments. Uher and Nakamichi set the performance standards with the former's CR-210 and the latter's 350 (and 250) a couple of years back. Now manufacturers like Fujitsu Ten and Mitsubishi hope to make their mark with similar products. If you're in the market for a quality cartridge deck and are willing to settle for one built into a complete head-end system, there are plenty of models to choose among (from Pioneer, Sanyo, Audiovox, and many others), but the preponderance of new decks are cassette types.

Speakers

If your idea of a car stereo speaker is a 5-inch full-range model complete with whizzer cone for the highs, you're living in the past. Car speaker systems these days can cost almost as much as home

Automotive separates come in various forms. The Panasonic system (this page) is assembled from three individual components: a stereo FM/AM tuner, a booster-amp/ tone-control unit, and an eight-track deck. The uncompromisingly home-style Marantz is a combination graphic equalizer, 60-watt amplifier, and ambience simulator intended for under-dash or glove-compartment mounting. Craig (far right) puts its controls on an under-dash unit, separates the power amplifier so that it can be stored in a nook such as the trunk.



systems and offer comparable sophistication. When it comes to challenging the fidelity available at home, the basic speaker today is some variation on the ADS 2002—which, at \$225, continues to be a strong favorite among the audio mobiles. But it has literally dozens of imitators, many of which claim to offer essentially the same performance for as little as a third of the cost.

The ADS 2002, in case you're not familiar with it, is an acoustic-suspension system containing a 4-inch woofer and 1-inch dome tweeter in an enclosure measuring 4¼ by 5¼ by 6⅞ inches. Braun, JVC, Walter Odemer, and Ultralinear are only a few of the manufacturers that have introduced speakers based on this format. Sanyo's SP-795 is typical of

the self-contained units. It features a 4-inch woofer and separate 3-inch hard-dome tweeter in a black cabinet. It can be biamped and has a passive crossover for conventional use. Rated maximum power handling capability is 35 watts continuous, and the price is \$50.

Some models offer the speaker either with an acoustic-suspension enclosure or naked; on a baffle board for rear-deck mounting in the car. Generally the portion of the system below the baffle board has been designed to fit the 6-by-9-inch oval cutouts provided in some cars.

Three Boston-area makers of component speakers—EPI, Advent, and KLH—have taken a different tack. EPI, the first to market, set its engineers the

Car Stereo Ripoffs: Presale Spooks in the Specs?

by David Hajdu

Some manufacturers of car stereo equipment are running a numbers game. The numbers—publicized performance specifications for amplifiers—are meeting with criticism as inaccurate, misleading, and unethical:

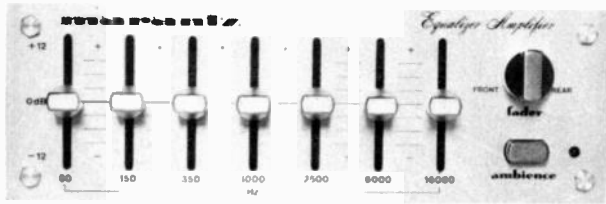
- One major manufacturer claims its high-end amp delivers 50 watts per channel at 0.07% THD. But in independent testing, only 14 watts produced the rated level of distortion. At 50 watts, THD rose to 8%.
- One amplifier rated at 40 watts per channel required 17½ volts for peak output in testing, while most 12-volt American cars put out just 13.5 to 14 volts on the road. At 13.8 volts, output is only 18 watts.

David Hajdu is managing editor of the trade publication Consumer Electronics Monthly.

Richard Coe, engineer for Audio Craft and former designer for Audiobile, has tested car stereo equipment for several West Coast companies and calls the confusion and ambiguity of current amplifier specs "a travesty." He recently tested a new amp rated at 125 watts per channel; it delivered 35. "That's typical of what's been going on in this industry," he says. "Some of the equipment matches its specs, and some almost makes it, but a lot of stuff doesn't even come close."

"But the biggest problem is that cars don't have enough voltage to produce the rated amplifier wattage. Preamps may boost the voltage, but distortion will become intolerable at a fraction of peak output. By the time you get enough power out of the radio it will be clipping like hell."

Lauren Davies, vice president of marketing of Craig, calls specs "the major problem in the industry today. Some reputable companies double and triple their specs; many manufacturers are using maximum output ratings at intolerable distortion levels without any qualifications. How can the public compare all those senseless numbers?" Ed Alexander, technical supervisor for Fosgate, says, "Specs aren't realistic because they don't match the conditions under which the products operate." And, according to Gene Erskine, national sales manager for Orovox Sound Electronics,



task of scaling down its Model 70 bookshelf system to fit the 6-by-9 cutout. Using the same woofer and tweeter, the engineers produced the LS-70, a two-way speaker mounted on an oval plate. Advent came up with its EQ-1, a similar product selling for \$180 per pair including integral power amplifiers with special equalization for the car. A third new type of one-piece speaker system is the super-coaxial and Triaxial type developed several years ago by Jensen: The same magnet powers both the woofer and the tweeter, while providing greater dispersion of high frequencies than is possible with conventional coaxial design. That's essentially the idea behind two Triaxials Jensen introduced last summer and three KLH models. Since

then, there has been a proliferation of look-alikes.

You don't need a conductor's ear to tell the difference in sound between these new all-in-ones and even the better models of a year or two ago. The frequency response is wider, the dispersion is broader, and the power-handling capacity generally is much improved. But just as some mobile audiophiles prefer separate electronic components, some opt for separate woofers, midrange drivers, and tweeters, with appropriate electronic crossovers. One advantage of separates is that you can mount them in different locations in the car—the woofers somewhere near the floor (out of the way, where baffling is a minimal problem), the tweeters aimed directly at the front-seat listening area, and

which makes Hercules amplifiers for the car. "The public is getting ripped off." Mike Neel of Shmegg Electronics—manufacturer of the Linear Power line of car amps, preamps, and power supplies—says, "This part of the industry is a mess. Somebody ought to do something about it."

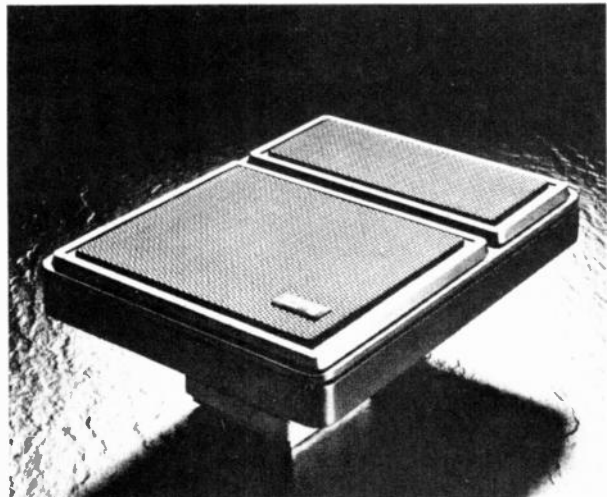
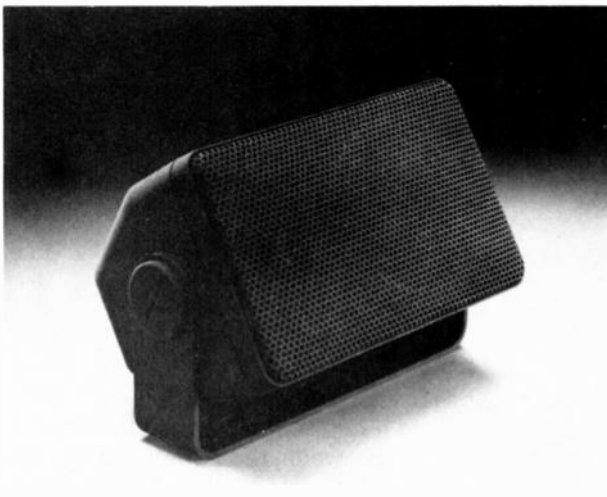
Like who? And what? In May 1974, the Federal Trade Commission promulgated "Regulations on Power Output Claims for Amplifiers Utilized in Home-Entertainment Products," effective the following November. Many in the car stereo industry think the FTC should establish similar standards for mobile entertainment products.

To get such standards, a concerned party must first file a petition with the secretary of the FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection. Staff attorneys would evaluate the petition to "see if anybody feels like doing anything about it," according to one staff attorney, Robert Blacher. The next step in the procedure is recommendation to one of the five bureau commissioners who decide whether or not to promulgate a rule. Any rule would be placed on public record, and hearings would begin, with industry spokesmen being invited to comment. In case of factual disputes, trial-like hearings might follow. All of this can take place, according to the FTC, within a year. But so far, the Bureau claims to have received no petitions for

car-stereo standards, although "incorrectly written" or improperly addressed petitions can die anywhere along the line.

Most suppliers surveyed reluctantly agree that rating standards should be set. Among others, Henry Eberle, president of Visonik of America, and his national sales manager Chris Hartnack seek a self-regulatory association to stave off potential consumer distrust. Several companies already claim to have adapted FTC home-audio standards to specs for their automotive products. "Everybody shies away from government interference," says Davies, "but in a case like this—when there is rampant, flagrant violation way past the point of both the law and common sense—it is certainly time we invite FTC supervision. If the industry can't regulate itself, I guess we need somebody else to." And Fosgate production manager Bill Perry says, "We thought the Feds would have been using FTC audio standards right along to cover our flanks. I wish they would jump in to even things out."

Coe fears that "the FTC will come in and make a mess of things. But I guess you've got to make a mess of things sometimes in order to get them straightened out. Right now, manufacturers are making a killing. They don't want to rock the boat while the fish are jumping in."



the midrange units somewhere in between. Audio-mobile (recently acquired by Advent) and Jandy, two of the earliest manufacturers of auto components, were joined recently by Jensen and Royal Sound. (The latter even offers a \$100 subwoofer system, the RS-6120.) Jensen's offerings include a 6-by-9-inch woofer, a 3½-inch midrange driver, and a 2-inch tweeter. Royal Sound has the RS-6110 High Frequency High Definition Speaker, priced at \$250; the RS-400 1½-inch dome tweeter, priced

at \$80; and the RS-500 5-inch speaker system, which sells for \$200. The Audio Separates line from AFS/Kriket includes tweeters, midrange/bass drivers, and biamped subwoofers that can be selected on a mix-and-match basis with a tuner or an environmental equalizer as control center. System prices start at about \$130.

There are even powered speakers for the car, available from companies like Laser Acoustics, with its \$295 two-way system (with a 6-inch

Car Stereo Ripoffs: Postsale **How to Thwart Thieves**

When the first car stereo units appeared in the mid-1960s, it didn't take long for word to spread along the criminal grapevine that here was a commodity worthy of attention—something of value that was small, easy to conceal, and very easy to rip off from defenseless parked cars. In places like Brooklyn, New York, and Phoenix, Arizona, police departments reckoned that your chances of losing your car tape player were about one in five in any given year. Insurance rates quickly rose to reflect the facts; many auto insurers specifically exempted stereo equipment in their policies.

Then came the CB craze, and suddenly the chances for survival of car stereo equipment improved markedly, although the insurance rates

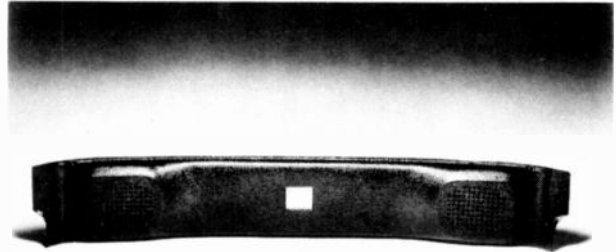
failed to reflect it. The ripoff artists found that CB was easier to sell—and easier to locate in parked cars, thanks to the telltale antennas. With the switch from 23 to 40 channels, however, the nation's thieves were caught just as flat-footed as the CB retailers. Hundreds of thousands of stolen CB radios suddenly became unsalable, and the thieves turned their attention back to snatching pocketbooks and burgling city apartments.

Car component systems are so new that the criminal community so far seems to be unaware of them, but few observers of the contemporary scene expect that situation to last long. If you thought it was bad enough to have a \$60 underdash cassette deck swiped (to say nothing of the damage done to the car during the break-in) while you were shopping at a suburban mall, you're not going to be too crazy about putting \$600 worth of stereo equipment into the same vehicle.

Actually, equipment manufacturers have been giving your problem a lot of thought. These days, the vast bulk of car stereo equipment that *can* fit into a dashboard *does*—making it much more difficult to rip off quickly. Tape decks, radios, and



Automotive loudspeakers, too, come in various forms. Visonik's 5000 (far left), typical of minibox type, mounts on rear deck. Epicure's LS-70 evolved from a home system, mounts in rear-deck cutouts for conventional oval speakers. Jensen door units (left, this page) increase mounting options. Grundig stereo system (below) custom-fits rear decks of six imported cars.



woofer) and a \$495 three-way system (featuring an 8-inch woofer). Powered speakers—or, at least, speakers powered by amplifiers that can be tucked away in the car's trunk—of course save in-dash and under-dash space for those elements that must be there: tuners, tape decks, and the system's operating controls.

So the car stereo business has become a whole new ballgame, and the quality of the sound that you can haul around with you in your car or van

has taken a drastic turn for the better. But the stakes—along with the prices—are higher too. If your purchase is to be a good buy for its intended purposes, it is important for you to understand your needs and desires and tailor the system to meet them, just as in home audio. The fact that established audio companies and their dealers have turned their attention to the car should mean that experienced counsel as well as wider choice are available to the consumer. ●

all-in-one head-end units not only are less noticeable when mounted in the dashboard rather than under it, but can be mounted much more securely (a fact reflected in the cost of installation).

Moreover, it's not necessary for all the equipment to be on display in the passenger compartment. You can, for example, mount the power amplifier in the trunk, while the component speakers are scattered around the interior of the car. An equalizer or tape deck can be mounted in the glove compartment or stored there whenever you leave the car. Those component-type speakers designed to fit the rear-deck cutouts provided by the car maker are virtually immune to ripoff if mounted properly because they don't attract attention and because, in order for the removal to be quick, the thief needs access to your trunk.

If you suspend some of your equipment under the dashboard, you're dramatically increasing your chances of losing it. There are several steps you can take to reduce or eliminate the risk. One is to mount the equipment on a slide tray so that you can remove it quickly and easily. Slide tray sets (a plate with copper shoes that bolts to the under-

side of the dashboard and a companion slide that bolts to the top of the system) cost about \$15 and are available just about everywhere car stereo equipment is sold. They can be locked to discourage theft during short stops, or the tray and deck can be removed and concealed for longer stays or taken indoors overnight.

Another means of protecting yourself is by using an electric pencil to engrave your Social Security number or motor vehicle operator's identification number on each component—and keeping a record of the serial numbers. Local police or your auto insurance agent may be able to lend you the engraving tool; it's all part of a nationwide program called Operation Identification, which may not prevent your equipment from being ripped off in the first place but will make it much easier for you to get it back if the police happen upon it. In addition to these, there are a variety of alarm systems—most in the \$25-\$40 price range—that set off the car horn or a siren if anyone tampers with the electrical system, tries to remove the equipment, or succeeds in breaking into your car.
R.A.



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HiFi-Croctic No. 41 (Xmas Xtic)

by William Petersen

O	1	U	2		W	3	C	4		O	5	R	6		T	7	B	8	N	9	M	10	O	11	W	12	T	13			
V	14			E	15	U	16	B	17	X	18	ZZ	19	C	20	G	21		V	22		T	23	L	24	A	25	R	26		
Z	27			H	28	N	29	E	30	O	31	U	32	D	33	X	34	O	35	R	36	K	37		J	38	V	39	W	40	
P	41	X	42	I	43	U	44		F	45	O	46	Y	47	T	48	R	49	N	50	S	51	C	52	J	53	K	54			
ZZ	55	T	56	U	57	O	58	L	59	O	60	V	61	R	62		A	63	U	64	T	65	H	66	N	67	O	68	W	69	
X	70	G	71	ZZ	72			T	73	I	74	M	75	V	76	Z	77	W	78		B	79	J	80	R	81	A	82	C	83	
O	84	T	85			U	86	E	87	M	88	Z	89	R	90		C	91	H	92	I	93	O	94	W	95	B	96			
U	97	R	98	L	99	O	100	M	101	H	102	D	103	O	104	I	105	F	106	R	107		S	108	W	109	J	110			
F	111	ZZ	112	O	113	K	114	T	115	R	116	A	117	O	118	N	119	U	120	V	121	B	122		O	123	P	124	B	125	
X	126	T	127	W	128	C	129			V	130	R	131	T	132	B	133	O	134	X	135	W	136	O	137	P	138		O	139	
X	140			Z	141	O	142	B	143	V	144	R	145	J	146		U	147	L	148			Q	149		V	150	W	151		
E	152	T	153	X	154	I	155	C	156	R	157	O	158			N	159	G	160	S	161			U	162	Y	163	E	164	H	165
U	166	C	167	R	168	J	169	S	170			T	171	U	172	K	173	A	174	O	175	L	176		U	177	F	178			
ZZ	179	O	180	T	181			H	182	Y	183	B	184	K	185	W	186	U	187	E	188	T	189	V	190	F	191	D	192		
X	193	C	194	D	195			P	196	Q	197	R	198			W	199	O	200	N	201	B	202	E	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. 41 will appear in next month's issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

INPUT	OUTPUT	INPUT	OUTPUT
A St Nicholas was patron of the bankers' _____	82 25 174 117 63	P Traditional end to a full Christmas dinner	41 124 196 138
B Popularized "White Christmas" (full name)	17 133 8 122 79 143 184 202 125 96	Q American cartoonist (1840-1902), coined "Santa Claus" (full name)	58 197 35 113 5 134 89 149 100 158
C Began tradition of the Christmas crèche (abbr and wd.)	167 129 91 52 156 194 20 83 4	R Opera traditional during Advent (3 Ger wds)	131 116 6 107 198 98 36 157 81 90 49 26 168 145 62
D Noble poems set to music	33 195 103 192	S Soprano Moser	51 161 170 108
E Odysseus	30 152 87 203 15 188 164	T Used in Britain as Christmas tree (2 wds)	171 48 115 73 181 85 7 56 13 65 189 132 153 23 127
F Color used for Christmas decorations	191 106 45 111 178	U Steinbeck novel (3 wds)	120 44 162 16 177 64 147 166 57 97 172 2 32 86 187
G Cask	21 71 160	V After <i>The</i> , ballet associated with the Christmas season	121 61 14 130 150 22 144 76 190 39
H Scottish first cousin of the Christmas pudding	102 66 165 28 92 182	W Composer of Word R (init and last name)	151 95 40 136 199 12 69 78 3 109 128 186
I Pen name of English novelist (1819-80), translated D F Strauss's <i>Das Leben Jesu</i>	43 93 74 105 155	X Confederate general (1824-63) (inits and last name)	135 126 18 193 154 42 140 70 34
J Confused	80 110 146 53 169 38	Y Common monogram for Jesus	163 183 47
K She "jes" grewed"	173 114 185 37 54	Z Santa's helper	77 27 141
L French scholar (1823-92), biographer of Jesus	24 59 148 99 176	ZZ "Toot _____", _____ tooth	72 55 112 19 179
M CBS record label	10 101 88 75		
N Burdens with, encumbers	119 159 9 50 29 201 67		
O Religious treatise attributed to Thomas a Kempis (3 wds)	139 104 46 68 137 94 1 175 84 142 60 11 180 200 118 123 31		

Solution to last month's HiFi-Croctic appears on page 7.

James Levine on Verdi and Mozart



Randall Enos

STILL IN HIS MIDTHIRTIES, James Levine can look back on a list of musical achievements that would represent an unlikely aspiration for many an excellent conductor twenty or thirty years his senior. His center of operations is the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, where he was principal conductor for three years before becoming music director in 1976. He has also been music director of the Ravinia Festival, near Chicago, since 1973 and held a similar post from 1974 to 1978 at the May Festival in Cincinnati, the city where he was born in 1943. Apart from an annual engagement at the Salzburg Festival and two or three guest-conducting appearances on each side of the Atlantic every season, these responsibilities represent the sum of his recent activities more or less completely. For unlike most of his colleagues, Levine, who spent six apprentice years (from 1964 to 1970) with George Szell in Cleveland, is totally committed to the artistic value of continuity. Seeing what he regards as a decline in interpretive—though not in technical—standards of orchestral performance over the past two or three decades, he blames it on the itinerant nature of many modern conductors' careers. He has been fortunate, deservedly so, in acquiring two or three firm bases at an unusually early age and wise in allotting at least seven months of each year to the Met alone. And if that emphasis on staying in one place suggests any hint of sloth, the dynamism of a career that includes teaching and piano playing as well as conducting counters it. B.J.

Bernard Jacobson, a former HF contributing editor, has completed a book of interviews, *Conductors on Conducting*, scheduled for publication by Columbia Publishing Company, Inc., early next year. This article is an adaptation of a chapter from that book.

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by Bernard Jacobson

LEVINE: Two kinds of music are the hardest to do: nineteenth-century Italian opera and eighteenth-century symphonic. No matter what difficulties are posed by twentieth-century works, Mahler, Berlioz, the performance practice of baroque music, and so on, for a modern conductor with a modern orchestra the hardest styles are Mozart-Haydn-Schubert on one side and Verdi-Puccini-Mascagni-Giordano on the other. In both cases, it's because the notes are harmonically very simple, because the objective technicalities are few, because the music looks pretty metrical, and yet with all this, everything about the style is utterly intrinsic.

Are we speaking here about the combination of the things that you see in the score and a whole ineffable tradition that has accreted? What do you mean when you say the style is intrinsic?

There's something in these aural phenomena that's very difficult to put into words. But let's assume that one has a very talented musician, a very sensitive human being with a lot of skill. It's easier for him to conduct Mahler than to conduct Verdi. We're now assuming that he has no intrinsic relationship to the style of Verdi as opposed to Mahler; we're saying he's an American. Mahler tells you exactly what to do. The culture from which a Mahler symphony comes is clear, almost tangibly clear, as is the emotional content, the musical material itself. The score is a conductor's road map. Don't misunderstand me—a lot of people miss it. But I was assuming that we're dealing with a very bright, sensitive, talented, perceptive person. Those same perceptions won't help him when he is looking at a Verdi score.

Are you saying that, next to Mahler with all his complications—his complexities and complexes, his clearly present-day consciousness—Verdi is a much more mysterious phenomenon, spiritually and artistically?

Yes. I think there are certain composers who were the great, total, cosmic geniuses. There are certain composers who had everything—like people are fond of saying about Shakespeare, for instance. There are certain artists who have this phenomenal world-totality in their person. And to me, the two composers who have it to the greatest degree are Mozart and Verdi. Now, of course, you have to be into Verdi to understand why a person would say that, and there's a whole group of musicians in the world who think that the greatest thing that ever happened is the late Beethoven quartets and that Verdi is nowhere. I feel sorry for them, because I think the late Beethoven quartets are fantastic, but I think Verdi is equally fantastic, and I'm sorry that oth-

erwise very bright, perceptive people will put something down out of ignorance.

Or maybe out of hearing inadequate performances.

Well, that's also true. The essential point is the difference between music that gives back and music that you grow tired of. There's certain music that, the more you do it, the more you must do it, the better you do it, the more involved you get in it. There's other music that, the more you do it, the thinner it becomes, the emptier it is, the more it doesn't feed you back.

As a critic I discovered, as I went on reviewing The Rite of Spring, that the better the performance was, the less I had to say about it. That, to my mind, marks it off from great music: With great music, the better the performance, the more insufficient, as a critic, you find your space.

That's very funny. I gave up doing *The Rite of Spring* as a guest conductor because it was solving the same problems all over again—once you have a properly organized performance of *The Rite of Spring*, it's finished. Whereas the simplest Mozart symphony, with a different orchestra, with the same orchestra another time—just change one singer in the cast of a Mozart opera and you have a whole new piece. You cannot get all the facets down in the right proportion in one performance, and that's thrilling, it's just thrilling. And that's why we get up in the morning and go back there trying to do justice to those pieces.

I assume that almost everyone would agree that Wagner was a man of undoubted musical creativity, genius, talent, whatever words you want to use. The point is, a conductor's involvement with Wagner's music sooner or later is debilitating and you have to leave it alone for a while. Sooner or later it makes you tired, it makes you worn out, it makes you frustrated. After conducting ten *Lohengrins*—even though I love the piece—I was very glad to stop. After conducting ten *Otellos*, all I want to do is start back at the beginning and conduct ten more. What produces that feeling is, ultimately, the kind of human being Verdi was as opposed to the kind of human being Wagner was, and this is utterly intrinsic in the music.

In Wagner and Strauss we have the two greatest examples of people who had something missing in their person that shows in their music, that can only be noticed if you live with that music all the time. You see, the listener can buy a ticket to hear *Walküre* and go and have a great experience and then go on to other things. But those of us who, in order to put on *Walküre*, re-

hearse it for a month and then do a run of performances know that when we come to the end we have given it everything and it has only given us so much.

With Strauss you have a different phenomenon. Take *Rosenkavalier*, for example. It's a mind-boggling score. The idea that these two guys wrote a totally original work of operatic art—they made up the thing, they wrote the libretto, the music, the orchestration, everything—and it's an absolutely singular work of art, no question. It's probably Strauss's best piece. But whether one agrees with that or not, take any of Strauss's best works and you find that, with all that extraordinary invention, with all the fullness everywhere else, at the very center of the music it's empty. You conduct, let's say, a run of *Salomes*, ten or twelve of them. Halfway through—despite the undeniable brilliant originality and éclat of the piece—you're doing the job. That's all I can say. You conduct *Salome*, the audience claps, and you go home. But you cannot walk into the pit to conduct anything from *Rigoletto* to *Otello* to *Falstaff* to the Requiem to *Ballo* to *I Vespri siciliani* without being transported within the first sixty seconds until the evening is over. Even if you think you're tired of it, when the next performance starts you're refreshed, like back to square one. Most of us agree that the pillars of the operatic repertoire from that standpoint are Mozart and Verdi.

You could say it's a moral thing, in the sense that there's a wholeness in the approach of these people to the human soul. We're talking about the fact—you can read it in Verdi's letters, you can hear it in any one of these pieces—that there is the most just proportion possible in that human being, and it is manifest in that human being's music, the right proportions of everything. That's what makes it so whole and so cosmically renewable.

It would follow that what one would have to seek out in performance is the avoidance of inappropriate stress, the avoidance of inappropriate extremity or extremism, and the perfection of proportion.

Yes. If you perform *The Marriage of Figaro*, for instance, you would surely say that here is one of the wholes, most perfectly proportioned things that ever happened. And nothing hurts it more than having one of its facets shoved down your throat while another remains covered up. Nothing hurts it more than a stage director who decides he's bloody well going to show you that this was seething revolution—that finishes it, goodbye, let's go home. Nothing hurts it more than a stage director who is going to show you that these people are all charming. Nothing hurts it more than that

they're going to show you the broadside version of each character, that Figaro resents being a servant and that the Count is a booby. The beauty of this situation is that it is so well balanced between the radiant facets, the everyday facets, the individual specifics, and, yes, the seething revolution. Everything is there, and you must see it and hear it and feel it and have one of those whole-world experiences.

Every word I just said applies to *Falstaff*. I think if I were pinned to the wall, if somebody said to me that I would die if I didn't name my favorite opera, I would probably say *Falstaff*. I think it may be the most perfect work of operatic art.

What are the things you have to do when you begin to prepare a Falstaff performance, and how do you do them?

There can almost never be a good *Falstaff* performance. Almost every *Falstaff* performance will be in some way a catastrophe, because this is one of those total challenges that is almost never met. First of all, there's the standard problem (all art works have it, but the great art works have it up the bucket): You've got to be absolutely rehearsed and timed and disciplined down to the last thirty-second note, and the whole thing must unwind as if it is being composed while it is played.

I will never forget the first time I saw Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne on the stage, and I knew that's what a musical performance should be like. Knowing theater people as I did, I knew how the Lunts rehearsed, and I knew that Alfred Lunt rehearsed where and how he was going to scratch his left buttock when he said so-and-so, and there was not so much as a half-step or a half-inflection that hadn't been rehearsed down to the last degree. But boy, when they played it, it was as spontaneous as hell, and you could go and see it twelve times and it was spontaneous twelve times.

That's what a performance of *Falstaff* has to be. It poses tremendous rhythmical discipline problems. Each must be solved. The sonorities have to sound a certain way. They have to be luminous and radiant.

This "certain way" is a specifically Verdian way, and it's a specifically Falstaff way. What makes it that?

I know, it's very difficult. But let's put it this way: You can find an orchestra, in Central or Eastern Europe perhaps, that has a fairly warm sound and that plays in a nice, *amabile* way; and suppose we disciplined the hell out of them, they would still not sound like *Falstaff*. And then there are German and Austrian singers, superb performers in other areas of the repertoire, who

"For a modern conductor with a modern orchestra the hardest styles are Mozart-Haydn-Schubert on the one side and Verdi-Puccini-Mascagni-Giordano on the other."

sound quite wrong in Verdi, or in Mozart's Italian operas. The actual sound of the voice placement and the Italian pronunciation may be wrong. I've heard Leporello who will take one of these little witty Latin jokes and grin in a manic Prussian way, and I just want to crawl into my chair. I think that is absolutely not what Mozart and Da Ponte meant at all. Is it an ethnic point? I'm afraid it may be, a little. I say "I'm afraid" because I guess that's not nice, but it may be true.

Not only not nice, but where does it leave you as an American?

As an American you can approach various European styles without the bias of being from some European country, which I find rather important.

But let's talk about good Verdi. The best recorded Verdi from a conductor is, a million miles ahead, Toscanini's, without question. There's no Verdi subsequently that gets anywhere close. I don't think Serafin, De Sabata, Capuana, Votto, Cleva, De Fabritiis, whoever you want, were in Toscanini's class. But I do think some of them did good performances of Italian pieces when they had a particularly fortuitous and perceptive cast. In my time, for instance, I've seen Gabriel Bacquier—who is not Italian—do a Fra Melitone in *Forza* that is the best I ever heard or saw and is a phenomenal total performance. I've recorded *Forza* with Placido Domingo singing Don Alvaro, and I think his is probably a better performance of that role, front to back, than anyone has ever done in the history of recordings. But I think the same is true of Albanese's Violetta in Toscanini's *Traviata*. The same is true of Vinay in Toscanini's *Otello*. The same is true of that whole Salzburg 1937 pirate record of *Falstaff*, with Toscanini conducting. The same is true of that NBC Symphony Carnegie Hall Verdi Requiem with Nelli, Barbieri, Siepi, and Di Stefano.

For style, none of the Requiems that have been done since get anywhere close. It's very hard for me to say what this is. But go get every recording you can of the last-act *Traviata* Prelude and listen to them all, and look at a score, and then play the Old Man's. I think you'll find it a jaw-dropping experience, a mind-blowing experience. I mean, the fiddles—they're crying, they're sobbing, they're singing. It sounds like some sort of cosmic Italian vocal phenomenon manifest in those sixteen NBC Symphony first violins. The way they connect—they use every legato in the book, from a sharp shift to a smooth glissando slide, in exactly the right way, in exactly the right places, with exactly the right amount of gauge and judgment and color. The accompaniment is perfectly balanced: It neither holds the melody in a straitjacket nor lets it go all over the place. The

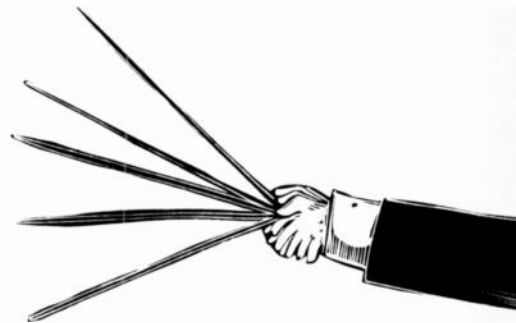
dramatic hopelessness of the situation is there in the piece, and Toscanini gets that across. The cantilena quality of the melody—he gets that across. All of the other performances you'll hear of it are either too dissected, too square, not dramatic enough, not legato enough, not vocal enough, not with the right spinto kind of tone-quality. This is only to try to clarify how complex the composer's challenge is and how rarely it is ideally met.

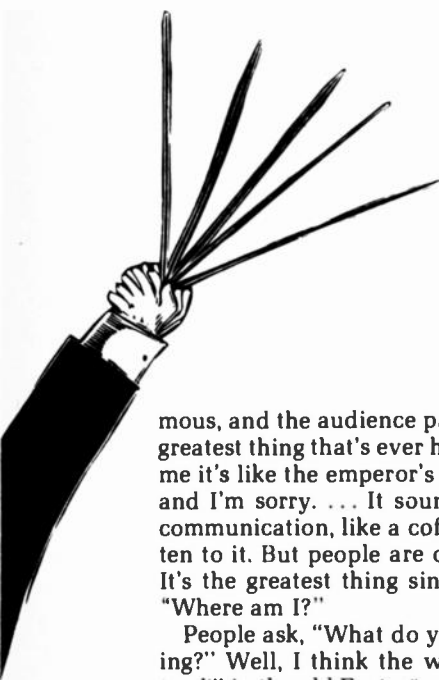
It's very difficult for me to put into words what the stylistic issue is. It's elements of a certain kind of projection of the text—not only the meaning of the text, but the sound of the text. It has to do with a certain balance between pointing on a detail and overpointing—but this is so with all music. It has to do with finding a tempo that is faithful to the often classical structure of the musical idea, at the same time that it is faithful to the pace of the words. This is the question of these whole works of Verdi and Mozart, where the marriage between the dramatic idea or philosophic idea, the text, and the music makes a perfect totality if you do it right. And there are many other such works. I think *Wozzeck* is one. I think *Rosenkavalier* is damned close to being one of them. I think *Tristan* is another. But there's a totality in the whole prolific output of a Verdi or a Mozart.

Let's take something we both know from a certain standpoint. You hear a Mozart performance, and the tempos have just the right amount of forward motion, but they are poised. The string sound is luminous and radiant but precise and clear and it crackles, but it doesn't sound shut down and pinpointed and tight, and when it's permitted to sing out it doesn't get all floppy and lose its tensility. And when the winds play, it sounds fresh and it sounds open, and you can hear all the notes individually but you can also hear them as a chord, and each telling little thing in the orchestration that's like a new horizon happens, and it's full of wonder. And now comes another performance where the tempos are—they're not wrong, and you can't say they were not playing together, and you can't say the sound was ugly, none of that. And yet the rhythm has no buoyancy, the sound is a little drab; the winds come in, and it lacks luminosity, it lacks radiance, it lacks transparency, it lacks glow. It doesn't smile. What an asinine thing to try to say! Nonetheless it's true, and when you have that experience, you experience it as a loss of style, do you not? An absence or a lack of style.

Some singer comes out and sings "*Deh vieni, non tardar*" from *The Marriage of Figaro*, and she sings clean pitches, and she pronounces the words all right, and she looks charming, and every note is a sort of white vibratoless hoot, and it's not really legato, and it all sounds like there's breath leaking out the sides, and she is fa-

"Nothing hurts *Figaro* more than a stage director who decides he's bloody well going to show you that this was seething revolution—that finishes it, goodbye, let's go home."





"The problem in performing Verdi is the same problem in performing the work of any genius—you need a performer who's nearly a genius, and you almost never have one."

mous, and the audience passes out with joy like it's the greatest thing that's ever happened, right? I'm sorry, for me it's like the emperor's clothes. I sit there and listen, and I'm sorry. . . . It sounds like interplanetary space communication, like a coffee percolator. I just can't listen to it. But people are dropping dead, left and right. It's the greatest thing since sliced bread, and I think, "Where am I?"

People ask, "What do you think is great Mozart singing?" Well, I think the way Lisa della Casa sang "Mi tradi" in the old Furtwängler film of *Don Giovanni* was great Mozart singing. I think the way Erna Berger sang Constanze in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* is great Mozart singing. I think the way Eleanor Steber sang Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* is great Mozart singing. It's just that when you get to stylistic issues, if I listen to someone sing "Deh vieni," I want the sound to be warm and free, and I want the Italian to be flavorful and sincere and warm, and I want the pitches to be connected legato in tune without a vibratoless white hoot, and when the sound vibrates, I want it not to sound spinto and pressured but to vibrate freely. When I don't hear it, I experience it as an absence of the correct style.

And when you start conducting a Verdi opera, you must have a method of searching for the corresponding things.

Well, I don't have a method of searching so much anymore—I know pretty much what I'm after (not that I achieve it very often, if ever)—but I rehearse to produce this. When I work with a singer in a room, when I work with an orchestra alone, and when I start having stage rehearsals, it's like putting together these elements. You work at each moment in the score for a better proportion of the elements. Let's assume that the orchestra plays a passage very precisely but without enough tonal radiance—you work for that. And suppose they're making a very nice sound, but the dramatic undercurrent to what's happening on the stage is not conscious enough. Or suppose you've got a singer who's singing very beautifully, but it's like she's delivering a concert piece and she forgets who she is.

I think nowadays you hear almost no good Verdi and almost no good Mozart. You hear no good Verdi because people read the score literally and they don't understand the stylistic conventions, which is something they also do in Mozart—that's one thing. Then you have people who fly off the deep end, and they think that any little subjective whim they want to do is in the style, which is also not true. For the most part, the problem in

performing Verdi is the same problem in performing the work of any genius—you need a performer who's nearly a genius, and you almost never have one. You have a performer who cannot possibly render the works of a brilliant, three-dimensional human being because he's a poor, two-dimensional, ingrown, not very perceptive character. When you're dealing with what happens in a piece like *Falstaff* or *Otello* or *Don Carlos*, a most incredible three-dimensional perception is necessary, and very few people have it. And then, even if you do have a conductor who has it, you have to have a cast who have it and a stage director who has it. And what's more, no two people will ever completely agree on all of this.

You mention the literal treatment of the score as one of the problems. In your approach to a given production of a Verdi opera, how much do you actually get from sources other than the score? Much of it must come from a background appreciation of style through years of studying Toscanini and other people.

Indeed, and working with the most perceptive coaches I can find around today, and working with some good old singers, like Gobbi, whose knowledge goes back to their teachers. It's partly that. It's partly continuous restudying. There are countless decisions you have to make about where to breathe, whether to make a portamento or not, whether there should be a parlando, whether the notes should be sung absolutely the way they're written or whether they're shorthand for something else.

Puccini, for example, eventually developed a notation where he wrote rhythmical values with no notes. But that doesn't happen in Verdi—everything has notes. Well, pretty soon you get used to the fact that sometimes, when he writes a whole line on the same note, it's shorthand for a certain kind of parlando delivery. Any perceptive Italian singer knows this, and it's a tradition, but it can become an exaggerated one, where the singer parlandos anything that is dramatically interesting even where a quasi-sung delivery would be right.

It's like on the violin: Do you make a clean shift, do you make a big slide, do you make a small slide? What kind of legato do you use? Leopold Mozart said you should endeavor to imitate the voice, and that raises the question, which voice? Of course you should imitate a vocal style, but the question is, what proportion of vibrato, free vibrato, spinto pressure vibrato; a sound that is open, a sound that is covered, a sound that has great dramatic color, or a sound that remains slightly divorced from an inflection of the word? You can analyze all these planes and take them apart, but the fact re-

mains that taking them apart and making them work are two different things; that this isn't just some concerted piece, that it has a very specific dramatic intent—and all of this within very specific details of style.

Nabokov is one of those minds I love. He wrote a work that took him, I think, seven years on and off—he made a translation of Pushkin's *Onegin* that is published in four huge volumes. The poem of *Onegin*, of course, is short enough. The translation itself is only the first volume. The other three volumes are notes. And notes about what? Notes about references in the poem, word choices in the poem, decisions about translation, historical references—three volumes to one volume. In the preface is a sentence I adore: "In art as in science, there is no delight without the detail." Ah, how true! And a big diatribe against generalities. It's the whole trouble with analyzing style, because it all comes down to detail.

The first time I did *Otello* with Jon Vickers I had an experience that typifies this. He and I had done *Otello* separately but never together. We scheduled a rehearsal alone. I sat at the piano; he sat on my left straddling a chair, facing me. We did not move from that position for four-and-a-half hours—neither of us got up to pee, neither of us strolled around the room—working on a role that you can probably sing through in sixty minutes, a little more maybe. People ask me, "What did you do? I mean—you know it, he knows it." Well, we discussed whether this line should have a little more of this about it, and whether that breath ought to be over here instead of over there.

We spent twenty minutes discussing the interpretation of a single line—what would have amounted, for us, to a radical difference. I'll tell you what it was, because it's significant to the question of style. When Jago first asks Otello about the handkerchief, Otello says, "Yes, such a handkerchief as you describe I gave to her. It was my first love-gift." Now, Verdi set this line in an almost casual way. It is not marked piano or any other way in the score to indicate a special dynamic—and Verdi in *Otello* goes all the way down to six ps—and it's not marked with a particularly slow tempo; it's almost like an offhand factual statement: "Yes, I know the handkerchief you mean." When I played this line for Jon, he sang it very softly and dreamily and pianissimo and long and slow. Immediately I was taken aback. I said, "Jon, you can't do that. That's a terrible distortion." He said, "I—I have to." I said, "But Jon, look at the way it's set. I know it's an important line, but you know, you've got to. . . . It's Verdi you're playing." He said, "I just don't think it's right." I said, "What's wrong with it?" He said, "People make jokes about Otello and the

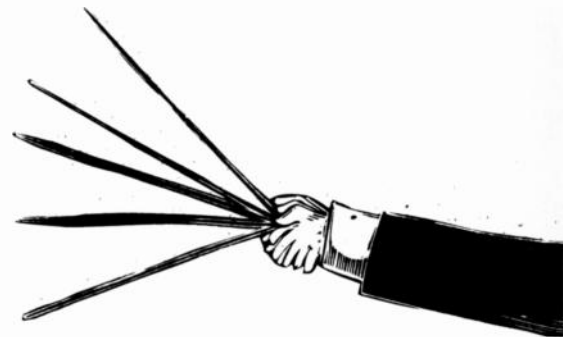
handkerchief, about how Jago made all this mischief with this handkerchief. Don't you see that the only way the rest of the opera is going to work is if the audience understands how important that handkerchief was to that man, if the audience understands that Otello sees before him everything that his lifetime commitment to that woman meant when he gave her that handkerchief? He has to reach a point of identification with any sensitive audience member at that moment, otherwise all this fuss that's going to be made over the handkerchief in Act III isn't going to work."

Well, we battled. I kept upholding Verdi's way of setting the line. Verdi obviously, with his unerring sense of performed drama, knew that the climax of the scene comes a little later, as soon as Jago says, "Yesterday I saw that handkerchief in Cassio's hand," and that's when Otello just blows up and they sing the final duet of Act II. So Verdi is clearly throwing that line away in order to set up the next line. But try as I might, I couldn't get Jon to do it that way. Ultimately it was much more convincing in that context for him to follow his own instinct. ■

The first Verdi opera recordings James Levine has made—*La Forza del destino* and *I Vespri siciliani* on RCA and *Giovanna d'Arco* on Angel/EMI—bear out the enthusiasms of a self-declared Toscanini disciple, leavened by a vigilant concern for the comprehensive human balance central to Levine's view of Verdi. Briskness of rhythmic impulse and care for the singing line are the most evident Toscaninian qualities. But my feeling is that, even at this early stage of his career, Levine has learned to allow for the needs of mortal singers more accommodatingly than the fanatically single-minded Toscanini was ever willing to do: He very rarely presses tempo to the detriment of a lyrical point. Levine has not yet, as I write, recorded any Mozart. But his Brahms and Mahler symphonies, on RCA, pertinently demonstrate the breadth of his stylistic sympathies. In particular, the polyphonic richness of his Brahms and the intensity (at a bravely slow tempo) of the intermezzo movement in the Third Symphony show how clearly he differentiates his approach for composers of schools other than that of Verdi.

Of the work of other performers discussed by Levine, the Albanese/Toscanini *Traviata*, the Vinay/Toscanini *Otello*, the Toscanini *Verdi Requiem*, and Vickers' *Otello* are all to be found on records, as are Della Casa's *Donna Elvira* (though not under Furtwängler) and Gobbi's interpretations of the roles of *Jago*, *Rigoletto*, and *Simon Boccanegra*. B.J.

"'In art as in science, there is no delight without the detail.' Ah, how true! It's the trouble with analyzing style, because it all comes down to detail."



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Haydn and the Opera Buffa



Edith Mathis

Frederica von Stade

Paul André Duvoisin

Antal Dorati's expert Philips performance of Il Mondo della luna reveals a delightful and aristocratic handling of the popular form.

by Paul Henry Lang

THE LATEST ADDITION to Philips' series of Haydn operas is *Il Mondo della luna* (*The World of the Moon*), composed in 1777 for the marriage of the reigning Prince Esterházy's son. Except for a few fragments, no autograph of the work is preserved, but two complete copies of the original score, together with a single copy of the printed libretto, permitted a reasonable reconstruction.

This is Haydn's last real opera buffa, the third based

on a libretto by Goldoni, though like the others of the great playwright's "poems" it was manipulated by an unnamed theatrical scribe—not exactly to its advantage. Goldoni, the "Italian Molière," abolished the verbal improvisations dear to the Italians since the *commedia dell'arte*. (Interestingly, there was a simultaneous growing dissatisfaction on the part of composers with musicians who altered their scores for the sake of im-

provised embellishments.) He was not a poet, as they used to call the authors of librettos because of the lyrics; there is skillful versification in his librettos, but not the cool, aristocratic poetry of Metastasio, none of the mixture of high and low characters that Mozart loved, and there is no psychological analysis of human motives. But there is good theater, a seizing upon just the right kind of incidents and sentiments to build interest and merriment.

There is a certain flow of reality and truth even in this fantastic story of a bogus astrologer and his *gran canocchiale*, his large telescope, which he uses to fool an elderly man who keeps a tight rein on his daughter. There is of course a cavalier who is after the maiden, plus a saucy Despina-like chambermaid and the usual permutations of lovers. In a word, this is pure Italian opera buffa; the stage business is well timed, the dialogue cavorts vivaciously, and the exploitation of the situation comedy is virtuosic.

The Italian buffa was scarcely concerned with Aristotelian theories of drama. The librettists did not surrender to the rules; they believed in down-to-earth comedy and considered human nature and human foibles to hold claims superior to those of critical literary authority. The miracle of it is that Haydn, who had never been in Italy, not only understood and assimilated this style, but—while retaining the elements of popular theater—made it, by classical compositional means, into a sort of aristocratic rococo.

In a recording—even in such an excellent one as this—the long stretches of secco recitative can be a little trying, but on the stage all this would come to life, for it is bona fide theater music that calls for acting and good, natural diction. The attentive listener will discover many old musical acquaintances, the stock opera buffa phrases and turns that were dear to the public and can frequently be encountered in *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* too. And there are some interesting parallels between some of Mozart's operas and *Il Mondo della luna*, including a scene resembling "*Là ci darem la mano*"—but here it is pure, malicious buffa.

Buonafede: Come, dear one, give me your hand.
 Lisetta: I won't.
 Buonafede: Oh such cruelty!
 Lisetta: I know you.
 Buonafede: I'd caress you as I would my little dog.
 Lisetta: And like a cat I will welcome your caresses.
 Buonafede: Come, my little darling poodle, come to me, don't bark.
 Lisetta: Away with you, you are going to scratch me.

There is no evidence that Mozart knew *Il Mondo*, though variants of Goldoni's book were set to music by famous composers, among them Galuppi, Piccinni, and Paisiello. One can never tell, however, what Da Ponte may have known; he was an omnivorous reader and familiar with the works of his competitors.

The overture is serious and symphonic (it was later used in Haydn's Symphony No. 63), and so is the prelude to the third act, while the intermezzos and ballet music are little gems. The recitatives are so "natural" and fluent that no Italian could improve on them, and the arias are masterly with their blend of seria and buffa, of da capo and symphonically through-composed structures. They are eminently singable, melodious, and delightful in their sudden relapses from quasi-seria

formality to buffo patter. The instrumental accompaniments are always inventive and appropriate to the occasion.

There are three finales. The first of these is as attractive as it is unusual, for it is subdued—the imbroglia has not yet proceeded very far—but the second is a substantial compound finale, fast and varied, the picture constantly changing from the comical to the sentimental, though here and there an almost threatening tone makes itself felt. The third finale is brief, the usual happy wrapup piece with lots of trumpeting.

An excellent cast makes for an outstanding performance. Buonafede's two daughters, Arleen Auger and Edith Mathis, are first-class (though Mathis flutters a bit when the give-and-take gets very rapid); they have fine, colorful, and cultivated voices, take the coloratura with ease and brilliance, and are equally at home in bel canto. Though they enunciate well, they cannot equal their Italian partners in this regard.

Frederica von Stade, who impersonates the conspiratorial chambermaid popular since ancient Roman comedy, uses just the right tone when egging somebody on, but in her arias she sings beautifully, passing from mockery to seriousness with great skill. Lucia Valentini-Terrani is very good as Ernesto. Though she is a dramatic alto with a powerful voice, she manages most of the time to tame it to chamber opera proportions. But she should not attempt trills.

Two of the male protagonists are Italians, tenor Luigi Alva and baritone Domenico Trimarchi, and they are superb as singers and actors. They possess good voices, but what distinguishes them is their vivid, many-shaded, and utterly lifelike singing of the recitatives, which they deliver even in the fastest passages with the clearest of diction. Only Italians can do that, yet tenor Anthony Rolfe Johnson comes close. He too impersonates a servant and is properly dry in conversational passages, but he discloses a pleasant and flexible lyric tenor in the arias. Both chorus and orchestra are excellent and well drilled, and the sound is exceptionally good.

Antal Dorati is in full command of the performance. His tempos are right, and the balance between stage and pit is impeccable. He gives the singers their head, as a good opera conductor should, and successfully maintains an intimate chamber opera tone. As a continuo harpsichordist he is not so good: He constantly arpeggiates, an original sin of most pianists attempting to play the harpsichord, and one that detracts from the crispness of the seccos and thus dampens the intended comic effects. Also, one is repeatedly taken aback by fast and funny recitatives in the major abruptly ending in a minor chord, even though the following aria is also in the major mode. These people are not the kind who tamper with scores, so for some ineluctable reason Haydn (or his copyist) must have written these cadences as they are performed; for once I would support a little tampering.

HAYDN: Il Mondo della luna.

Flaminia	Arleen Auger (s)	Ernesto	Lucia Valentini-Terrani (ms)
Clance	Edith Mathis (s)	Ecclitico	Luigi Alva (t)
Lisetta	Frederica von Stade (ms)	Cecco	Anthony Rolfe Johnson (t)
		Buonafede	Domenico Trimarchi (b)

Suisse Romande Radio Chorus, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Antal Dorati, harpsichord and cond. PHILIPS 6769 003, \$35.92 (four discs, manual sequence). Tape: 7699 078, \$26.95.

From Spain's Golden Age

In a three-disc Telefunken set, Bruno Turner's *Pro Cantione Antiqua* performs church music from the rich flowering of Renaissance Spain.

by Susan T. Sommer

"El siglo de oro"—what a ring that phrase has! The age of gold, when precious metal from the New World streamed into the coffers of a revitalized Spain, bringing a flowering of art and intelligence unparalleled on the Iberian peninsula. Music and literature, fairs and fiestas flourished in the new city of Madrid and in the older centers like Seville and Granada. Cathedrals arose to glorify the power of the Catholic Church and to impress the people with the majesty of the Counter-Reformation. And to complete the effect, the Spaniards filled their cathedrals with magnificent music.

A fine boxed set of three discs from Telefunken can give the twentieth-century listener some idea of the sounds that awed and impressed churchgoers in sixteenth-century Spain. Restricting themselves to the motet repertory alone, *Pro Cantione Antiqua* and the record's producers have still put together a selection that is varied yet consistent in style and a wonderful listening experience.

More than half the music is by the acknowledged master of the age, Tomás Luis de Victoria, the Spanish priest who gained an international reputation in Rome from 1565 to 1585, an artist at home with a rich dark palette and a big canvas. His settings of the Marian antiphons *Ave Maria*, *Salve Regina*, and the *Magnificat* for double chorus glow with life, the homophonic sonorities reinforced and sustained by an organic web of polyphony. In the smaller forms—for example, in the exquisite *Beati immaculati* or the subtle shifting color of *Duo Seraphim*—Victoria shows his skill at delicate workmanship and detail.

But equally enjoyable, and possibly more interesting to the specialist, are the motets of Victoria's contemporaries, few if any of which have previously been recorded. While Victoria spent much of his creative career away from his country, the real guru of the generation, as Robert Stevenson has called him, was Francisco Guerrero, a man renowned for his personal goodness as well as his contrapuntal skill. For the first of these virtues we will have to take the word of his contemporaries, but the rootless intertwining lines in his *Salve Regina*, the light but pungent harmonic turns of *Ave virgo*, and the transparent homophony of *O Domine Jesu Christe* are living testimony to his musical mastery.

Cristóbal Morales, a perhaps more familiar name who properly belongs to an earlier generation, is represented by only one motet, *O crux, ave*, which reflects the denser texture of the prevailing Flemish style, a sound also heard in the long lines and constant motion of *In passione positus* by his pupil Juan Navarro. An exquisite setting of a sensuously perfumed text from the Song of Solomon, *Hortus conclusus*, gives a tantalizing glimpse of the music of Rodrigo Cevallos (1530–81). To-

ledo and Avila, the homes of Alfonso Lobo (1555–1617) and Sebastian de Vivanco (1550–1628) as well as El Greco and Saint Teresa, give rise to darker colors and more dramatic contrast in the works of these composers. A short ostinato dominates an expressive *Veni, Domine* by Juan Esquivel, while Jean de Castro's three-voice Christmas motet *Angelus ad pastores* shows the influence of the popular villancico. Finally, the early baroque of the seventeenth century can be heard in the harmonic simplicity and lively figuration of the double chorus *Laudate Dominum* by Juan Pujol of Barcelona.

Pro Cantione, that superb male vocal ensemble (here augmented to seventeen voices), is a perfect medium for this repertory. In England early music seems to be going through a *siglo de oro* of its own today, and there is no better representative than this group of trained professionals whose voices, technique, and understanding are so well tuned to the great music of the Renaissance church. Curiously, Spain is the one country where we have positive evidence at this time of the use of instruments other than the organ in a liturgical setting. Brass ensembles are mentioned in several accounts, and director Bruno Turner here uses the London Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble discreetly to reinforce some of the more solemn and ceremonial works, where they play with subdued tone and perfect intonation.

The selections themselves are nicely balanced. The Victoria motets are spread out among the other works, and one gets the impression that each side has been planned as a satisfactory listening experience in itself. Taken as a whole, there is a certain sameness in the style that can be wearing, but given the repertory this is probably unavoidable.

Thoroughly avoidable, however, are the lack of texts and the skimpiness of information about individual works and their performance. It is quite impossible to form an adequate judgment of a work from this period without access to the words, no matter how clearly the singers enunciate. And while an enterprising listener might be able to find the text to, say, the *Salve Regina* elsewhere, he is highly unlikely to turn up the words to *O Ildephonse*, an encomium to a seventh-century bishop of Toledo.

The sound is beautifully full-bodied, although my copy had a defectively pressed sixth side.

EL SIGLO DE ORO: Spanish Cathedral Music in the Golden Age. *Pro Cantione Antiqua*, London Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble, Bruno Turner, cond. TELEFUNKEN 36.35371, \$23.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

VICTORIA: *Salve Regina*; *O sacrum convivium* (two settings); *O Ildephonse*; *Duo Seraphim*; *Quam pulchri sunt*; *Magnificat*; *Super flumina Babylonis*; *Domine non sum dignus*; *Beati immaculati*; *Sancta Maria*; *Senex puerum*; *Ave Maria*. **GUERRERO:** *Salve Regina*; *Ave virgo sanctissima*; *Magnificat*; *O Domine Jesu Christe*. **MORALES:** *O crux, ave*. **LOBO:** *O quam suavis*. **ESQUIVEL:** *Veni, Domine*. **CEVALLOS:** *Hortus conclusus*. **VIVANCO:** *Stabat Mater*. **NAVARRO:** *In passione positus*. **CASTRO:** *Angelus ad pastores*. **PUJOL:** *Laudate Dominum*.

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Leonard Bernstein
The definitive Lenny

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37*; Andante favori, in F, WoO. 57. Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Riccardo Muti, cond.*. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL S 37512, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ●● 4XS 37512, \$7.98.

R BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in B flat, WoO. 6. Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON PRIVILEGE 2535 107, \$6.98 [from SLPM 138 848, 1963]. Tape: ●● 3335 107, \$6.98.

EMI's attractive sound and Riccardo Muti's more flexible orchestral framework give Richter a helping hand in his new recording of the C minor Concerto. His basic conception differs little in these two recordings, made fifteen years apart: Both are coolly detached; both have a slowish first movement; in both, the first-movement cadenza is executed in curiously metronomic, unorthodox fashion. But where DG's asstringent, acutely defined sound made the interpretation seem denatured and static (the concerto as Cherubini might have composed it), the suavity of the new version helps the playing to project more assertiveness and robust physical appeal. The piano here has more weight and warmth, thus tempering Richter's austerity sufficiently to allow a more persuasive argument. The disc mastering job, moreover, is one of Angel's best, and the pressing is as smooth as the imported DG.

Both fillers are valuable. The Richter/Sanderling B flat Rondo, performed in the standard Czerny revision, has dash and strength; in this work's classical context, the prevailing tonal asperity is a virtue. On the Angel disc, Richter's fast tempo, fancifully clipped phrasing, and keen staccato put his *Andante favori* in close competition with Brendel (Philips 6500 762) and Kempff (DG 138 934). Those partial to a broader, more ruminative approach are advised to investigate Artur Schnabel's sublime and surprisingly well-reproduced account on Bruno Walter Society BWS 724. H.G.

BERNSTEIN: Symphonies (3); Chichester Psalms. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [Hans Weber and

Günther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 077, \$26.94 (three discs). Also available separately as 2530 968 (No. 1 and Psalms), 2530 969 (No. 2), and 2530 970 (No. 3), \$8.98 each.

Symphonies: No. 1 (*Jeremiah*; with Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano); No. 2 (*The Age of Anxiety*; with Lukas Foss, piano); No. 3 (*Kaddish*; with Montserrat Caballé, soprano); Michael Wager, speaker; Vienna Jeunesse Choir, Vienna Choir Boys). Chichester Psalms (with soloist from the Vienna Choir Boys, Vienna Jeunesse Choir).

This is likely to remain the definitive Lenny for some time to come. All four works were recorded in August 1977 as part of the Berliner Festwochen, and they supplant Bernstein's earlier versions of the three symphonies (now collected as Columbia MG 32793) and *Chichester Psalms* (MS 6792). Of course, the Israel Philharmonic is not really a better orchestra than the New York Philharmonic, but it does sound that way here.

Symphony No. 3 (*Kaddish*) is heard here in a fairly drastic revision of the 1963 original, withdrawn in 1964. "I was not satisfied with the original," Bernstein told the press after the Berlin premiere of the revision. "There was too much talk. The piece is essentially the same, only better. It is tighter and shorter. There are some cuts, some musical rewriting, and a lot of rewriting of the spoken text." For this recording (and in the Berlin performance), the speaker's part was assigned to a man rather than a woman; Bernstein now feels that the part may be spoken appropriately by either. "The original idea," he explained, "was that it be a woman because she represented *das ewig Weibliche*, that part of man that intuits God. But then I realized that this was too limiting. Hence the alternative possibility."

Kaddish remains the biggest problem child among the four Bernstein brain children here displayed. Despite the tightening, it remains unsatisfactory, and to my mind the flamboyant and theatrical spoken text, by Bernstein himself, is its biggest flaw. The melodramatic mode is quite characteristic of him—the man wears his heart on his sleeve. There can be no questioning his sincerity, no doubt about the honesty of his self-revelation. But there are times when laying one's soul bare becomes embarrassing, and the speaker's angry trumpeting at God in the "Din-Torah" movement somehow do not ring true, nor can one feel at ease with the strained conceits of the Scherzo. Not even the affecting eloquence of the soprano solo in the finale—gloriously sung by Montserrat Caballé—can obliterate the gaucheries of the spoken text.

The symphony that wears best is No. 2, *The Age of Anxiety* (1949), which can be heard with a great deal of pleasure even if the Auden poem that shapes the music is completely disregarded. The interplay between orchestra and piano is fascinating, and the reading benefits considerably from a stunning performance at the keyboard by Lukas Foss. The "Masque" movement, described by Bernstein as "a kind of scherzo for piano and percussion alone (including harp, celesta, glockenspiel, and xylophone) in which a kind of fantastic piano-jazz is employed, [is] by turns nervous, sentimental, self-satisfied, vociferous"—and exceptionally effective.

Jeremiah (1942) remains a remarkable

Explanation of symbols

Classical:

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

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

achievement for a twenty-four-year-old composer, although to my mind only the "Lamentation" (Christa Ludwig is marginally less eloquent here than is Caballé in *Kaddish*) is top-drawer Bernstein. The *Chichester Psalms*—perhaps his most quintessentially Jewish piece despite the title—is "easy" Bernstein. The repeated phrase "Adonai ro'i, lo ehsar" ("The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"), as sung by an unidentified boy alto in this recording, is hauntingly lovely and almost as unforgettable as "Maria" from *West Side Story*. I.L.

B **DEBUSSY:** Preludes, Books I-II. Paul Jacobs, piano. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH HB 73031, \$9.92 (two discs, manual sequence).

DEBUSSY: Piano Works. Dezső Ránki, piano. [Attila Apró, prod.] HUNGAROTON SLPX 11886, \$7.98.

Children's Corner Suite; Images, Sets I-II; L'Isle joyeuse.

Paul Jacobs' recording of the Debussy etudes (Nonesuch H 71322, October 1976) demonstrated his formidable pianistic equipment and identification with the composer's spare late style. His technical mastery is no less impressive in the earlier preludes, and, intelligent and scrupulous interpreter that he is, he has modified his approach in keeping with the different demands of this music.

Objectively considered, these are distinguished re-creations, notable for such ele-

gant finesse as the winged trills in bars 11 and 12 of "Les Fées sont d'exquises danseuses." In general Jacobs is very attentive to the composer's markings, although—as his lucid annotations indicate—he realizes that at times what Debussy wrote and what he actually wanted are at variance. These performances consequently incorporate corrections made by the composer after publication (communicated to the artist by Roy Howat of Cambridge, England) as well as interpretive features culled from Debussy's *Welte* piano rolls of several preludes (e.g., the quickening of pulse on page 2 of "La Cathédrale engloutie," leading to the big climax).

It is on subjective grounds that I find Jacobs' preludes less impressive than his etudes. So much in this music depends more on implication than on explicit direction that one's reaction is strongly influenced by such considerations as sonority and the way the performer manages tempo modifications and responds to poetic imagery that can never be fully spelled out.

One constant here is the controversial sound of the Bösendorfer Imperial grand as captured by Nonesuch's close, resonant recording. The swollen bass and conversely "white" upper treble may suit "Danseuses de Delphes" and such intentionally water-logged preludes as "La Cathédrale engloutie," "Brouillards," and "Ondine," but to my taste works like "Feuilles mortes," "Des pas sur la neige," and "Feux d'artifice" require a crisper, more compact ambience. (In "Feux d'artifice," Jacobs

brings exceptional control and evenness to the softer cascades, but the fortissimo declamations and exploding glissandos lack bravura sizzle.) At times—in "General Lavine," for example—the turgid piano tone combines with broad tempos and overly abrupt tempo modifications to produce a lumbering effect, despite all the elegance and wry, subtle humor.

These are certainly evocative performances, even if my own taste runs to the more contained, classically compact statements of Gieseking (especially his Angel version, 35066 and 35249), Monique Haas (in MHS 1536/41), and Casadesu (a spare, shapely account of Book II from the late 1940s, which recently resurfaced as Columbia Special Products P 14203). My copy of the Nonesuch set has some ticks and grinding noises.

Hungaroton's more intimate sonics for Dezső Ránki's Debussy recital provide an interesting foil to the Nonesuch approach. The microphoning is again rather close, but the instrument used has a lighter bass and a treble that sounds rounder and warmer for all its cutting acerbity. Ránki, who has impressed me in other repertory, sounds particularly in his element with most of this music. He puts the tonal plangency to good use, bringing a judicious stylized warmth to *Children's Corner* (though his "Golliwog's Cakewalk" may be too brisk and intense) and dealing engagingly with the light and shade of the two sets of *Images*. He applies a supple rubato within the context of a shapely composure that conveys the structure and the harmonic outline along with the poetic atmosphere. The virtuosic figurations of *L'Isle joyeuse* are dispatched with taut rhythm and clear fingerwork, although here, as in "Golliwog's Cakewalk," the close-up recording and brisk objectivity diminish the music's voluptuous scope.

H.G.

Critics' Choice

The most noteworthy releases reviewed recently

BACH: Violin Sonatas and Partitas. Végh. TELEFUNKEN 36.35344 (3), Oct.

BARTÓK: Mikrokosmos. Ránki. TELEFUNKEN 36.35369 (3), Oct.

BARTÓK, STRAVINSKY: Two-Piano Works. Kontarskys. DG 2530 964, Nov.

BEETHOVEN: Diabelli Variations. Rosen. PETERS INTERNATIONAL PLE 042, Sept.

BOCCHERINI: String Quintets. Quinteto Boccherini. HNH 4048, Oct.

BRAHMS, SCHUMANN: Piano Works. Kubalek. CITADEL CT 6027, Nov.

BRITTEN: Various Works. Baker, Britten, et al. LONDON OS 26527, Nov.

CHOPIN: Ballades; Fantasy. Arrau. PHILIPS 9500 393, Sept.

DVOŘÁK: Cello Concerto. Rostropovich, Talich (1952). REDIFFUSION HCN 8004. Rostropovich, Giuliani (with Saint-Saëns concerto). ANGEL S 37457. Oct.

DVOŘÁK: Quartets, Opp. 51, 105. Gabrieli Qt. LONDON TREASURY STS 15399, Nov.

FALLA-HALFFTER: Atlántida. Tarrés, Sardinero, Frühbeck. ANGEL SBLX 3852 (2), Oct.

HOLST: Choral Works. Groves. ANGEL S 37455, Oct.

LISZT: Piano Sonata. **SCHUMANN:** Fantasy. De Larrocha. LONDON CS 6989, Oct.

LISZT: Piano Works. Dichter. PHILIPS 9500 401, Nov.

MEYERSON: Symphonies (5). Masur. VANGUARD CARDINAL VCS 10133/6 (4), Oct.

MOZART: Violin Sonatas. Shumsky, Balsam. MHS 3475/80 (6), Oct.

MUSSORGSKY: Pictures at an Exhibition; Night. Markevitch. MHS 3650, Oct.

POULENC: Organ Concerto; Concert champêtre. Preston, Previn. ANGEL S 37441, Nov.

SCHUBERT: Songs. Ameling, Baldwin. PHILIPS 9500 169, Sept.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Quartets Nos. 1, 3. Gabrieli Qt. LONDON TREASURY STS 15396. Quartets Nos. 4, 12. Fitzwilliam Qt. OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 23. Nov.

STRAVINSKY: Pulcinella Suite, et al. Boulez. COLUMBIA M 35105, Nov.

VIVALDI: Choral Works, Vols. 1-2. Negri. PHILIPS 6700 116 (2), Nov.

LEONARD PENNARIO: Daydreams (Piano Recital). ANGEL S 37303, Nov.

RUDOLF SERKIN: On Television (Piano Recital). COLUMBIA M2 34596 (2), Nov.

MARTIAL SINGHER: French Song Recital. 1750 ARCH RECORDS 1766, Nov.

HAYDN: Mass No. 9, in D minor (*Lord Nelson*). Judith Blegen, soprano; Gwendolyn Killebrew, mezzo; Kenneth Riegel, tenor; Simon Estes, bass; Leonard Raver, organ; Westminster Choir, New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [John McClure, prod.] COLUMBIA M 35100, \$7.98.

Comparison:
Willcocks/London Sym.

Argo ZRG 5325

This is a poor specimen of both the art of interpretation and the craft of recording. The sound is unattractive: The ever-mobile violins are kept in the background; only the treble is distinct in the solo quartet as well as in the chorus; the balances are mostly lopsided; and even with a score in hand one is repeatedly lost in the gray muddle of the tutti.

Leonard Bernstein is dealing here with a masterpiece of a great composer at the height of his creative powers, who pours the wisdom, imagination, and unexampled technical *savoir faire* accumulated during a long lifetime into his last great vocal/orchestral works—the oratorios *The Creation* and *The Seasons* and the last six Masses. This, the third of those Masses, is perhaps the greatest of them. (In his own catalog of works Haydn called it *Missa in angustiis*—



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CIRCLE 42 ON PAGE 127

"Mass in time of anxiety.") It is an exceedingly careful setting; the perfect accord between voices and instruments is always minutely calculated for compatibility and concordance.

There are no arias, the solo quartet instead stepping out momentarily from the choir and melting back in again. Bernstein's tempos are unyielding, and the alternation of solo quartet and choir is not sufficiently clear. The phrasing is indifferent, and the dynamics are lacking in finesse, though a measure of these defects should be laid at the door of the sound engineers.

Of the soloists, only soprano Judith Bleger is satisfactory. Mezzo Gwendolyn Kilbrew cannot seem to handle an upward-

swinging large interval without a swishing crescendo. Tenor Kenneth Riegel has a tight voice, which he pushes. Bass Simon Estes announces the beginning of a phrase with an audible hum ("Mmmiserere nobis"); once launched, however, the phrase is well sung. This new recording cannot hold a candle to David Willcocks' splendid Argo performance with the King's College Choir, the London Symphony, and a first-class solo quartet.

Yet even the Argo recording shares some disadvantages with the Columbia: the reverberating echo of the church where the recordings were made, because of the need for an organ, and the role of the organ itself. At the time of the composition of this Mass,

Prince Esterházy had already reduced his orchestra (Haydn was no longer its conductor and lived in Vienna) and several woodwinds were missing. We have reliable evidence that Haydn, out of necessity, transferred the woodwind and the horn parts to the organ, retaining three trumpets, drums, and the strings. An organ is superfluous, even disturbing, when used in post-baroque, fully symphonic music that does not require a continuo; in this case the incongruous little right-hand solos on the organ, impersonating the woodwinds, and the continuous *tasto solo* playing (only the bass line without chords), which by that time was an anachronism, detract from the transparent texture. We also know that after 1800, when the Esterházy orchestra was once more rebuilt, the organ part was retranscribed for woodwinds and horns, though probably not by Haydn. The new critical score of the Cologne Haydn Institute prints these parts, and it would be most interesting to hear this Mass (as well as the Mozart Requiem and other such works) performed without the organ and recorded in a studio instead of in a church. P.H.L.

HAYDN: *Il Mondo della luna*. For a feature review, see page 103.

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LEHÁR: Paganini.

Maria Anna Elisa	Anneliese Rothenberger (s)
Bella Girelli	Olivera Miljakovic (s)
Niccolo Paganini	Nicolai Gedda (t)
Prince Felice Bacchiocchi	Friedrich Lenz (t)
Marquess Giacomo Pimpinelli	Heinz Zednik (t)
Beppe	Benno Kusche (b)
Huntsman	Rainer Jakob Wichartz (b)
Bartucci	Horst Sachtleben (spkr)
Count Hédouville	Gerd W. Dieberitz (spkr)
Tofolo	Erich B. Wagner (spkr)

Bavarian State Opera Chorus, Bavarian Symphony Orchestra, Willi Boskovsky, cond. [Helmut Storzjohann and Christfried Bickenbach, prod.] ANGEL SBLX 3863, \$16.98 (two SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence).

LEHÁR: Die lustige Witwe (excerpts in English).

Hanna Glawan	Beverly Sills (s)
Valencienne	Glenys Fowles (s)
Camille de Rosillon	Henry Price (t)
Raoul St. Broche	Alan Kays (t)
Count Danilo	Alan Titus (b)
Cascada	Thomas Jamerson (b)
Njegus	James Billings (b)
Baron Mirko Zeta	David Rae Smith (bs)

New York City Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Julius Rudel, cond. [George Sponhaltz and John Coveney, prod.] ANGEL S 37500, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ● 4XS 37500, \$7.98; ● 8XS 37500, \$7.98.

As a theater piece, *Paganini*, I fear, is indefensible. A romantic farrago about the virtuoso's irresistibility to women, it ends with a big scene in which he renounces amorous entanglements in favor of art. The last act, set for the flimsiest of reasons in a smugglers' inn, brings him face to face with the very woman from whom he is trying to escape, Maria Anna Elisa, princess of Lucca and Piombino and, incidentally, the sister of Napoleon. She, however, is understanding. Though disguised for the nonce as a humble street singer, her innate nobility is quickly revealed by her ready acceptance

Continued on page 114

SALOME DONS A SONIC VEIL



Beardsley's "Salome with St John's Head," 1893

by David Hamilton

Salome was the first of Richard Strauss's operas from which recordings were made. Perhaps because the German companies were chary of the scandal associated with the work, none of the original 1905 Dresden cast went into the studios, but the successful Berlin premiere at the end of the following year (the Kaiser's moral scruples having been placated by the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem at the evening's end!) seems to have been the go-ahead signal.

Three members of the Berlin cast—Emmy Destinn (*Salome*), Ernst Kraus (*Herod*), and Baptist Hoffmann (*Jokanaan*)—made excerpts for G&T early in 1907. They're all short snippets, and only Destinn's secure and gleaming voice was accorded orchestral accompaniment; one admires the fluent and rhythmically surefooted pianist who accompanies Kraus (rather a "Bayreuth barker," he), but none of this makes for pleasant or informative listening (I haven't heard the Hoffmann sides).

With that beginning, you might expect to find a long history of recordings from *Salome*, representing many of the famous interpreters of the title role, and perhaps also the famous conductors who led them through the perilous score. No such luck; of Fremstad, Garden, Ackté, Gutheil-Schoder there is not a trace, and of Jeritza only a bit of the final scene recorded (badly) at a Vienna performance in 1933. Gadski, who wasn't a famous *Salome*, sang a bit of the seduction scene (less well than Destinn), and several lesser singers made more snippets. In 1924, HMV recorded eight sides under Albert Coates, with Göta Ljungberg, who had just sung the role at Covent Garden and would later do so at the Met (she sounds a vigorous but very erratic singer), and Parlophone made a curious selection of similar length under Frieder Weissmann, involving Herod and Jokanaan but no *Salome*!

Neither then nor later did anyone succeed in persuading the composer to record any vocal excerpts from this opera (or, indeed, from any other), though he did make three versions of "Salome's Dance." With the advent of electrical recording, that *bonne bouche* came in for more attention, and several sopranos essayed the final scene, none of them capturing much of its intensity or perversity. (Marjorie Lawrence's recording remains a curiosity for its use of Wilde's original French text, to fit which Strauss radically adapted the vocal line.)

Only with the LP era, in fact, do we begin to have a significant representation of *Salome* on disc, and the eight recordings since 1950, especially when supplemented with the considerable range of live-performance recordings available in archives and under the counter, cover pretty nearly all the significant modern interpreters. One might wish for a single recording combining the best features of all of them—say, Montserrat Caballé's *Salome* (RCA), Agnes Baltsa's *Herodias* and José van Dam's *Jokanaan* (in the new Karajan), Julius Patzak's *Herod* and Anton Dermota's *Narraboth* (in the Krauss set, now on Richmond), a good Viennese supporting cast, Karajan or Leinsdorf conducting the Vienna Philharmonic, engineering with the clarity (but not the

gimmicks) of the Decca/London Solti set (OSA 1218).

That formulation at least rules out the early Keilberth (Oceanic) and Moralt (Columbia) mono sets. Suitner's 1963 Dresden recording with Christel Goltz (issued in America only in "highlights" form by Vox), and the live-performance Hamburg set led by Karl Böhm (DG 2707 052); there's nothing in any of those that hasn't been done better by someone else. I know that Böhm was an associate of the composer (he conducted the premieres of *Die schweigsame Frau* and *Daphne*), but that was a long time ago, and I find it hard to believe that his hit-and-run performances of the later 1960s and the 1970s would have satisfied the exigent Strauss. Böhm's failure to make the indicated tempo contrasts in the interlude depicting Jokanaan's ascent from the cistern, his mammoth slowdown for the prophet's first big cadence ("und in den Häusern der Könige gekündet hat")—which we know, from fragmentary recordings taken at Vienna performances in 1943, Strauss did not make—and numerous similar derelictions of duty would rule this recording out of court even if the fairly desperate singing of Gwyneth Jones and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (not to mention all the annoying live-performance slips) did not do so already.

Up to now, Erich Leinsdorf has been the conductor on commercial records who followed Strauss's tempo instructions most faithfully, and I'm happy to report that Herbert von Karajan's interpretation is, in this respect, quite similar, if with an occasional extra degree of nuance that is neither obtrusive nor disruptive. Though the work of both these men in the classical repertory usually strikes me as rhythmically flat and nerveless, some aspect of *Salome* evidently suits their temperaments. Both, of course, are notable orchestral technicians, and the challenge of weaving Strauss's incredibly elaborate orchestral tapestry must stimulate them enormously.

As recorded, it seems to me that Leinsdorf achieves the greater textural clarity, Karajan the greater variety of color—but that qualification "as recorded" is important, for RCA's sound is clean but on the dull, even hard side, while Angel's is suffused with a beclouding "ambiance" often difficult for the ear to penetrate. I suspect that, under ideal conditions, we would find Karajan's orchestral playing the most satisfying of all; what we can hear of it, despite a few not-quite-perfect attacks, is certainly impressive, and the Vienna Philharmonic is surely more *au courant* with the score than the London Symphony—but these are not ideal conditions.

Nor are they favorable to a consistent appreciation of the singing either. Just as instrumental lines are often swallowed up in the pervasive resonance, so, too, are the voices. Hildegard Behrens sings *Salome*'s words with impressive spontaneity and variety of articulation; her performance has a freshness, a most appropriate girlish quality. But the voice appears to be variable under the stress of the higher-lying, more heavily scored writing; she leaves out some words at the tops of arching lines and the accuracy of her intonation suffers—as, I



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think, does the tonal quality, but it's hard to separate that from the fuzzing of the resonance. For whatever reason, she rarely comes across with the combination of vocal purity, coloristic resource, and effortless command of the Straussian melos that makes Caballé's performance with Leinsdorf so consistently satisfying, although all those elements are more than fleetingly present in Behrens' work. She's a singer whom I look forward to hearing with interest in the theater.

Jokanaan's first lines, from the cistern, come at us as if over the Tetrarchal Public Address System supplemented by the Royal Palestinian Echo Chamber. Van Dam doesn't need that kind of help, and in fact it diminishes later on, as if the engineers had decided that the point about his subterranean location had been made. This is a wonderful piece of singing, even more majestic than Sherrill Milnes's work for Leinsdorf, and fuller in the lowest reaches of the role.

The royal couple is strong, too: Baltsa's firm, compact voice a far cry from the usual blowsy Herodias, and Karl-Walter Böhm an accurate, vigorous Herod, in whom I miss only the slippery intimations of psychosis that make Patzak's performance hors concours. Wieslaw Ochman (Narraboth) has his vibrant sound rather more disciplined than it was in the Böhm/DG recording, and the rest of the cast is almost consistently splendid (a tangible plus over Leinsdorf's all-British ensemble, some of whom simply don't manage to sound at home in German). The exception is Jules Bastin's First Nazarene, more parlando than legato, and rhythmically imprecise as well.

In the Salzburg performances following this recording, Karajan apparently made a cut in the score, of precisely the passage that in my November 1969 review of the Leinsdorf recording I singled out as a bit of structural "overload" on Strauss's part: from Jokanaan's "Eine Menge Menschen . . ." up to Herod's "Tanz für mich, Salome" (at the very start of Side 3 of this and most other recordings, if you want to try it). Gratifying as this concurrence of conductorial and critical opinion may be, I'm glad the cut was not made in the recording; it doesn't really help much. (I don't credit the explanation that it's a "standard" cut in Germany and Austria, either; it's not made in any live-performance recording I've ever heard, even by that inveterate cutter Artur Bodanzky, at the Met in 1934.)

Unlike most of the other *Salome* recordings, this one does not include the Lord Alfred Douglas translation of Wilde's play (suitably abridged, of course), but an anonymous modification thereof. The exception among earlier recordings was DG's, which offered the French text of Wilde's play, the German translation by Hedwig Lachmann that Strauss used, and the Vyvyan Holland translation of Wilde—all of them complete, with the passages Strauss used printed in boldface, those he omitted shown in lighter type—a worthwhile idea.

That same Holland translation turns up with the new Caballé/Bernstein Strauss disc (though now laid out separately from

the German text, instead of alongside it; bad marks to DG!). I'm sorry to report that Caballé's interpretation of the final scene has rather coarsened in the years since the Leinsdorf recording; almost all the delicate inflections have vanished, the wonderful long phrases are now choppy, the intonation is less precise, the tone less firm, the singing gusty and shrill on top. Not to put too fine a point on it, she belts it out. The excerpt begins before the usual place, at "Es ist kein Laut zu vernehmen," and the usual concert cut of Herod's and Herodias' lines near the end is made.

The appended orchestral songs may well be of interest, however; two of them are first recordings ("Ich liebe dich" and "Zueignung"), and there hasn't been a modern version of "Cäcilie"; the other two were recorded by Schwarzkopf and Szell (Angel S 36643). The two novelties stem from Strauss's wartime years, when he did a lot of puttering around. To the final bars of "Zueignung" he added some words, making it a personalized version for Viorica Ursuleac, in honor of her performances of *Die ägyptische Helena*: "Du schöne Helena, habe dank!" (All other orchestral recordings of this song are scored by other hands.) To "Ich liebe dich" he added two pompous preluding measures.

This last version was specifically made for tenor (the vocal line even written in the tenor clef, with some modifications of the original vocal line), but Caballé sings it anyway, ignoring the rewritings of the vocal line. This is a particularly gusty and unsatisfactory performance; the others are not so bad, and the orchestral parts are capably played, if not with quite the fine-honed elegance of the Szell recordings. A similar reservation might be entertained about the playing of the *Salome* excerpts on this disc, especially the dance, which is also rhythmically ponderous vis-à-vis Karajan's more feline account. The recording is much clearer than Angel's, however, faithfully reproducing the conductor's grunting and groaning as well as the music.

STRAUSS, R.: *Salome*, Op. 54.

Salome	Hildegard Behrens (s)
Herodias	Agnes Baltsa (ms)
Page of Herodias	Helja Angervo (ms)
Herod	Karl-Walter Böhm (t)
Narraboth	Wieslaw Ochman (t)
Jews	Heinz Zednik (t), David Knutson (t), Martin Vantin (t), Gerhard Unger (t), Ench Kunz (b)
A Slave	Horst Nitsche (b)
Soldiers	Gerd Nienstedt (b), Kurt Rydl (bs)
Jokanaan	José van Dam (bs-b)
Nazarenes	Jules Bastin (bs), Dieter Ellenbeck (t)
A Cappadocian	Helge von Bomches (bs)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. [Michel Glotz, prod.] ANGEL SBLX 3848, \$16.98 (two discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● 4X2X 3848, \$16.98.

Companions:
Caballé, Leinsdorf / London Sym. RCA LSC 7053
Goltz, Krauss / Vienna Phil. Rich. RS 62007

STRAUSS, R.: *Salome*, Op. 54: *Salome's Dance*; *Final Scene. Songs (orch. Strauss)*. Montserrat Caballé, soprano; Orchestre National de France, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [Hans Weber and Gunther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 963, \$8.98. Tape: ●● 3300 963, \$8.98.**

Songs: *Zueignung*, Op. 10, No. 1; *Cäcilie*, Op. 27, No. 2; *Morgen*, Op. 27, No. 4; *Ich liebe dich*, Op. 37, No. 2; *Wienlied*, Op. 41, No. 1.

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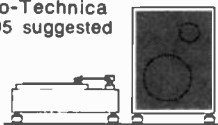
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of the blow fate has dealt her. "You can't belong to any woman," she acknowledges to Paganini. "Art alone must be your mistress. You belong to all the world." And being a quick-witted fellow as well as a genius, he sees her point. "Komm," he says to his faithful manager just before the curtain falls. "in die Welt!"

Angel's scrupulously ample version of *Paganini*, which includes the stupefying dialogue as well as the charming musical numbers, enables us to see just how meretricious the work is. By comparison with *Paganini*, MGM's film biography of Johann Strauss Jr., *The Great Waltz*—in which Strauss is shown composing his *Tales from the Vienna Woods* while riding in an open carriage through a vernal landscape with Miliza Korjus chirruping at his side—is a masterpiece of veracity. Someone ought to rescue Lehár from the books he provided music for in the second half of his career, when he began to tackle "serious" subjects of this sort. His was a small talent but a genuine one, and the best of his music has considerable charm.

Though *Paganini* is by no means one of his most inspired scores, it contains a pleasing waltz for Anna Elisa, "Liebe, du Himmel auf Erden"; an attractive duet for her and Paganini, "Niemand liebt dich so wie ich"; and a fine *Tauberlied* in "Gern hab' ich die Frau'n geküsst." It should be pointed out that Tauber did not sing the title role until the work was mounted in Berlin some months after its not very successful Viennese premiere.

The sweetening mixture of intimacy and vocal sweetness that Tauber brought to Lehár survives on his many 78s, but even those who do not know these will surely be aware on hearing the set under review that Nicolai Gedda now lacks the basic requirements for this music: above all, ease of manner and allure. Anneliese Rothenberger, too, is no longer fresh enough of voice for this assignment, though in her case a certain charm endures. Olivera Miljakovic makes heavy weather of the soubrette role of Bella Giretti, prima donna of the Royal Opera in Lucca. The other performers, both singers and actors, are satisfactory. Heinz Zednik, Bayreuth's brilliant Mime, is a fascinating artist but not a convincing operetta jeune premier. Willi Boskovsky conducts energetically, a fact accentuated by the close miking. A full German-English libretto is supplied, though with notes that barely reach the level of literacy.

More graceful leadership than Boskovsky's is to be heard on the disc of excerpts from *The Merry Widow*, where Julius Rudel yields himself up unstintingly to the grace and sensuousness of Lehár's masterpiece. But apart from the conducting and Alan Titus' attractive, if vocally rough, Danilo, there is little to recommend about this record, which features a witless new English translation of the lyrics by Sheldon Harnick (e.g., "With girls in this oasis, I'm on a first-name basis") and singing by Beverly Sills so tremulous as to be embarrassing. In the dialogue, moreover, the latter is revealed as an underenergized and poorly spoken actress. Neither vocally nor historically does she come anywhere near the standards set by Jeanette MacDonald in the old Lubitsch film.

The sound of the recording is good. English texts are provided, and there are first-rate notes by Richard Traubner. D.S.H.

LISZT: *Années de pèlerinage* (complete). Lazar Berman, piano. [Werner Mayer, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 076, \$26.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

LISZT: *Années de pèlerinage* (complete). György Cziffra, piano. [Eric Macleod, prod.] CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CSQ 2141, 2142, and 2143, \$7.98 each SQ-encoded disc.

B LISZT: *Années de pèlerinage: Second Year*, Italy. David Bean, piano. [Marc J. Aubort, prod.] WESTMINSTER GOLD WG 8339, \$3.98.

The *Years of Pilgrimage* is a loose collection of short essays composed at different times in Liszt's varied career—ranging in the "Third Year" to the experimental, pre-Impressionistic meditations (with pre-echos of Bartókian Expressionism as well) composed after Liszt had taken vows and assumed a relatively sedentary life-style in the Villa d'Este.

By the time of Lazar Berman's excellent 1974 Liszt disc (Columbia/Melodiya M 33927, May 1976), which included *Venezia e Napoli*, the supplement to the "Second Year" of the *Années*, the pianist's playing was already markedly more refined in color and phrasing than that of his earlier recordings. It is fascinating to compare the new, even more sober *Venezia e Napoli*: Although the "Barcarolle" still flows and displays ravishing colors and the repeated notes in the concluding "Tarantella" still are negotiated with insolent ease, a darkly sonorous massiveness replaces the light-fingered spontaneity of yore. This is partly the result of recording—the acceptable Soviet engineering hardly compares with the outstandingly rich, solid DG—but one must also acknowledge the conscious growth of an artist no longer content with razzle-dazzle.

For the most part, Berman's *Années* gave me real pleasure. The gorgeous sound makes listening a joy, and so too does Berman's Olympian mastery of most pianistic problems. Has anyone had more success at keeping the layers of sonority of the "Dante Sonata" in perspective? In contrast to the prickly barrage of notes of most performances, Berman translates most of those figurations into poetic shimmer, revealing the music's sometimes hard-to-discern grandeur. There may be more to such pieces as the three Petrarch sonnets and the "Jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este" than the delicate coloration and fabulously even fingerwork he brings to them (compare the recordings of Kempff, Arrau, and Russell Sherman), but his straightforward approach has its dividends. If nothing else, this remarkably refined *Années* should confound the frequent accusation that Berman is an uncouth banger.

Recalling György Cziffra's rhythmically erratic old Angel set of the *Transcendental Etudes* and his capricious (albeit here more appropriately so) *Hungarian Rhapsodies* (Connoisseur Society CS 2097/9, October 1976), I feared for these gentler pieces. The worst expectations were realized with his

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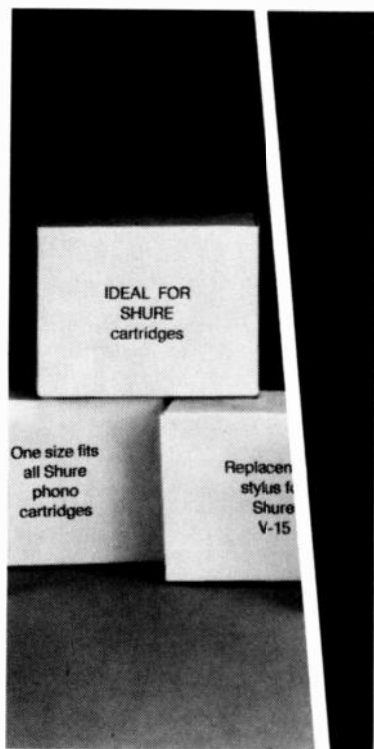
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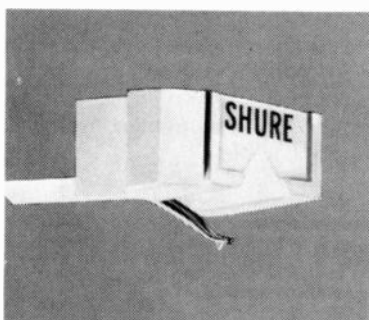
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mauling of the unpretentious "Canzonetta del Salvatore Rosa," where phrases are clawed, pounced upon, and diddled with. While that piece is an extreme example, Cziffra's playing gives much ground for complaint. Take "Sposolizio," for example: The *ppp, piu lento* central part is rhythmically ambiguous; later, the left-hand octaves—where Berman sustains the melody on top so beautifully—are fractured rhetorically; and, finally, twenty-seven bars before the end Cziffra suddenly doubles the tempo, thus missing the suggestion of Wagner's "Forest Murmurs."

In the "Sonetto del Petrarca No. 47" he sounds more lascivious than intimate, and the filigree sounds labored. (In fairness, the big cascade in the "Sonetto No. 104" has a certain appropriate electricity.) Often he sets the right mood but fails to sustain it: The "Sonetto No. 123" begins with a suitably placid tone but soon dissolves in contortions. Though Cziffra's "Dante Sonata" strives for the kind of organization heard in Berman's version, his unalluringly spiky vehemence gets in the way. Cziffra does get more attractive reproduction here than he has sometimes had, and he does occasionally manage a modicum of poetry. But his playing is for me too undisciplined and willful in regard to detail to wear well.

The American pianist David Bean plays the "Second Year" (without *Venezia e Napoli*) with forthright ardor, luminous tone, and good technique. His Westminster Gold disc has obvious appeal as an inexpensive edition, though the reproduction—glassy on top and, in an almost undefinable way, not quite real—is rather off-putting, especially in the "Dante Sonata," which underlines the music's objectionable note-consciousness and rhetorical emptiness. Bean, incidentally, plays the alternative version of bar 45 in the "Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104"; both Berman and Cziffra use the standard version. H.G.

MESSIAEN: *Turangalila* Symphony. Michel Béroff, piano; Jeanne Loriod, ondes martenot; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL SB 3853, \$15.98 (two SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence).

Comparisons:
Le Roux/Orch National Decca (France) 117013/4
Ozawa/Toronto Sym. RCA LSC 7051

The more I listen to the music of Olivier Messiaen, the more I am reminded of the work of the French playwright/poet Paul Claudel. While it is difficult not to be impressed with, even overwhelmed by, the breadth of Claudel's cosmic vision, and while one cannot help admiring the technical means used to realize this vision, it is nonetheless terribly difficult to put up with his eternal proselytizing.

Though a nonvocal work such as the gargantuan ten-movement *Turangalila* Symphony (the score runs more than 400 pages) cannot really preach explicitly, the composer has spelled out his modest intentions for the work as "a love song, a hymn to joy, time, movement, life, and death." (Messiaen's description, although not included in the Angel package, was reprinted with the Ozawa/RCA set.) Even if I had no idea

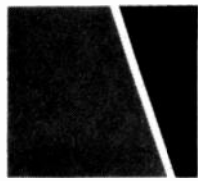
of the music's philosophical impetus, I think I would still squirm each time the "theme of love" appears in one of the three whopping, and more or less identical, climaxes in the eighth movement ("The Development of Love"). The theme itself is so saccharine—rendered even more cloying by its high-register doubling on the ondes martenot—that one figures Messiaen must be trying to "say" something. Nor am I able to take the orgasmic fifth movement ("The Joy of the Blood of the Stars") very seriously, with its Irish-jig-like main theme.

Perhaps the thematic material is *Turangalila*'s main problem. In many other ways—in richness, colors, effects—the music does overwhelm. There is no question that it offers a rhythmic feast (Messiaen apparently worked out the entire rhythmic structure for the work before he filled in the other elements), whether in the all-percussion section near the beginning of the seventh movement, the complex, pointillistic banter of the ninth movement, or the almost traditional toccata of the finale.

Messiaen's cosmic conception of love has its roots in such diverse sources as French surrealism and Indian philosophy, and he does manage some convincing musical translations of his broad vision. In the sixth movement ("The Garden of Love's Sleep"), for example, the piano, winds, and percussion play nontonal material (the piano writing is based on birdcall patterns) that is juxtaposed over the love theme (here presented quite subtly) in the ondes martenot and strings playing in a solid F sharp major, the symbolically used key in which the symphony finally closes. Much of the music might well be described as surrealistic, as in the quiescence of the sixth movement or the weird nightmare effects Messiaen creates by combining instrumental timbre with rhythmic structure in the two "love song" movements (the second and fourth).

Composed between July 1946 and November 1948 for Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, *Turangalila* was the first commission Messiaen ever accepted; Leonard Bernstein conducted the premiere in December 1949. The new recording, the third (the first, made by VEGA, is now available on French Decca), marks one of the rare times the demanding piano part has not been performed by Yvonne Loriod, the composer's wife. (Sister Jeanne Loriod, however, does the ondes martenot part in all three recordings.) But Michel Béroff, who has already proven himself an outstanding Messiaen performer, succeeds brilliantly in solving the problems of rhythmic and dynamic integration that abound in the score, in which the piano plays almost nonstop and has several cadenzalike passages.

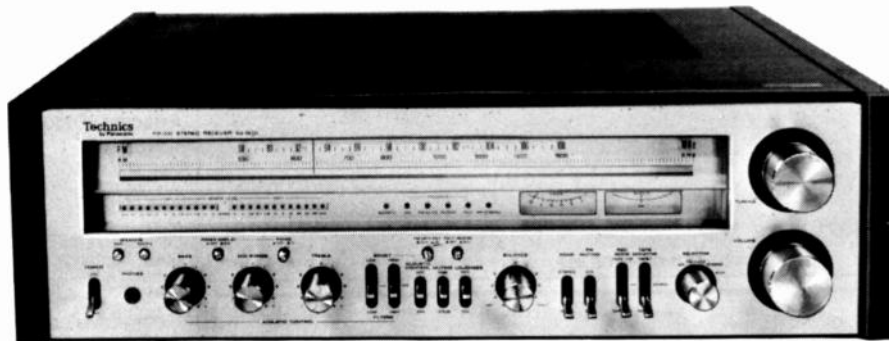
The most immediate chore facing any conductor tackling *Turangalila* is controlling the disparate musical elements, since so much is generally going on at the same time. In this regard André Previn, like Maurice Le Roux and Seiji Ozawa before him, does a superlative job, and he has in addition infused the music with an emotional depth and spirit largely absent from Ozawa's interpretation. In the chaotic energy of the fifth movement, for instance, Previn



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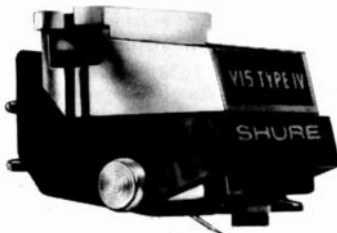
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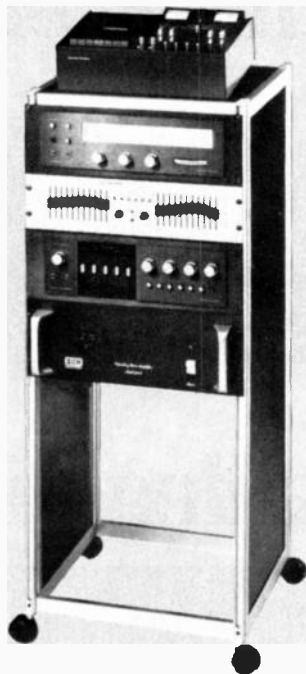


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communicates something beyond the mere notes, while Ozawa remains fairly literal-minded. And in the sixth movement, perhaps the symphony's best, Previn reaches a level of hushed, mystical beauty I have heard in no other performance. While remaining faithful to the score, he has broadened the levels on which the music operates, and in so doing gives us the most accessible performance on disc.

If this weren't enough, EMI has given him warm, rich, well-balanced sound that I find preferable to RCA's harsher, albeit sharper, sonics. My only regret is the somewhat velvety piano sound—the more incisive reproduction of the piano by Vega and RCA is more appropriate. Although the Le Roux and Ozawa renditions (both supervised by the composer) excel in their own right, the Previn/Angel release rates top place. R.S.B.

PURCELL: Dido and Aeneas.

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Second Witch	Linn Maxwell (s)
Dido	Tatiana Troyanos (ms)
Sorceress	Patricia Kern (ms)
First Witch; Spirit, Third Witch	Alfreda Hodgson (ms)
Sailor	Philip Langridge (t)
Aeneas	Richard Stilwell (b)

English Chamber Choir and Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. [Pierre Lavoix, prod.]
RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-3021, \$7.98.

PURCELL: Dido and Aeneas (ed. Britten and I. Holst).

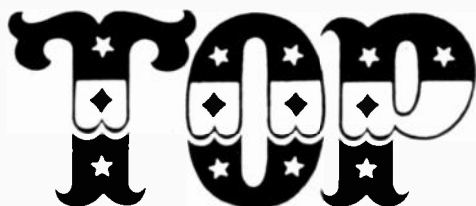
Belinda	Norma Burrowes (s)
Witches	Felicity Palmer (s), Alfreda Hodgson (ms)
Second Lady	Felicity Lott (s)
Dido	Janet Baker (ms)
Sorceress	Anna Reynolds (ms)
Spirit	Timothy Everett (boy s)
Aeneas	Peter Pears (t)
Sailor	Robert Tear (t)

George Malcolm, harpsichord; London Opera Chorus, Aldeburgh Festival Strings, Stuart Bedford, cond. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON OSA 1170, \$7.98. Tape: ● OSA5 1170, \$7.95.

Comparisons:
Troyanos, McDaniel, Mackerras Arch. 198 424
Baker, Herincx, Lewis Oiseau SOL 60047
Veasey, Shirley-Quirk, Davis Phi. 6500 131

There have been many recordings of Purcell's abidingly fascinating opera. Of the five older versions in SCHWANN, at least three have considerable virtues. The Archiv performance under Charles Mackerras is on balance the most persuasive of them; the Philips and Oiseau-Lyre performances are both splendidly conducted—by Colin Davis and Anthony Lewis, respectively—but neither has a strong Dido, Philips' Josephine Veasey sounding to my ears foursquare, Oiseau-Lyre's Janet Baker hopelessly genteel.

Those who find Dame Janet an expressive singer (and do not mind so straight and vibratoless a tonal production as she affects) will doubtless rate the Lewis performance more highly than I do. I expect the same is true of the new London recording, where I find her less satisfactory yet, her tone these days being not only colorless, but often inadequately supported. The high Gs, too, are distinctly more uneasy than of yore. Moreover, Peter Pears, who although never a vocal paragon has in the past given many effective, even moving, operatic performances, is here simply too infirm of voice (he was sixty-five when the



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recording was made in 1975) to project Aeneas convincingly. The other singers are more satisfactory (especially Norma Burrowes, a charming Belinda), but Stuart Bedford's spiritless and undramatic conducting—in what, after all, is a very lively work—casts a pall of dullness over the entire enterprise.

Musicologically the edition used in the London recording (by Benjamin Britten and Imogen Holst) is not without interest, since the final six lines of the libretto's second act, for which no music survives, have been realized operatically with the aid of selections adapted from other Purcell scores. Still, a comparison of this performance with a 1959 BBC air check of the same edition, conducted by Britten and sung by Claire Watson and the forty-nine-year-old Pears, makes melancholy listening, so great is the difference in rhythmic vitality and dramatic engagement.

Luckily, the Erato/RCA set is not only a vast improvement on the London set, but in my opinion the most engaging performance of the opera now available. The reasons for this are twofold: a highly accomplished cast of vocalists and the invigorating leadership of Raymond Leppard, who conducts the music with such theatrical vividness that all its power is unmistakably revealed. Under his guidance the solo singers and the chorus characterize their roles with a sense of involvement and a variety of emphasis that make Purcell's score sound as richly human as one of Monteverdi's music dramas.

Tatiana Troyanos, though her tone is marked by a distracting small flutter, is a noble and passionate empress and a more expressive one than she was in the Mackerras set, made some ten years ago. Richard Stilwell is a manly and reflective Aeneas. All the smaller roles are projected with similar effectiveness, and the chorus is very fine.

London's recording, like the performance, is on the wan side. Appropriately enough, RCA's has a great deal more presence—at least in the French Erato edition from which I reviewed. D.S.H.

ROMAN: Swedish Mass. Britt-Marie Aruhn, soprano; Anna de Wolf, mezzo-soprano; Bo Armand Olsson, bass; Stockholm University Chorus, Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, Eskil Hemberg, cond. PETERS INTERNATIONAL PLE 053, \$7.98.

Johan Helmich Roman (1694-1758) was a prolific Swedish composer whose 400-odd known works gathered dust in the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm until they were rediscovered just before World War I by Patrik and Ake Vretblad. As time passed, other musicians (among them the Swedish composers Hilding Rosenberg and Valdemar Söderholm and the French musicologist Claude Genetay) joined the archaeological expedition, and by the 1940s a fair amount of Roman's instrumental music had been republished in modern editions and some of it had been recorded.

Although he wrote just as much for voices as for instruments, for some reason

his vocal music has been quite neglected, and this recording of his Swedish Mass marks the first appearance on disc of a large-scale choral work from his pen. Roman was a fervent champion of the use of the vernacular in his vocal works, and even though he was preceded by several other composers, he has come to be known as "the father of Swedish music." (The tag pertains to his work in behalf of the Swedish language, not to musical style.)

The Swedish Mass is an attractive, brightly scored setting of the Lutheran service of the State Church of Sweden as it was used in the eighteenth century (Kyrie and Gloria only), composed in the prevailing international style of the day as used by Italian, French, and German Kapellmeisters. Roman goes about his business in a straightforward, sturdy fashion, and if the piece does not plumb the depths of emotion, the Swedish language adds a pleasing touch of exoticism. The performance by the Stockholm University Chorus, the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, and three vocal soloists under the direction of Eskil Hemberg is not especially brilliant, but it is enthusiastic.

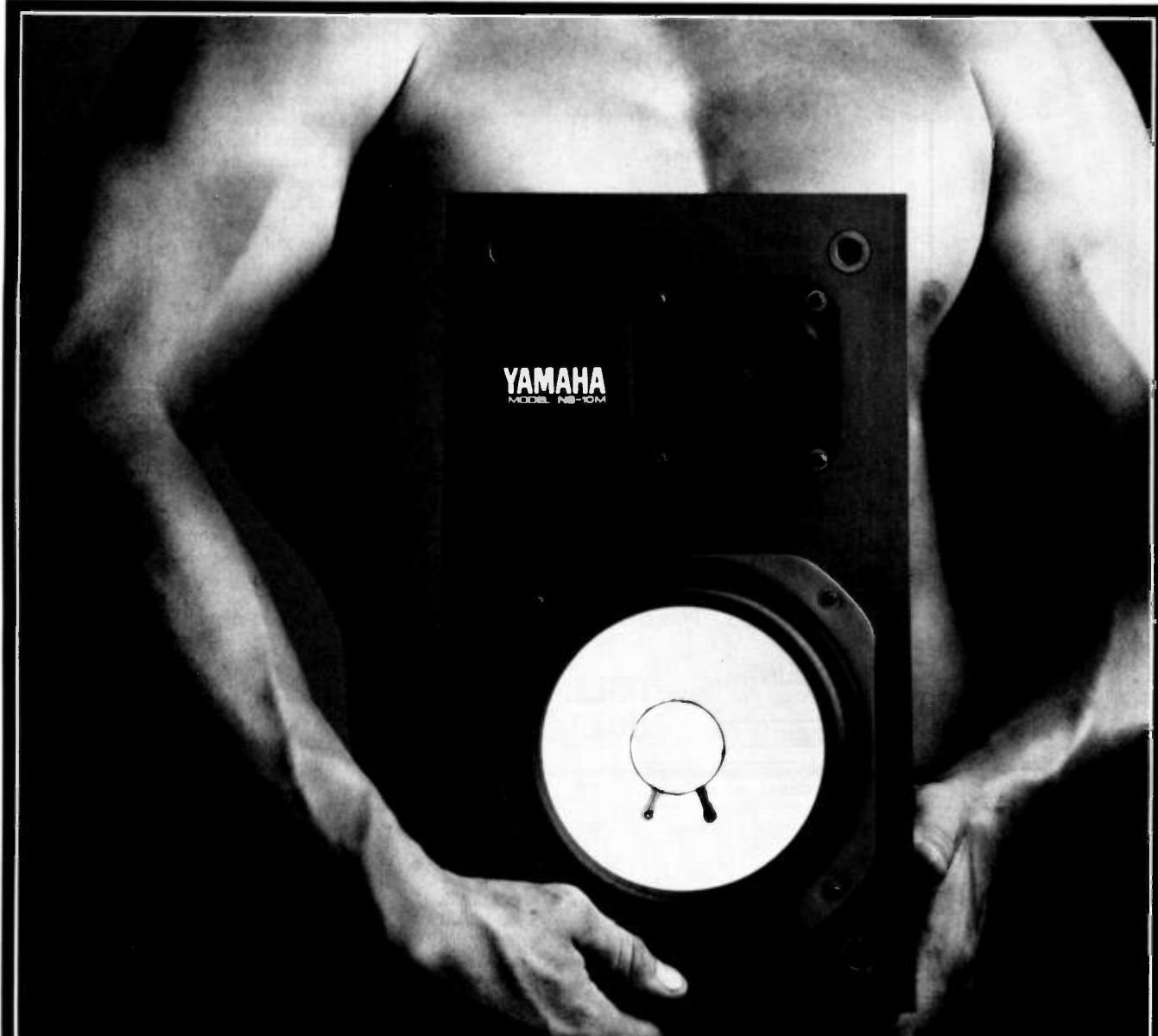
There seems to be no question about the authenticity of the Swedish Mass, but the same cannot be said about other works attributed to Roman. The full extent of his borrowings is only now beginning to be realized. In 1976, the Swedish musicologist Ingmar Bengtson published "Mr. Roman's Spuriousity Shop—A Thematic Catalogue of 503 Works (from c. 1680 to 1750) by More Than 60 Composers." Bengtson urgently seeks help in identifying the sources of Roman's thefts and will send a copy of the catalog to anybody who wants to turn tune-detective. Requests should be addressed to him at the Swedish Music History Archives, Strandvägen 82, Stockholm, Sweden. I.L.

R SIBELIUS: The Origin of Fire, Op. 32*; Pohjola's Daughter, Op. 49. Sulo Saaris, baritone*; Helsinki University Men's Chorus*, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Thor Johnson, cond. **FINNISH CHORAL WORKS.** Helsinki University Men's Chorus, Martti Turunen, cond. [Don Gabor and Laszlo Halasz, prod.] VARÈSE SARABANDE VC 81041, \$7.98 [from REMINGTON originals, 1953].

Choral Works: **SIBELIUS:** Song of My Heart, Op. 18, No. 6. Finlandia, Op. 26a. **HAPPALAINEN:** Pan. **KILPIMEN:** To Song. **PALMGREN:** Cradle Song. **SOMNINEN:** Rippling Water. **TURUNEN** (arr.): Finland, My Homeland; On the Hills of Karelia.

SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 1, in E minor, Op. 39. Humoresques (5), Op. 87b, Nos. 1-2, and Op. 89, Nos. 2-4.* Anja Ignatius, violin*; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Jussi Jalas, cond. [Don Gabor and Laszlo Halasz, prod.] VARÈSE SARABANDE VC 81043, \$7.98 (mono) [from unreleased REMINGTON originals, 1954].

Early-LP collectors will remember Remington, the first of the budget labels and a frequent object of sneering in those days. Yet there were gems in that catalog (rights to which have been acquired by Varèse Sarabande), which includes some early stereo material with the Cincinnati Symphony un-



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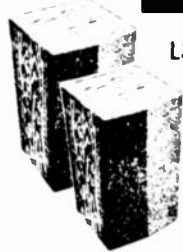
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der the late Thor Johnson, who occupied that podium between Eugene Goossens and Max Rudolf.

Of greatest interest is what was and may still be the only recording of *The Origin of Fire*, a brief cantata for baritone, male chorus, and orchestra. Composed just after the Second Symphony in 1902, it was based on Sibelius' ever-inspirational source, the *Kalevala*. The dark guttural sounds of the vocal writing and the lusty orchestration make a powerful effect reminiscent of the earlier Kullervo Symphony. Although one might hope for a newer and clearer recording, this intense performance can only be welcomed back warmly. Johnson's *Pohjola's Daughter* may lack something in virtuosity and driving fury (cf. Kajanus, Bernstein, and Barbirolli), but it is poised, supple, and charming, with effective use of stereo (in 1953!).

In addition to participating in *The Origin of Fire*, the Helsinki University Men's Chorus recorded an a cappella recital under its conductor, Martti Turunen. The side's worth reissued here introduces us to four lesser Finnish composers, of whom Selim Palmgren (represented by the gruff but tender "Cradle Song") and Ahti Sonninen (the delectable "Rippling Water") impress as imaginative craftsmen, and offers two traditional Finnish ballads arranged by Turunen and two Sibelius pieces—the sadly atmospheric "Song of My Heart" (about a bereaved parent) and a later arrangement of the hymn section of *Finlandia*. The latter is quite an experience in this format, especially when sung with such fervor, tonal splendor, and rhythmic alertness. All told, this recording constitutes a major contribution to the discography of Sibelius and of Finnish music in general.

The Jussi Jalas performances, recorded in 1954, are released here for the first time, though we have not necessarily been deprived. Jalas is obviously an important link to the Sibelius tradition, but his sane, forthright, and intelligently shaped First Symphony is compromised by mediocre playing (as has been his recent series of Sibelius rarities with the Hungarian State Orchestra on London). The sound is respectable mono, though with a fair amount of hiss. If you are looking for this approach to the symphony, I would suggest Paavo Berglund's (Seraphim S 60289), which is better executed and recorded (if still not ideal) and cheaper.

In the *Humoresques*, I am impressed with the force and skill of violinist Anja Ignatius but puzzled by the omission of the delightful Op. 89, No. 1, which strikes me as less dispensable than some of the others. Jalas' orchestral framework is commendably detailed, but for a complete account the domestic alternatives are Aaron Rosand (Turnabout TV 34182, with Nielsen's Sixth Symphony) and David Oistrakh (Melodiya/Angel SR 40020, with the violin concerto). A.C.

STRAUSS, R.: Salome; Songs (orch. Strauss). For a review, see page 111.

VIVALDI: Sonatas (6), Op. 5. Salvatore Accardo and (in Nos. 5-6) Sylvie Gazeau, vio-

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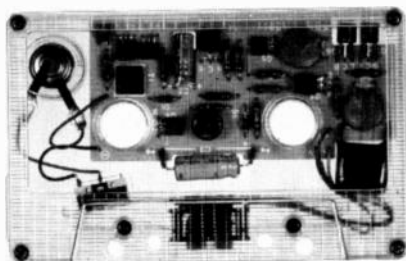


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lins; Bruno Canino, harpsichord; Rohan de Saram, cello. PHILIPS 9500 396, \$8.98.

These six sonatas are pleasant early works. It is only with No. 4 that we pick up our ears; Nos. 5 and 6, trio sonatas, are bona fide Vivaldi. Here the composer does not always observe the customary equality of the two violins, and especially in No. 6 he handles the first violin almost as he will later in the concertos.

Salvatore Accardo is a good fiddler, but he has an old-fashioned concept of baroque music. There is little dynamic variety, because he follows the dated "terrace dynamics" idea and stays too long on each terrace. The phrasing is plain, and he uses the *grand détaché*—that hallmark of baroque string playing—too energetically, even in the dainty dance pieces. Since he is rather closely miked, it helps considerably to reduce the volume.

Rohan de Saram, the cellist, does not distinguish between thematic passages and the merely supporting bass, sawing away at each with the same enthusiasm, thus making the bass too prominent; Bruno Canino, the harpsichordist, is too mousy. Sylvie Gazeau, who plays the second violin in the trio sonatas, plays well but defers a little too much to her partner—or has a tiny violin tone. Still, all of them do well in the trios, and especially in the two Preludios the music flows nicely. P.H.L.

Recitals and Miscellany

LAZAR BERMAN: Encores. Lazar Berman, piano. [Steven Epstein, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34545, \$7.98 (with seven-inch bonus disc). Tape: ●● MT 34545, \$7.98; ● MA 34545, \$7.98.

RACHMANINOFF: Preludes: in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2; in G, Op. 32, No. 5; in G minor, Op. 23, No. 5. **SCRIBIN:**

Etudes: in B flat minor, Op. 8, No. 11; in D sharp minor, Op. 8, No. 12. **KHACHATURIAN:** Toccata in E flat minor. **PROKOFIEV:** The Love for Three Oranges: March. **BEETHOVEN:** The Ruins of Athens, Op. 113; Turkish March (arr. Rachmaninoff). Sonata No. 20, in G, Op. 49, No. 2: Tempo di minuetto. **CHOPIN:** Etude in C sharp minor, Op. 25, No. 7. **SCHUBERT-LISZT:** Gretchen am Spinnrade; Erlkönig. **FALLA:** El Amor brujo; Ritual Fire Dance.

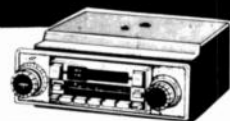
These are old-fashioned encores, the kind that pleased audiences in the early years of this century. (The Khachaturian Toccata, although written in 1932, is a warmed-over ember from Falla's "Ritual Fire Dance.") Columbia has accordingly presented them in a slightly campy album whose confusing format resembles one of those hard-to-read menus from an "olde-fashioned" ice-cream parlor. They may also have unwittingly simulated the real-life concert-hall situation of unannounced encores: The restless murmur of the collective "What's he playing?" comes into your living room, since neither the order of the annotations nor the jacket contents listing conforms to the actual sequence of the record (which is as listed above; the side break occurs between the Prokofiev and the Beethoven).

It is doubtful that any concertgoer would hear this sort of piano sound in the hall. The sonorous instrument—presumably a German Steinway—has a far less raucous sonority than its New York counterpart heard on Berman's Beethoven sonata disc (M 34218, March 1977), but the same overly close microphoning has picked up a percussive twang from mezzo-forte up and has at worst (as in the Scriabin D sharp minor Etude and in the "Ritual Fire Dance") reduced Berman's pianism to clatter.

He walks a constant tightrope between lumbering, straightforward sturdiness and occasional fustian frivolity (e.g., in the central section of the Schubert-Liszt "Erlkönig," which is teased and simpered over). The precisely articulated, unusually deliberate Rachmaninoff G minor Prelude has its "Bydlo"-like attractiveness, and some of the other selections are strongly characterized, but I repeatedly miss the nuance and sense of transition one hears from the greatest masters, even in so-called popular repertory. But then nuance and yielding rubato do not flourish in such an acoustical environment, and my impressions of Berman's

Continued on page 129

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(Continued from page 84)

heartening to note that others are joining in; in the works are three recent major projects from Philips and EMI.

HF readers are probably aware by now that Colin Davis has recorded Peter Grimes for Philips with Jon Vickers in the title role; release is planned for early 1979. Also in the cast are Heather Harper (Ellen Orford), Jonathan Summers (replacing the indisposed Norman Bailey as Balstrode), Elizabeth Bainbridge (Auntie), Patricia Payne (Mrs. Sedley), Forbes Robinson (Swallow), John Dobson (Bob Boles), Richard Van Allan (Hobson), and John Lanigan (the Rector).

EMI's projects are the *Spring Symphony* and the *War Requiem*—the former with André Previn and the London Symphony (with soloists Sheila Armstrong, Janet Baker, and Robert Tear and the London Symphony Chorus), the latter with Louis Frémaux and his Birmingham forces.

Desmar update. Desmar informs us that it has seven releases on the way, all in German pressings: two discs each by the Boston Camerata under Joel Cohen ("German Music from the Middle Ages and Renaissance" and Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Midnight Mass*) and by pianist Richard Goode (selected pieces from Brahms's Op. 116, 118, and 119 and Schubert's A major Sonata, D. 959); a second disc by Tchaikovsky Competition winner Nathaniel Rosen (Schumann's complete cello/piano works, with Doris Stevenson); Lucile Johnson and Marcela Kozikova playing "French Music for Two Harps"; and the Los Angeles String Trio playing Haydn's three Op. 53 trios and Schoenberg's Op. 45 Trio.

Also coming are three historical offerings: "Claudio Arrau: The Early Recordings," a two-disc set of the Polydor, Telefunken, and selected EMI recordings; "Maggie Teyte at Town Hall, January 15, 1948," containing Britten's *Les Illuminations* and excerpts from Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*; and a two-disc International Piano Archives set featuring pianist David Saperton.

Enoch Light dies. Record producer, bandleader, and stereo pioneer Enoch Light died in New York on July 31. Light is probably best remembered for his albums "Persuasive Percussion" and "Provocative Percussion" on the Command label he helped found during the 1950s. These recordings perhaps more than any other established stereo as the major medium for popular music. Light continued to produce recordings for Project 3 until his death. He was seventy-one. ●

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playing may be subtly influenced by the wiry aggressiveness of the sound.

A seven-inch bonus disc is included, containing a mazurka by Berman himself and Mozart's Fantasia, K. 397—recorded, we are told, when the pianist was seven. I listened to the first, an unfamiliar work, incredulously; only with the first notes of the Mozart did I realize that the correct speed is 33½ and not 45, as indicated. The playing is remarkably accomplished for a seven-year-old, though one does wonder how such decent sound emerges from a Russian home recording of 1937. (Think of the dismal Soviet professional efforts of the Fifties!) H.G.

LONDON EARLY MUSIC GROUP: What Pleasures Have Great Princes. London Early Music Group, James Tyler, dir. RCA RED SEAL CRL 2-2794, \$8.98 (two discs). Tape: ●● CRK 2-2794, \$8.98; ●● CRS 2-2794, \$8.98.

A debut album by what will probably be one of several spinoffs from the late David Munrow's assemblage of instrumentalists and singers, the Early Music Consort of London. The London Early Music Group, headed by lutenist James Tyler, attempts a lot in two discs covering the entire spectrum of music during the reign of Elizabeth I. Not unexpectedly, wind virtuoso Munrow's inheritors are most successful where the music can depend on first-rate instrumentalists like Oliver Brookes, Alan Lumsden, and David Watkins to make its point.

The most satisfactory side of the four is the one devoted to instrumental ensembles of Allison, Bachelor, Lupo, Holborne, Byrd, Johnson, and that prolific and various composer, Anon. It is a particular pleasure to hear the broken consort (an English term for the then fashionable combination of bowed, blown, and plucked instruments), which has been lacking in the recorded catalog since the classic recording by Sydney Beck went out of print many years ago. Allison's *Go from my window* and Lady Frances Sidney's *Almayne*, like *The widow's mite of Bachelor*, are delightful pieces, ever various in their kaleidoscopic sound as well as substance.

There are other treasures in the collection. Byrd's immensely expressive motet *Haec dicit Dominus* gets an extraordinarily moving reading by five vocal soloists backed up by Anthony Saunders at the organ, and the composer's consort songs, "What pleasures have great princes" and "Content is rich," sung in an attenuated falsetto sound by tenor Paul Elliott, nevertheless have great charm. Even more successful, though, are performances of consort songs that incorporate contemporary instrumental settings: Dowland's catchy galliard "Can she excuse my wrongs" and Morley's delightful "See mine own sweet jewel."

Nevertheless, the album is not completely successful. As director, Tyler errs on the side of stodginess. The disc side devoted to solos and ayres presents one grim landscape after another, each at an appropriately doleful tempo. Out of Byrd's enormously various choral repertoire, Ty-

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ler has selected three excruciatingly penitential Latin motets and a rather dull anthem, *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles*. Even in his solo appearances, the oft-times dazzling lutenist chooses to play pieces best described as thoughtful or deliberate; they hardly ever raise the heartbeat of the listener.

No doubt there is something daunting in trying to challenge Munrow in his most ebullient, manic phases, but until the great talents of today try to do so, we will not recapture the excitement and enthusiasm he roused so often. S.T.S.

NIGEL ROGERS: *Airs de Cour: Drinking Songs from the Reign of Louis XIII*. Nigel Rogers, tenor; Anthony Bailes, lute. [Gerd Berg, prod.] PETERS INTERNATIONAL PLE 050, \$7.98.

This elegant and graceful recording belies its subtitle. "Drinking songs" calls up a picture of hearty tankards of ale and sturdy trenchermen, but if a beverage should accompany this collection, it might rather be a sparkling white wine or a fragrant claret served in crystal stemware and offered with a knowing wink or a languid sigh.

The *air de cour*, an early-seventeenth-century French form with relations to both the English ayre and the Italian monody, is a strophic lute song with comparatively simple accompaniment. Deriving its rhythms from the long and short accents of French metric poetry, the sophisticated *air* has a unique plasticity that demands the utmost stylistic understanding from the performer. The sensitive musical singing of Nigel Rogers is perfectly suited to bring out the best in this underrecorded repertory.

"*Cessés mortels de soupirer*" by Pierre Guédrón is a fine example of the early declamatory *air de cour* with a beautifully plangent refrain. Guédrón's son-in-law, Antoine Boessel, brought more charm and flexibility to settings such as his "*N'espérez plus mes yeux*," for which Mersenne provided a series of virtuosic vocal variations. One wonders if Marie de Medici herself ever sang "*Qui veut chasser une migraine*," a witty recommendation for the curative powers of wine written by her music teacher, Gabriel Bataille. In any case, it pleased the French court, which continued to fancy airs like this and those of Etienne Moulinié even after their fashion with the general public had passed.

Rogers sings several short pieces by each of these four masters of the genre and half a dozen additional *airs* by their contemporaries. Anyone familiar with the tenor's superb Monteverdi Orfeo (Archiv 2710 015) or his masterly album of early Italian songs (Archiv 2533 305) will recognize and appreciate his total command of the style of the early seventeenth century, an era that catered to the elegant singer in command of his instrument. On the other hand, there are those who claim that only the French can sing French, and if you insist on the nasal forward projection of that school, you may not enjoy the international sound Rogers employs. Otherwise, this album is highly

recommended for its unusual yet attractive repertoire and its totally engaging style.

S.T.S.

SPANISH CATHEDRAL MUSIC IN THE GOLDEN AGE. For a feature review, see page 105.

AUDIOPHILE RECORDS

The unconventional techniques employed in the recording and manufacture of the discs reviewed below result in prices and distribution patterns that set them apart from mass-market recordings.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 (Appassionata)*. Ikuyo Kamiya, piano. [Hiroshi Isaka, prod.] RVC RDC 4, \$14.95 (direct-to-disc recording, 45 rpm; distributed by Audio-Technica).

The rather light, icy sonority of the Bösendorfer Imperial concert grand is hardly heard to flattering advantage in this direct-to-disc recording. For one thing, the treble emerges as a separate entity from the bass—the former rather cold, jangly, and percussive, without sufficient atmosphere; the latter uncomfortably plump, even posh, imparting an inappropriately beefy sound to the fundamental linearity of Beethoven's writing. Then, too, the emphasis on "directness"—whether to disc or from sounding board to eardrum—results in a technologically advanced but uncomfortably cramped perspective. The splashy diminished-seventh runs, melodramatic chord outbursts, and other rhetorical devices of the *Appassionata* cry out for expansive breathing space; perhaps the *Waldstein* or another more tautly constructed Beethoven sonata might have been better served by such clinical engineering.

As for the performance, Ikuyo Kamiya, a thirty-two-year-old graduate of the Toho Gakuen University, hits a pretty fair percentage of the sonata's many notes but shows little real understanding of how to organize them into meaningful patterns. A certain pianistic aggressiveness goes hand in hand with interpretive blandness. Details are treated inconsistently: Although Kamiya plays no *nachschlag* on the trill at bar 183 in the first movement—pedantic and musically senseless adherence to a tiny point found in the autograph and first edition—she ignores the crucial directive to repeat the second part of the finale. (Beethoven indicated this, in *all* versions of the text, not only with conventional repeat signs, but also with the highly unusual written-out specification "*la seconda parte due volte*"—"the second part twice.")

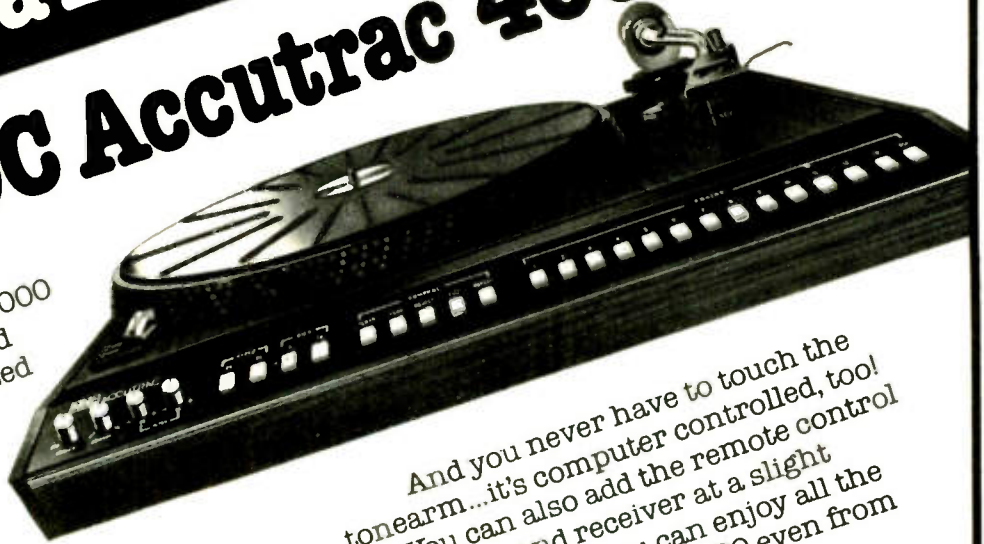
The omission adds to the aggravation of the absurdly high price asked for this student-ish performance of only one sonata.

HARRIS GOLDSMITH

Continued on page 132



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CIRCLE 67 ON PAGE 127

IDIL BIRET: Piano Recital. Idil Biret, piano. [Ilhan Mimaroglu, prod.] FINNADAR SR 125, \$12.98 (direct-to-disc recording).

CHOPIN: Mazurkas: in A minor, Op. 17, No. 4; in B, Op. 56, No. 1. **PROKOFIEV:** Sonata No. 2, in D minor, Op. 14. **SCRIABIN:** Sonata No. 10, Op. 70.

This is the most successful direct-to-disc piano recording I have heard. The bright, crystalline top is present, but there is also a warm ambience, with none of the glaring telephone-booth constriction of recordings seemingly made without the awareness that appropriate acoustics are as important to piano sonority as shocking clarity.

Having an artist as sensitive and accomplished as Idil Biret at the keyboard is an enormous help. Her fluency seems limitless, and her ability to control even at the softest dynamics is all too rare these days. Interpretively, the young Turkish-born, French-trained Biret has her own mind about all of this music, yet for all the subjectivity she never violates the basic idiom of the work at hand. The two Chopin mazurkas are treated very freely, with a complex rubato and almost tricky inner-voice dialogue—an arresting blend of fragile delicacy and commanding strength. The Prokofiev Second Sonata has less of the steely rhythm heard in the second and fourth movements of Gary Graffman's recording (due for rerelease on Odyssey), but Biret compensates with a warm, almost improvisatory, flexibility; her folk tale-like interpretation emphasizes the kinship with such contemporaneous Prokofiev works as *Tales of the Old Grandmother*.

Scriabin's last sonata gets a reading that, once again, cultivates delicacy and warmly singing tone. Whereas Horowitz, in his great 1966 live recording (Columbia M 31620 or M2S 757), shapes the febrile phrases on an epic scale, the present account treats the music more intimately, with an equally valid series of sharp accents followed by diminuendos. For sheer power, it would be hard to rival the sustained colossal energy that Horowitz brings to the chains of trills in the first big climax, but Biret, helped by the wide dynamic range, creates almost comparable—if more intermittent—energy. Hers is a bona fide virtuoso rendition.

The price is steep, but in this case artistic values go hand in hand with aural ones. A fine disc. **HARRIS GOLDSMITH**

CHOPIN: Piano Works. Arthur Moreira-Lima, piano. [Tamako Hashimoto, prod.] DENON OX 7118 ND, \$14.95 (PCM digital recording; distributed by Discwasher).

Ballade No. 3, in A flat, Op. 47. Etudes: in E, Op. 10, No. 3; in C minor, Op. 10, No. 12. Mazurka in B flat, Op. 7, No. 1. Nocturnes: in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2; in C sharp minor, Op. posth. Preludes: in D flat, Op. 28, No. 15; in D minor, Op. 28, No. 24. Scherzo No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 31.

This digitally recorded disc comes with detailed Japanese annotations, from which I learned—through the help of a friend—that Moreira-Lima is a Brazilian pianist, born in 1940, who studied at the Moscow Conservatory and in Paris with Marguerite Long. He is a prizewinner in several big international competitions—second place (behind Martha Argerich) in the 1966 Warsaw Chopin competition and third at both

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CIRCLE 15 ON PAGE 127

Leeds and Moscow's Tchaikovsky. His playing is a little different from that of the usual young virtuoso: more impulsive and subjective, more freewheeling in the way he contrasts dynamics and links phrases. He takes chances, and even with his big technique there are a few arbitrary passages and wrong notes in the B flat minor Scherzo, none of them of great consequence.

Moreira-Lima is certainly helped by the striking solidity and presence of the sound (which does, however, seem a trifle icy and artificial in the top register); with a recording of less impact and brilliance, one might be more distracted by his theatricality. My copy does suffer from slight surface crackle not present on the several other Denon discs I have heard. HARRIS GOLDSMITH

CLEVELAND SYMPHONIC WINDS. Cleveland Symphonic Winds, Frederick Fennell, cond. [Robert Woods, prod.] TELARC 5038, \$14.95 (Soundstream digital recording; distributed by Audio-Technica).

BACH: *Fantasia in G, S. 572*; Gravement (arr. R. F. Goldman and Loist). HANDEL: *Royal Fireworks Music* (ed. Baines and Mackerras). HOLST: *Suites for Band, Op. 28*: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in F.

This disc allows us to hear a recording made by the Soundstream digital process, in which sound is preserved on tape in binary numbers at the rate of 640,000 binary digits per second. The result is a recording with a much wider dynamic range than is possible in conventional tape mastering and unusually low levels of distortion. As heard here, woodwinds, brass, and percussion speak with unusual clarity, vivacity, and presence. The bass drum, the piccolo, and such formidable forces as eight bassoons and six trumpets are all well defined in the total registration of an unusually large and skilled wind ensemble. As a demonstration record, this is hard to beat.

How you respond to it musically depends on how you feel about the repertory. Holst's band suites are jaunty in the best British tradition, with lively tunes and some apt references to familiar themes. No Mozart wind divertimentos, to be sure, but attractive on a modest scale and well played. The Bach and Handel are both arrangements, but good ones, and the *Royal Fireworks Music* is impressive in terms of massed wind sonorities. The Bach has majesty, the Handel a nice lilt and a quality that can be called baroque without making any great claims to musicological authenticity.

Frederick Fennell has a good ear for balances and a propulsive beat that keeps everything moving well. This record certainly establishes the potential of the Soundstream digital recording technique.

ROBERT C. MARSH

JØRGEN ERNST HANSEN: Organ Recital. Jørgen Ernst Hansen, organ of Holmens Church, Copenhagen. [Peter Willemoës and Yoshiharu Kawaguchi, prod.] DENON OX 7109 ND, \$14.95 (PCM digital recording; distributed by Discwasher).

BACH: *Concerto in G, S. 592*; *Fantasia and Fugue, in C minor, S. 537*; *Chorale Preludes: Herzlich tut mich ver-*

langen, S. 727; *Jesus, meine Zuversicht, S. 728*. BOYCE: *Voluntary in D*. MARTINI: *Sonata sui flauti, No. 3*. PACHELBEL: *Chaconne in F minor*. TELEMAN: *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*. WALTHER: *Concerto del Sigr. Torelli*.

The organ, probably more than any other instrument, is dependent upon a sense of aural spaciousness, and it is well to remember that most of the organ's literature has been conceived for large and often reverberant churches. It follows, then, that the worst mistake an engineer can make in recording an organ is to place the microphones too close, for one loses thereby that all-important sense of space and hears too many incidental noises of playing action and pipe speech.

Peter Willemoës has produced uncomfortably close-mike organ recordings in the past, and so I was apprehensive when I noticed his name among the engineers for this new record. He has done it again. If you've ever wondered what a fifty-stop Marcussen organ would sound like right in your listening room, this is the record for you. The problem is that this instrument was never voiced to be heard at such proximity. Up close, the church's acoustics cannot perform the essential softening, mellowing, and blending functions; one hears too much buzz, sizzle, and "chiff" from the flues, and the reeds sound rather crude. What's worse is that all this only accentuates the sadly uninspired performances of Jørgen Ernst Hansen, who exhibits scarcely more life than he did in those dull early-Sixties Nonesuch records. Everything is rendered in a monotonous legato and, aside from some perceptible shaping of phrases in the Pachelbel Chaconne, the tempos are coldly metronomical.

Denon's "pulse code modulation" process does yield an intensely realistic sound - I'm certain the Holmens Church organ sounds exactly like this if one stands on a high ladder two feet in front of the rückpositiv case - but musically this is a loser. Here, to be sure, the medium is the message.

SCOTT CANTRELL

JAZZ

LOUIS BELLSON/RAY BROWN/PAUL SMITH: *Intensive Care*. [Jeffrey Weber, prod.] DISCWASHER DR 001 DD, \$14.50.

The clean crispness of Louis Bellson's snare drums and the warm, full tone of Ray Brown's bass give this direct-to-disc recording some distinctive sonic interest. Paul Smith's piano has depth and sparkling definition, and the overall balance of the three instruments is close and natural. But Smith, on whom the performances focus, is a busy, busy pianist who, much like Oscar Peterson, is interested in technical virtuosity more than in musical interpretation. And the material is an unimaginative collection of pop warhorses - "The Lady Is a Tramp," "On a Clear Day," "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," "Yesterdays," "Everything Happens to Me," etc. All of them are good tunes, but all have been played to death and are not resuscitated by Smith's treatments.

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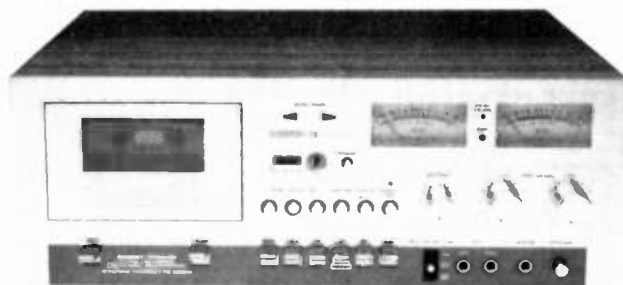
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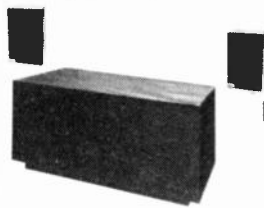
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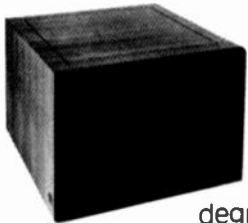
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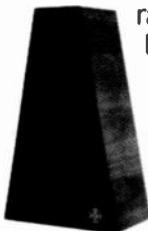
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MISCELLANEOUS

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Peter Yarrow, Mary Travers, and Noel Paul Stookey in concert at Central Park

Peter, Paul & Mary's Courageously Uncool Reunion

by Bruce Pollock

For a particular generation of pop music fans, the long-awaited reunion of Peter Yarrow, Noel Paul Stookey, and Mary Travers was as potentially exhilarating—or potentially traumatic—an event as the return of the Beatles would be for a succeeding generation. For Peter, Paul & Mary were avatars of the Six-

Bruce Pollock is a music journalist and the author of Popular Songwriting 1955-1975, Playing for Change, and Me, Minsky, & Max.

ties folk consciousness that immediately preceded the arrival of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. Part Peter Seeger, part nursery rhyme, the trio popularized a host of sing-along anthems to a socially conscious crowd caught midway between paunch and protest.

Their influence was both musical and visual: Peter and Paul wore goatees, Mary's hair was long and ironed straight. Many of their songs were inoffensive and sweet—about hammers and lemon trees and dragons. But they also recorded a number of Bob Dylan

tunes, such as *Blowin' in the Wind* and *Don't Think Twice*, which, by becoming enormous hits, paved the way to something larger than mere folk: folk/rock. "We all passed the hat together," said Mary, recalling that era. "There was Dylan, Woody Allen, and Bill Cosby—who were starving to death with the rest of

"We all passed the hat
together—Dylan, Woody Allen,
Bill Cosby."

us—along with Len Chandler, Tom Paxton, and Odetta."

"We were so compelled to share what we shared," added Peter. "It was a kind of ecstasy of creativity."

The years passed, and although the trio voiced some of the most poignant and prophetic messages of

the decade, notably in *Great Mandella* and *The Wedding Song*, their breakup in 1971 was as inevitable as the passing of folk's mass popularity. "It was time for us to reidentify ourselves individually," said Peter, "take some time to say, 'Who am I? What really means something to me?' Because 'Peter, Paul & Mary' was so overwhelming an identity it really took over everything." Their audience, meanwhile, mortgaged their high ideals and forgot all the words to the songs.

Yet it was predominantly the same audience, with children in tow, that occupied every seat at the Dr. Pepper Music Festival in New York City's Central Park last August. They and the hundreds of nonpaying patrons scattered throughout the greenery had come to sing and stomp and clap along with the 1978 Peter, Paul & Mary, on tour together for the first time since 1970. This was an audience that used to march together as one, keeping time to the words of these singers, all conspiring to "tear this building down" (*If*

Peter, Paul & Mary: Reunion. David Rubinson, producer. Warner Bros. BSK 3231, \$7.98. Tape: ●● M5 3231, ● M8 3231, \$7.98.

David Rubinson's production credits include such acts as Patti LaBelle and Herbie Hancock. Peter, Paul & Mary's credits include a mile-long list of Sixties folk hits and, in Mary's case, a few recent m.o.r. solo albums. Put them together and what do you get? On "Reunion" you get string tremolos, thinly recorded Ferrante & Teicher pianos, the Swingle Singers and other kinds of Bach mimicry, harp arpeggios, and Vegas major-seventh chord endings.

But there's more to "Reunion" than sappy ballads, and in their wide choice of music, Peter, Paul & Mary are to be commended—one number each for reggae and novelty, a little folk/rock, and a few ballads, some already described, some far more palatable. Instrumentation ranges from conventional mud (take a Manilow instrumental track and double it) on *Like the First Time*, to authentic reggae on Dylan's *Forever Young*, to rousing, rolling rock on *Best of Friends*. The voices are in excellent form, and the vocal arrangements are similar in many respects to the old Peter, Paul & Mary style: verses are solos back by oohs, and choruses are harmonized vertically.

This kind of treatment does not always suit the material, however. The melody of Margie Adam's *The Unicorn Song* is often buried completely from overharmonization (and/or bad mixing). Similarly, the vocal track on Dylan's *Forever Young* has been subjected to too much doubling. The effect is that these voices—which blend so well and so naturally—simply weight down a sprightly, col-

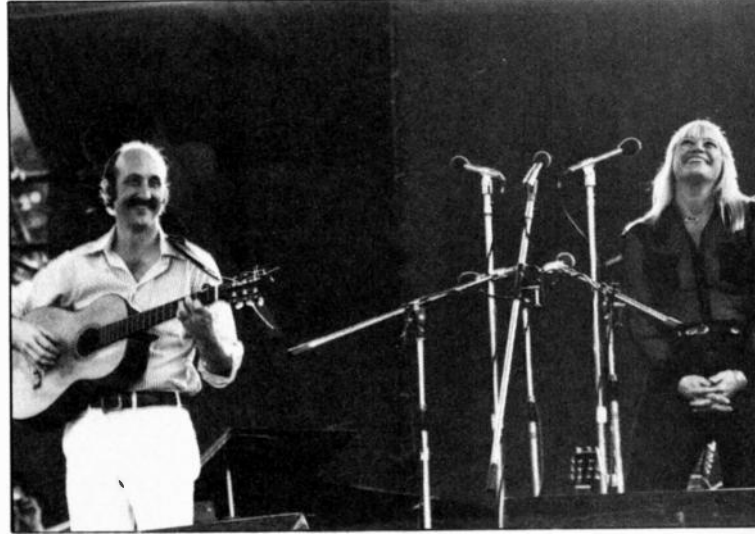
orful instrumental track. And I'm surprised that Billy Joel's *Summer Highland Falls* was even attempted by a group of this kind. Those pick-up notes are difficult enough for one singer to spit out, much less three. It seems they may have realized this, for the sibilant lyric eventually gives way to rousing Swingle Singers la-las backed by a pseudo-classical instrumental. Let's hope Joel never hears it.

Perhaps in light of the variety of musical frameworks on "Reunion," the trio has chosen to stick to one or both of two lyric themes: relationships (love or friend) and the Maintenance of One's Individual Identity. Of the numbers that put the two together, *I Need to Be Me for Me* ("and then we still can be for each other") stands out as a particularly invidious example of this overworked Werner Erhard doctrine.

But "Reunion" does have its moments. As delivered by its graceful melody, *Sweet Survivor's* message will get to you if you dare give it the chance. *Best of Friends* is also irresistible, bouncing and rollicking its way from one voice to the next. It's just a wisp of a melody, but it stands up to repetitive treatment like a champ.

I'm glad Peter, Paul & Mary are back—more power to them. But I can't understand why they've chosen to work with Rubinson when Peter is a perfectly fine producer in his own right. Perhaps if this comeback is more than a one-shot (which, no doubt, will depend on how "Reunion" does) they'll stick with their own instincts next time and not take the safe, glossy route. Honesty and corn are their two fortes, and there's a market for that. Why glaze the ear when the kernel's so healthy?

SUSAN ELLIOTT



I Had My Way). And while nostalgic curiosity may have been what initially attracted them, by the evening's end it was clear that the trio had revived an old need for togetherness, for involvement through music.

Speculating backstage afterward, Paul (he prefers to be called Noel) was caught in the spirit of the singularly exhilarating performance. "If the Beatles believed what they sang," he said with smile, "they're going to have to get back together. They're going to have to realize that what they sang about is stronger than the individual identities they're hanging onto."

Paul, of course, was always the fantasist; Mary's appraisal of the situation was—characteristically—more down to earth. With only five out of a scheduled eighteen concerts completed, she felt it was too early

"If the Beatles believed what they sang, they're going to have to get back together."

to say anything definitive about the reunion, commenting instead upon the evening's ambience: "Today it's hard to find a place where large numbers of people can share a good, schmaltzy, warm, honest, open feeling without being embarrassed. Nobody was nervous out there. They all had a good time. There's still a tremendous desire on the part of the audience to articulate that sense of freedom that you feel when you sing unabashedly, out loud."

Peter, the politician in the group, seemed more philosophical. "If we have something to share now, it's because we're able to do what Joan Baez once said Bob Dylan does: say something that people want to say but haven't found the way to say. But I don't really know what the effect of this get-together will be. I suspect it'll be another grain of sand, another drop of water in a cup or an ocean that's beginning to fill up now

for the first time in many years. It'll be a different cup and a different ocean from the one in the Sixties, but it will be a privilege to be a part of it at a time when it's filling up rather than draining out. I think there's a redefinition going on, more reality-based than we ever had in the Sixties. It's beginning to be an optimistic time."

The reunion has actually been in the wind for some time. "Three years ago Peter thought the time was right," Paul related, "and he got Mary and me together." But, as it turned out, some of the personal differences that led to their retirement got in the way again. Paul—who leads a decidedly low-key, religious life up in Maine and sings maybe forty dates a year at places like his daughter's high school—was unwilling to commit the time involved. Mary was also too busy, touring the country with a cabaret act somewhere to the right of Judy Collins and the left of Peggy Lee. Peter had continued to keep an active hand in the music business, writing and producing for Mary (*Torn Between Two Lovers*) MacGregor, among others.

"About a year ago," Paul continued, "Mary called and said, 'I've got an opening. Why don't we try it one more time?' So we met, and this time there was something especially right about it."

The first step on the long road back was selecting the songs for the "Reunion" LP (see page 144). Also in the works are a live album to be recorded on tour and a possible TV special. After that, who knows? "To recover seven and a half years we went through 150 songs, more or less," Paul explained. "And each one became a platform for philosophical discussion."

Mary found an earthier metaphor. "We took apart songs like you'd take apart a chicken," she said. "We wanted to find songs that talked about what we felt was happening now. From 1960 to 1965 it was the Us generation. From 1965 to 1970 it was Us against Them. In 1970 to 1975 it was the Me generation. Now I think we're coming to a point where, yes, it's impor-



tant to me to understand myself and to have an image of who I am that is not determined by externals, but I'm not supposed to lose sight of other people. If I am in pain and they are in pain, maybe I can put aside my pain for a while and be of some help. Maybe that's what the Eighties will be about."

With such high ideals and the built-in difficulties of collective decision-making, it's no wonder that five

"'Peter, Paul & Mary' was so overwhelming an identity it took over everything."

of the songs on "Reunion" were written by either Peter or Paul, including two Peter wrote with Tin Pan Alley veterans Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil. Other material includes Billy Joel's *Summer Highland Falls*, and a reggae version of Dylan's *Forever Young*, which took Peter to Jamaica to work with Jimmy Cliff's band and the Maytals. Most of the album was recorded live at CBS studios in New York, with such top musicians as Kenny Bichel, Steve Gadd, and Will Lee. (Ironically, it was originally going to be produced in London by George Martin of Beatles fame. But Martin had to pull out, due to heavy *Sgt. Pepper* commitments.)

The Seventies has been a time of reunions—Crosby, Stills & Nash, Dylan and the Band, the Beach Boys and Brian Wilson, Jan & Dean, Sonny & Cher,

one half of the Monkees—of rejuvenation, redefinition, and renewal. Almost every major group that broke up has gotten back together at least one more time to try it again. Will Peter, Paul & Mary's reunion be, as *Like the First Time* (from "Reunion") suggests, "forever"?

It may be too soon to tell, but Paul seemed willing to entertain the notion—if a bit ambiguously. "At this point," he said, "we have re-established a sense of each other as valuable human beings. Each of us must retain an individual integrity, a career, and its commitments. But if at some point further on down the line an opportunity again arises, we would not hesitate to make this happen again."

Peter, though equally noncommittal, had a slightly different perspective: "[The reunion] was something that happened under its own steam. It happened because we weren't asleep during those eight years. We've been thinking and growing and changing."

Even if it has been nothing more than a tantalizing taste of renewed folk consciousness, their tour has brought a lot of people back together, back in touch with feelings not touched in a long while. Perhaps Peter, Paul & Mary have helped to create a momentum that other performers will pick up on and keep rolling. As Mary succinctly and amusingly put it: "We're heading back into a sense of community, a sense of caring. Because I think you can't stay alienated forever. It's bad for your skin." ●

The American Song Festival: Long Odds for a Short-Sighted Business

by Richard J. Pietschmann

“It’s a long shot,” admits Jay Lowy when asked about the chances of a novice songwriter’s winning the American Song Festival and being noticed by a music publisher. Lowy should know—he’s vice president and general manager of Jobete Music Company and the other Motown-affiliated music publishing companies, and a member of the ASF’s

“The kid’s probably going to make \$40,000 in royalties from that one song.”

forty-member “blue ribbon panel” of judges that decides the five-year-old songwriting competition’s grand prize winners each year. “Though it’s an expensive vehicle,” he continues (the minimum entry fee is \$13.85), “it’s an honest one.” Lowy looks out at his office’s view of Hollywood, thinking about the festival. “We *do* try to listen closely to songs, and it’s possible that a song *will* step out.” But, he says, the odds that an entering songwriter will gain recognition are so long that trying to beat them becomes almost prohibitive: A writer may enter as many songs as he wishes, but for every entry after the first he must pay \$8.25.

The author is a free-lance journalist and writes a monthly music column for Los Angeles magazine.



That, of course, does not mean that ASF winners don’t profit or that the festival does not unearth talented writers and commercial songs. So far, according to Tad Danz, the smooth and well-groomed president of ASF and proprietor of what he calls “the largest songwriting competition in the world,” the organization has forked over more than \$450,000 in cash prizes since 1974. This year, the two grand prize winners, one professional and one amateur, will each receive \$6,000 while the major category winners will each get \$1,000. (Amateur categories are Top 40, folk, gospel, easy listening, country, vocal, “ASF open,” and “judges’ decision.” Professional categories, for those writers who are members of a licensing organization such as ASCAP or BMI, are Top 40, easy listening, country, “ASF open,” and “judges’ decision.”) Not surprisingly, Danz steadfastly refuses to reveal the number of entries received each year, other than to claim “getting in tens of thousands of songs.”

Most lucrative to both winning and nonwinning entrants are those songs that are signed by music pub-

lishers and recorded. Last year, judge Lucky Carle of United Artists Music Publishing found a song he loved and filled out a special request slip to have the writer contact him after the competition was over. A few months later, Jack Sawyer's *All I Ever Need* appeared on albums by artists from Helen Reddy to Johnny Mathis. "The kid's probably going to make \$40,000 in royalties from that one song," says Danz. Ironically, Sawyer's song was not a prizewinner.

ASF promotional literature is quite naturally packed with success stories of unknown writers penning their way into show business following exposure during the song festival. Thirty-one albums and four-



The judges earn their week's lunch money

teen singles containing ASF-winning songs are listed in the *Songwriting Notebook* sent to entrants. Betsy Bogart's story is cited as an example of how perseverance can pay off: She first entered the competition in 1975 with *Hitchhiking Man*, and it won honorable mention. But she was back with the same song in 1976, when it won a quarter-finalist spot, and then again in 1977, when it copped the amateur folk prize. It was also picked up by Famous Music. (Bogart is a winner again this year—see box on facing page.)

Though executives of ASF occasionally get carried away by the benevolent nature of their services, at its very pragmatic corporate heart the festival is clearly intended to make a lot of money for its parent company, the Seattle-based Sterling Recreation Organization. Sterling is a family corporation that owns seventy movie theatres (SRO Theatres) on the West Coast, five bowling centers, and "about a dozen" radio stations, according to Danz, a corporate vice president and a family member. The company became involved with ASF during the festival's first year—in October of 1973.

"In the summer of 1973," says Danz. "this guy named Larry Goldblatt, who used to manage Blood, Sweat & Tears and David Clayton-Thomas, organized the song festival and solicited entries. He got about four to five thousand, but he ran out of money. So he needed to find some way to hold the event or

refund the money, and he convinced Sterling that it would be a good venture to go into."

But that first year was a disaster from which Sterling may still be smarting. The original plans were to make ASF similar to the song festivals held so successfully in Japan, South America, and Europe, where, for instance, the Eurovision finals are viewed on television each year by about half a billion people. (Eurovision is the European competition in which Swedish group ABBA got its start.) But the ABC network presentation of the elaborate ASF finale with Helen Reddy and Paul Williams in October of 1974 garnered an embarrassing twelve share in the Nielson ratings (a twenty is low enough to cause a series' cancellation), and somber Sterling executives returned home to lick their wounds and figure out how to save their investment.

The first thing they did was to elevate Danz (he says he was originally sent to ASF late in 1973 "to watch the checkbook") to president in order to clean house. "Due to a process of natural selection, as Darwin would say," relates Danz with a grin, "I've been the only one of the four original executives to make it."

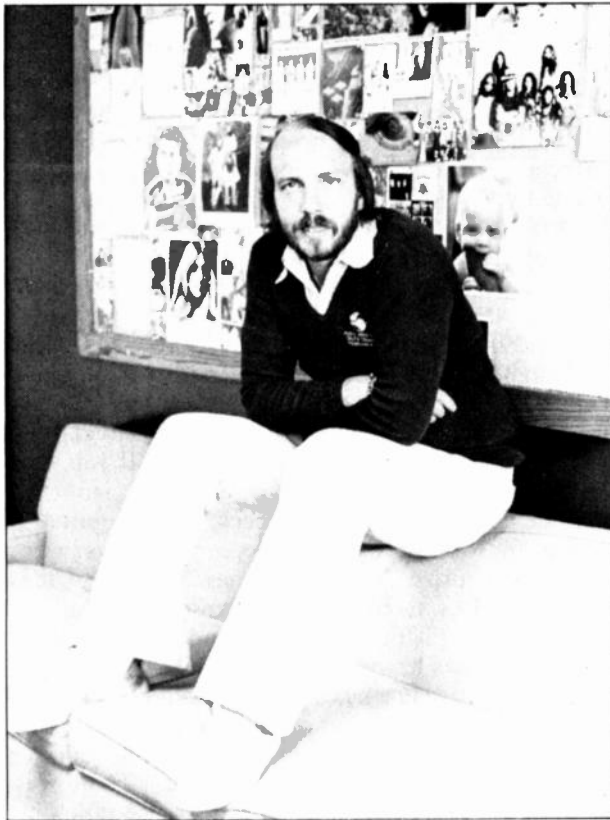
And what Danz did was to re-evaluate the emphasis on television. "We were one hundred per cent convinced in 1974 that the key to making the ASF viable was TV," he remembers. "But we made a mistake copying what was a successful format elsewhere—we thought we could just transplant it. It didn't work."

The retrenching process, which Danz refers to as "a rough first couple of years," was a painful one. But experience and research began to indicate that American songwriters wanted different things from their international counterparts. A television award show "wasn't what they as career-oriented individuals cared about," says Danz. "What they cared about was if they lived in Duluth or Des Moines and there wasn't an office of 20th Century-Fox Music or ABC Music in town, how did they get their talents exposed. So in the last four years the American Song Festival has tried to give its constituents what they want—and they pay all the bills." According to Danz, right now entering songwriters' payments allow the ASF to "break even." But the company's eyes are on the future. "From the corporate standpoint . . . we've been hanging in there because we believe that one of these years the festival's time will come."

But there is at least some frustration evident in Danz's evaluation of ASF's current status. He terms it "pretty stable . . . just about the same number of entries as it's always had." He must drool when he notes the incredible success of Eurovision and the other big TV-oriented song competitions. "We haven't been able to unlock the secret of turning it into a mass media event," he says with a shake of his head. "We need more than the right button. We need a smash hit. We need an ABBA."

Philip "Flip" Black, ASF's director of creative services and a young veteran of the music business (his father was a band leader, and he "sort of grew up in music," including a stint as a pop singer), probably wants those hits more than anybody. "Our success depends on our winners' success," Black says flatly. "I'm still waiting for that big hit song—I know it's in there somewhere," he says pointing at a box of one hundred cassette tapes from recent entrants.

Black runs the nuts-and-bolts end of ASF—the complicated and multilayered process that culls the thousands of individual tapes and—through four judging stages—ultimately determines the winners. The judging this year was held, appropriately enough, at the corner of Hollywood and Vine on the fifth floor of an old office building. Four nights and one day a week the center was open to the ninety judges, who spent an average of five hours a week listening with headphones to tapes played over identical Dolby-ized Sankyo cassette decks. Judges are paid \$9.00 an hour and those who stick through all three levels of initial judging stand to earn approximately \$500 to \$600—"lunch money," as Flip calls it. Final judging is done by a volunteer panel that this year consisted of industry giants such as Bruce Lundvall (CBS Records president), Jay Lowy, top songwriters Al Kasha and Joel Hirschhorn, Norman Gimbel, Buck Owens, Glen Campbell, and Barry Manilow.



Flip Black: "Our success depends on our winners' success"

AMERICAN SONG FESTIVAL 1978 CATEGORY WINNERS

PROFESSIONAL

Easy Listening	Becky Hobbs Los Angeles, Calif.	<i>I Can't Say Good-bye to You</i>
ASF Open	John Flint Minneapolis, Minn.	<i>You and I</i>
Country	Robert Byrne Tom Brasfield Muscle Shoals, Ala.	<i>I'll Love Your Leavin' Away</i>
Top 40	Norman Sallitt Los Angeles, Calif.	<i>Magic in the Air</i>

AMATEUR

Top 40 & ASF Open	Bill Owens Louisville, Ky.	<i>I'll Never Be the Same Again</i>
Folk	Willie DeLeon Victor DeLeon Bloomington, Calif.	<i>Carnival Man</i>
Gospel	Warren Donell-Hickman San Francisco, Calif.	<i>God's Still Got the Power</i>
Easy Listening	Betsy Bogart Gary Reed Marietta, Ga.	<i>Just a Kiss Away from Falling in Love</i>
Country	Eric Bach Andrew T. Wolf York, Pa.	<i>Sad Time of the Night</i>
Vocal	Michael G. Crews Germantown, Tenn.	<i>Only Love</i>

A visit to the cubicled judging offices does, indeed, seem to indicate that no one is there for the money. (Black says he gets at least three times as many applications for judges as he needs.) Judges, three-quarters of whom are in music publishing, hunch seriously over the tape decks. Roy Kohn, West Coast branch manager of Peer-Southern, looks up from an awful tape ("listen to this one," he says) and tells me it takes him two hours or more to go through a box of one hundred tapes. At the first level, four or five promising tapes are pulled out by a judge and passed along to the second level, while his rejects go for review to another judge, who may pass along a few more. "We're out looking for a good song," says Kohn, who has been an ASF judge since 1975. "I look for a good song, not especially a hit song."

Leroy Lovett, whose firm represents several publishers that specialize in gospel and rhythm & blues and who has been a judge from the beginning, puts down his headphones and grimaces. "This is really the dregs, the pits," he says of his review box of gospel. "Within twenty seconds I can usually tell whether a song is good or not."

Nearby in a small office, a three-member, second-level panel is simultaneously evaluating a box of tapes shot up from the initial judging. Since two of the three must agree to pass a tape on and up, one hundred tapes take from three and a half or more hours. Usually there is agreement, but says Rick Landy of 20th Century-Fox Music, "on the other hand we've had some heated battles."

Lucky Carle, who last year found that rare gem of

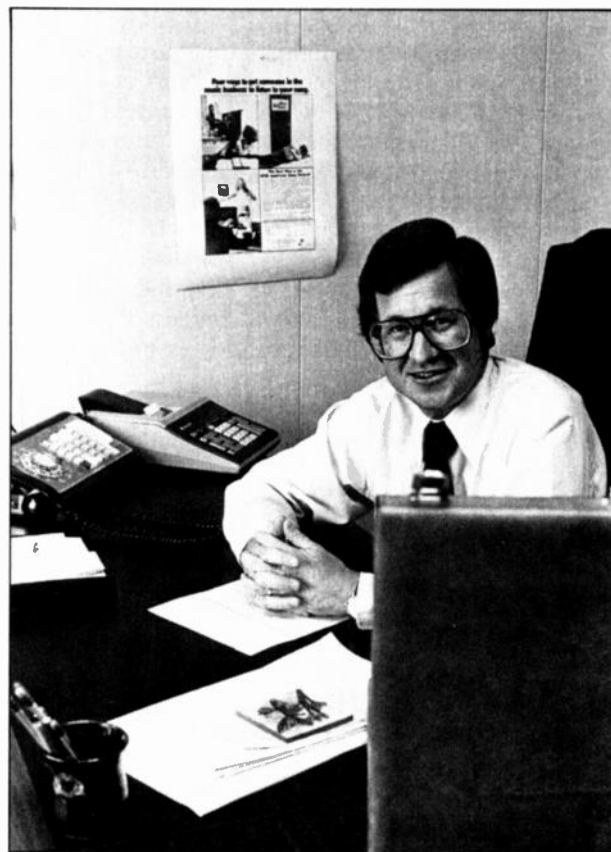
"Skid Row Slasher had no music, no words, just sound effects of people being strangled."

a song, says he has found another this year, and it's killing him that he has to wait a couple of months before he can contact the writer. (The rules are: No contact until the judging process is completed.) Lucky slips the cassette lovingly into the tape deck, and we listen to *Love's Become So Easy*, author currently unknown (tapes are blind). Lucky's eyes glaze over as he listens, and we all agree it is one terrific song.

But, clearly, this fine song is not the norm. "We're constantly amazed how much money is spent by amateurs on demos, and the songs don't have a hook," Landy says. Yes, says Flip Black, the ASF gets lots of awful tapes in every year, and even a couple of hundred blank tapes. "Some of our entrants *couldn't* be listening to the radio, hearing what the music of today is," he says. "Or even what a song is. We get some very bizarre things. *Skid Row Slasher* had no music, no words, just sound effects of people being strangled, and some poor soul spent \$13.85 to send that in."

"The key to the song festival is not *how* we judge songs, but *who* we get to judge songs," Danz says. "Why should a guy like Lucky Carle come in and judge the song festival? First because it's a social experience, second because he believes in what we're doing, and third because if a publisher finds a good song he can sign it up. In effect, when he comes to the song festival, he's doing his job."

The owners of the American Song Festival, economic considerations aside, obviously view their competition as a valid means by which songwriters with talent can, with a bit of luck, open that door into the music business. Certainly this is the least expensive way for someone without connections or someone



Tad Danz: "We need a smash hit"

who can't get to New York, Nashville, or Los Angeles to gain access to some of the top ears in the industry. But the reality is that no matter how good the song, recognition may never come. Or, it may come belatedly: "With *You Light Up My Life*," says Black, "Joe Brooks *knew* he'd written a hit song, but for years he couldn't get arrested with it."

And when recognition does not come to ASF entrants, they rarely try again. Repeat entries are "not very high from nonwinners," acknowledges Black, though "probably seventy-five percent" of the winners re-enter.

But winning the American Song Festival may not be as important as simply entering it. "If you win the song festival, Warner Bros. or Columbia is not going to be breathing down your neck," Black grants. That \$40,000 song Lucky found a year ago never did win any ASF prize. Nor did his new find, even though Warner Bros. Records' Lorrie Janson says that "word on the street is that Lucky's found another song."

As I was leaving ASF's judging offices with Flip Black, a judge in a nearby cubicle yelled, "I just found a song that's perfect for one of our acts. How can I get them hooked up?" Flip looked back and said, "Not until the second week in September." There was an audible groan as the judge protested, "But he's in the studio right now." ●

Input Output

Instruments and Accessories

MA-6 Mixer/Amplifier. Fender has jumped into the PA market with both feet by introducing this mixer. Designed for use by small groups, the MA-6 is sure to win the hearts of lots of folks who need an economical PA system. The input section has six positions, each incorporating the following: a low-impedance XLR (unbalanced) female microphone jack, a high-impedance female phone jack for mikes or instruments, a rotary gain control for setting input levels, a slide fader for further control of individual channel levels, bass and treble controls (40 Hz and 10 kHz, respectively), a combination effects and reverb send pot (left for effects, right for reverb), and separate rotary pots for monitor send. At the top of each input position is a red LED that warns of an overload. Not bad.

But there's more. The output section features master level sliders for MAIN (to the audience) and MONITOR (to the musicians), and rotary pots for reverb and effects returns with individual on/off switches so that the return signals may be sent selectively to the MAIN output, the MONITOR, both, or neither. There are separate five-band equalizers for the monitors and the house sound, enabling the mixer to take best account of the acoustics while still equalizing the monitor mix to the musicians' best advantage. Below the MAIN and MONITOR outputs, there are effects send and receive jacks, should you care to patch in a digital delay, a phaser, or any external accessory. DIRECT inputs allow an additional mixer to be plugged directly into the summing amps of the main section, the monitor section, or both, and a reverb-footswitch jack makes it possible to cut the reverb in and out at will from a remote location.

The back panel of the MA-6 has two phone jacks for AUX REVERB send and receive for an add-on echo unit (which automatically replaces the built-in reverb), a MONITOR OUT jack to drive a separate power amp and speakers for monitoring, a PREAMP OUT jack that lifts the signal from the MA-6 ahead of its internal power amp to drive an outboard of your

choosing, and a PWR AMP IN jack that bypasses all the board functions and feeds the built-in 200-watt-rms power amp. Next in line are two speaker jacks for the main output (again, no extra power amp is needed), a sturdy on/off power switch, an accessory AC plug, an 8-amp fuse, power-cord receptacle, and circuit-breaker reset switch. The level meter reads the power amp's output in rather vague terms.

As for performance, the MA-6 is clearly a winner. The sound throughout the board is clean and noise-free. The equalizers in the input positions, marked "40 Hz" and "10 kHz," represent strange selections indeed, but as bass and treble controls, they do the job quite well. The equalizers at the outputs have roughly a 20-dB range for each slider and operate very smoothly considering this type of equipment. All the pots operate comfortably, the housing is solid, and the power amp delivers plenty of power without audible distortion.

Prospective buyers of PA systems should make the \$750 MA-6 a "must see" item before plunking down those dollars on anything else. The people at Fender have a right to blow their own horns on this one. The mourning voices of musicians who wish for the "pre-CBS" days will be silenced, because this Fender is a *Fender Fender*.

CIRCLE 122 ON PAGE 127

DB-1104 Direct Box. This new direct box from Uni-Sync incorporates all the features standard on other models of good quality. Through a step-down transformer, instrument signals are converted to a signal level acceptable to a microphone line and may be fed to a control console via the mike input positions. Also like other direct boxes, the DB-1104 has an additional AMP output (phone jack) to feed the instrument's stage amplifier and an input sensitivity switch to match either pickup or preamp outputs. A FILTER/FLAT switch, according to Uni-Sync, "simulates speaker response characteristics for use in the PICKUP mode." In fact, the filter elimi-



Fender MA-6 and optional speakers

nates the extreme high end from the signal and is useful for minimizing electronic noise and for keeping a damper on finger noise with new strings. A GROUND LIFT switch also is provided so that, when a hum is present, the user can "disconnect" the ground as a possible remedy. The input connector (like the AMP output) is a standard quarter-inch phone jack. The mike-level output jack is a female XLR with a cast-aluminum housing that appears to be very sturdy.

The DB-1104 works as well as any other. (There is not much to say about the comparative sound quality of direct boxes because there should be no difference.) The only troubling thing about this model is that the rocker switches used for FILTER/FLAT, PICKUP/AMP, and GROUND LIFT feel mushy—sort of like mercury switches you find on a living room wall. Of course they do work, but the user doesn't get a positive feel from them: in a high-pressure studio or road situation you want to know that, when you flip a switch, it stays flipped. Connectors and switches are recessed to prevent damage. The DB-1104 is a well-designed instrument that costs \$61.75.

FRED MILLER

CIRCLE 121 ON PAGE 127

This Christmas Shopping Guide is designed to make your Holiday gift buying easy . . . use it to make your gift selections. You will find something for each and every music listener on your Christmas list. Your favorite high fidelity or record shop is the best place for filling every Christmas stocking.

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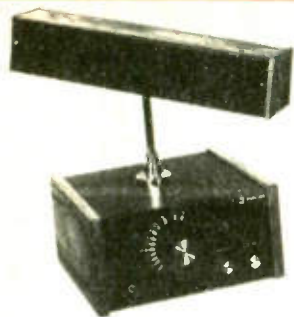


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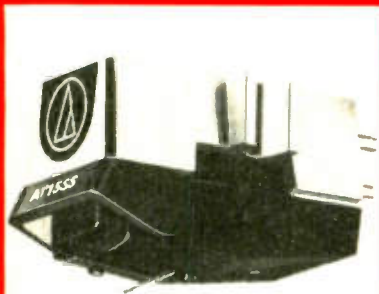
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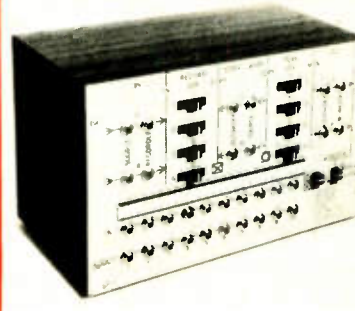


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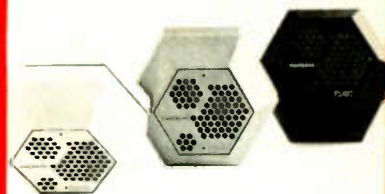
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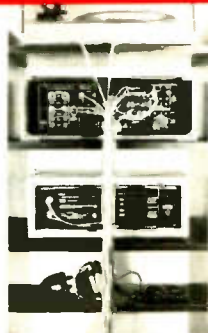
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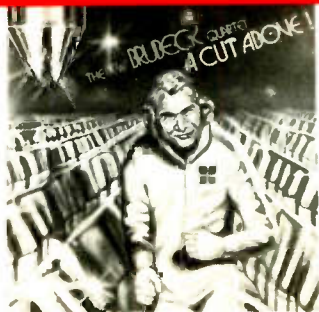
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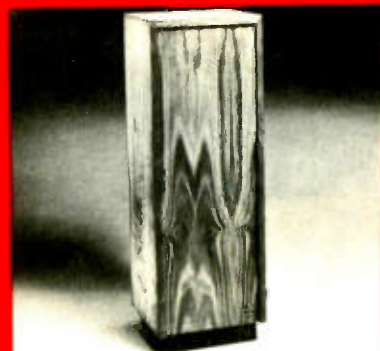
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Steve Kuhn: Non-Fiction. Manfred Eicher, producer. *ECM 1-1124*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● M5 E1-1124, ● M8 E1-1124*, \$7.98.

There is something ironic about the fact that the record company that in recent years has shown the most unrelenting dedication to contemporary jazz is based in Europe. Yet despite its single-minded aesthetic vision—as provided by producer Manfred Eicher—Germany-based ECM has managed to gain major-label distribution in this country, first from Polydor and now from Warner Bros. That's quite an accomplishment for a label whose producer/guiding light would probably discard anything that even resembled a Top-40 single.

Typically, this latest batch of releases is well engineered, attractively packaged, and uncluttered by any intrusion of production trickery. We can either like or dislike the music on these albums, but we cannot accuse Eicher of inserting his personality between us and the performers.

"Desert Marauders" is the second ECM recording from Berkeley pianist Art Lande and Rubisa Patrol. It is a su-

perbly organized, almost intimately cohesive group that somehow manages to make sense out of Lande's quixotic contention that "when we play, we don't know what we're going to play, and we never play the same way twice." Trumpeter Mark Isham is a marvelous improviser—one from whom more will

be heard. I'm sure. Lande's compositions, especially the rhythmically complex *Rubisa Patrol*, the samba-tinged *El Pueblo de las Vacas Tristes*, and the dense lines of *Perelandra*, display the attractive talents of an ensemble that plays together with the passion and closeness of blood brothers.

"Times Square" is Gary Burton's sixth album as a leader for ECM. (Lord knows how many he has made since his days as a wunderkind of the vibes in the early Sixties.) His enormously facile style has often led him into more technical fur than imaginative substance, but here—as on many of his recent recordings—he is held somewhat in check by the solid bass work of Steve Swallow. Alas, it isn't al-



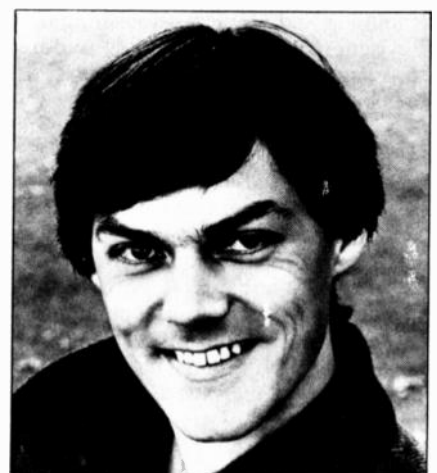
Art Lande



Steve Kuhn



Jack DeJohnette



Jan Garbarek

ways enough of a counterweight, since the curious presence of drummer Roy Haynes tends to unbalance the proceedings in favor of hyperactivity. A further oddity is the inclusion of trumpet player Tiger Okoshi, a master of the treacherous area that lies between Miles Davis and Freddie Hubbard. Okoshi's personality never does break through, and, worse still, his fat, abrasive tone neither blends with nor contrasts properly against the rest of the group's soft tonal texture. The best moments, and the most surprising, are in Swallow's five compositions, which unfold a new and promising stage in this gifted musician's evolution.

"New Directions" showcases a group of virtual superstars that includes drummer Jack DeJohnette, guitarist John Abercrombie, trumpeter Lester Bowie, and bassist Eddie Gomez. But, as with so many groups assembled for the purpose of one recording, the best moments are spotty and usually come from individual flights of spirit rather than collective interaction. Bowie plays impressively, far better than his earlier work with the Art Ensemble of Chicago would have led one to expect. DeJohnette makes a convincing case for himself here (as well as on two other albums in this collection) as the nonpareil master of contemporary drumming. And Gomez, after so many years in Bill Evans' shadow, is finally coming into his own. Only Abercrombie seems vague and uncertain, his drifting lines unconnected to the group's work.

DeJohnette and Gomez also play on "Batik," guitarist Ralph Towner's fifth album for ECM. Predictably, it reflects Towner's sometimes-obsessive fascination with moody abstraction. As in his work with Oregon, he often suggests jazz more than he reveals it. Pieces like *Waterwheel* and *Batik* have the persistent, one-chord modal oppressiveness that often made Oregon's work sleep-inducing. Fortunately, DeJohnette's energetic drumming and Gomez' astonishing improvisations make it impossible to doze off. When Towner reaches their level of intensity (which does happen occasionally), he has no trouble commanding attention.

DeJohnette is also the energy spark on "Places," Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek's new release. Easily the best sax player to emerge from Europe in the last decade, Garbarek is not yet well known to the American jazz public—despite appearances on nearly fifteen ECM albums. He plays with the big, aggressive tone typical of the post-Coltrane style, yet avoids most of its implicit cliché traps, even on the tempting funk lines of *Entering*. He is at his best on the moodier pieces, as heard on the long, stretched

out improvisations of *Going Places* and *Passing*. Garbarek is ably supported by the astonishing guitar work of Bill Connors and the appropriate (if a bit off the wall) organ textures of John Taylor, and it's all held together by the cohesive mortar of DeJohnette's drumming.

Pianist Steve Kuhn has managed to work with most of the major jazz names of the last two decades, yet until Eicher found him (this is his fourth LP for ECM), he had received neither the attention nor the platform that his playing warranted. On balance, "Non-Fiction" is both more aggressive and more prominent than his previous work. Kuhn is an improviser whose ability to articulate effectively with both hands brings great density and complexity to his solos. This may have been the cause of a certain inaccessibility in past performances, and he seems determined to counter that here. On *Firewalk*, he is brilliantly and appropriately fiery; on *Alias Dash Grapey*, he takes an unfamiliar excursion through two-handed blues-based lines. He is supported in stellar fashion by bassist Harvie Swartz and drummer Bob Moses, but woodwind specialist Steve Slagle leaves much to be desired. Still, "Non-Fiction" could be Kuhn's passport to a wider audience.

Eicher's tastes, which lean toward hard-edged modern with a touch of icy intellectualism, are reflected throughout this set of releases and throughout all of ECM's roster and repertoire. (In these days of saxophone pre-eminence, it's interesting that three of these albums are by groups that feature a trumpet player.) But opinionated though his choices may be (and should be), he has clearly shown that fusion, crossover, etc., are not the only passable trailways for contemporary jazz. And I suspect he deserves a healthy share of credit for the other majors' recent interest in the genre.

Valerie Carter: Wild Child. James Newton Howard, producer. *Columbia JC 35084, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 35084, ●● JCA 35084, \$7.98.*

Valerie Carter's debut album last year presented a singer with a strong, dramatic voice and not much presence. Lowell George's guitar lines emphasized her affinity for country crooning, even if it was notable for its Ronstadtian woodenness. In other words, she sounded good but dull.

This time she sounds good and exciting, due mostly to a brilliant switch of genre: Throughout "Wild Child," Carter emulates the great soul belters of the '60s—Diana Ross, Gladys Knight, Aretha Franklin. As producer James Newton Howard plugs in punchy horns,

swirling strings, and bouncy pianos, Carter moans and yowls and cries with a control and spirit her first LP barely hinted she was capable of.

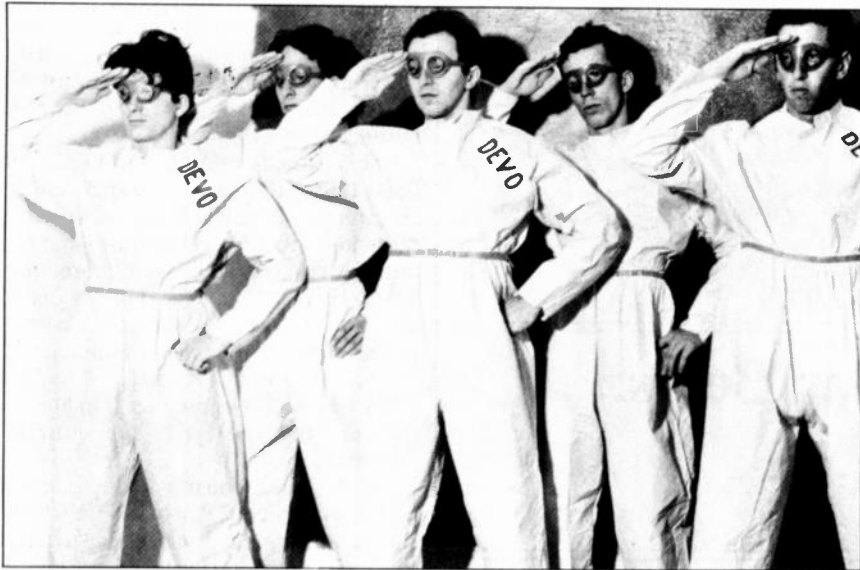
Over the course of "Wild Child," she constructs her own pop/r&b ambience and revels in it. Her high, sharp voice is shiveringly suited to r&b's capacity for effective self-pity—when you've been stomped on as brutally as many of its great songs document, you have a right to feel sorry for yourself, provided the sorrow is mingled with a degree of bitter vindictiveness. Carter delivers all of this with cool command on songs like *Change in Luck* and *Lady in the Dark*. She's also willing to throw herself into the reckless, blindly passionate side of the genre in *Crazy* and *The Story of Love*. And for tough sensitivity, *Trying to Get to You* out-nerves even Millie Jackson.

All of this has its drawbacks, the most important being that r&b workouts are not usually attractive to the white pop audience at which Carter's first album was aimed. Another is that, as good as her evocations of soul are, it's a genre past its prime. And as the title song hints, when she tries to establish her own persona, she goes weak in the knees. In the meantime, "Wild Child" stands as a thoroughly admirable knockout punch to the old second-album jinx, and such ingenuity may yet lead Carter to apt solutions to her stylistic problems. K.T.

Devo: Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo! Brian Eno, producer. *Warner Bros. BSK 3239, \$7.98. Tape: ●● M5 3239, ●● M8 3239, \$7.98.*

"Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo!" begins with the first few bars of the Beatles' *I Want to Hold Your Hand* and goes rapidly downhill. Which is precisely the album's point: "Devolution," the not-so-weird philosophy touted by this five-piece band from Akron, Ohio, holds that the world is going to hell in a handbasket. Once upon a time there may have been such a thing as progress, but now everything is falling apart, devolving—hence Devo. The group dramatizes the death not only of God (*Praying Hands*), but also of rock & roll, on whose grave it does a gleeful jig by setting the Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction* to machine-shop percussion, turning it into Rube Goldberg reggae. And in *Come Back Jonee*, Chuck Berry's immortal Johnny B. Goode is hit and killed by a truck.

Devo's debut record is manic yet mechanical, nagging and nervous but oddly lacking in tension, probably because the group celebrates rather than struggles against the dehumanization it describes. There's something smug about its alienation when compared to the pathos and



Devo—not with a bang, but a giggle

compassion of, say, Talking Heads, whose music Devo's frequently recalls. (No doubt the similarity owes partly to Brian Eno, who produced this album as well as Talking Heads' second.) The enigmatic urgency and anarchy of Pere Ubu, another avant-garde Ohio band, make Devo seem slick and shallow.

Still, Devo is devilishly funny. Mark Mothersbaugh's comic synthesizer and robotlike vocals bring to mind a punk R2D2. The ingenious arrangements are as catchy as the Cars' and show the same cold wit, which becomes utterly madcap on *Gut Feeling*—a crazy quilt of *The House of the Rising Sun*, Tommy James and the Shondells, and a swirling skating-rink organ. This is the way the world ends, Devo seems to be saying—not with a bang, but a giggle. Well, there are worse ways to die than laughing. K.E.

Dave Edmunds: Tracks on Wax 4. Dave Edmunds, producer. *Swansong* SS 8505, \$7.98. *Tape:* ● CS 8505, ● TP 8505, \$7.98.

It's highly improbable that Dave Edmunds will ever be singled out as today's trend-setter, but neither will he ever be regarded as yesterday's fool. Oblivious to the ever-changing British music culture, he consolidates the basics of rock & roll, country & western, and rhythm & blues. The reward for us is just plain fun; the reward for Edmunds is a camp following from punks to reborn rockers.

Though the term lost popularity a few years ago, Edmunds is a pub rocker. What he creates is music to down pints and jump over tables by. Primarily a singer, producer, and multi-instrumentalist, he relies heavily on the independent and co-authored work of his remarkable bassist, Nick Lowe. Lowe's

expertise at writing clever pop tunes (*Television*), sweet laments (*Never Been in Love*), and outspoken rockers (*Heart of the City*) is matched by Edmunds' flexible vocals, which faithfully re-create Nashville and Memphis, as well as London. As on last year's release, "Get It," his leads are at their most breathtaking when, via perfect double-tracked harmony, he manages to sound like *both* Everly Brothers.

For "Tracks on Wax 4," he departed London's Rockfield studios, a complex whose reputation he almost single-handedly established. What he has pulled out of Eden Studios is more kinetic rock with less of the gloss of "Get It." "Tracks" explodes from its first number, *Trouble Boys*, through the concluding *Heart of the City*, a version far more desperate than Lowe's original.

Alcoholic rock demands directness and simplicity; current recording demands precision. Edmunds has been able to recall the days of those first (alcoholic) Sun recordings, which were wonderfully spontaneous but sounded like they emanated from the men's room. "Tracks on Wax 4," while hanging onto its energetic predecessors, transcends their limitations, bringing Edmunds into direct contact with the audience he clearly values. I.G.

Merle Haggard and the Strangers: The Way It Was in '51. Ken Nelson, Fuzzy Owen, & George Richey, producers. *Capitol* ST 11839, \$7.98. *Tape:* ● 4XT 11839, ● 8XT 11839, \$7.98.

That Merle Haggard should follow his very worst album, "I'm Always on a Mountain When I Fall," with what is probably his very best is an altogether typical gesture for this wildly uneven art-

ist. "Mountain" was caked with gelatinous filler ballads that wasted one of the greatest voices in country music. On "The Way It Was in '51," Haggard turns around to present the most thoughtful and lovely tribute record since "Lefty Frizzell Sings the Songs of Jimmie Rodgers."

On the first side Haggard sings songs by and about Hank Williams; on the second side, those of Lefty Frizzell. Certainly these two great primitives represent aspects of Haggard's own performing persona. Williams' beery recklessness is a side that the commercially respectable Haggard, a moody ex-con, tries to mask these days. Nonetheless, it bubbles under all of his best work with a thrilling ominousness. Haggard yodels out Williams' *Moanin' the Blues* and *Lovesick Blues*, the pedal steel snakes in a painful whine, and the album takes off.

On Frizzell's numbers, Haggard's bottomless melancholy and self-pity give a voluptuous edge to his deep voice as he uncorks weepers like *Mom and Dad's Waltz* and *I Never Go around Mirrors*. He frames "The Way It Was" with his own nicely sentimental, disposable salutes. It is obvious that he will never be a songwriter to equal his two heroes, but that doesn't even matter when he sings with such power and intelligence. K.T.

Heart: Dog & Butterfly. Mike Flicker, Heart, & Michael Fisher, producers. *Portrait* FR 35555, \$8.98. *Tape:* ● FRT 35555, ● FRA 35555, \$8.98.

Like any enterprising ad agency, Heart sells the sizzle, not the steak. Its music, after all, is modest fare at best: Led Zepelin leftovers and a folkishness that tends toward mush. What distinguishes the group are the Wilson sisters—lead singer Ann and acoustic guitarist Nancy. Yet it's less remarkable that two women can rock out than that Heart's male electric guitarists are so humdrum.

"Dog & Butterfly" juxtaposes genders and genres and is all about "kicking the role thing," as Ann squeals—in emulation of Zep's Robert Plant—on the sputtering *Cook with Fire*, recorded live in Memphis. One side of the record ("Dog") is given over to the yang of aggressive hard rock and flinty lust, while the other ("Butterfly") is devoted to the yin of delicate ballads and love.

It's a promising concept and attempts to upset the appellation of sexual stereotypes, but Heart lacks the compositional art to make it compelling. The Wilson sisters are adept at juggling eccentric sprung rhythms, but some of these tracks (especially *Hijinx*) are

Continued on page 164

Break
Away

Jules and the Polar Bears: Hot Stuff

by Ken Emerson

Jules and the Polar Bears: Got No Breeding. Larry Hirsch, Stephen Hague, & Jules Shear, producers. *Columbia JC 35601, \$7.98. Tape: ●●JCT 35601, ●●JCA 35601, \$7.98.*

By the time you read this, California may have collapsed into the ocean. Don't blame it on the San Andreas fault, but on the swift kick delivered by Jules Shear and the Polar Bears on their exhilarating debut album. "Got No Breeding." True, others have berated the platinum polish of California music and the laidback life-style it listlessly celebrates. Warren Zevon's two records in particular have registered on the Richter Scale, though not with quite enough force to send the whole house of cards and co-

caine flying. Backed by Linda Ronstadt's band and produced by Jackson Browne, Zevon is too ensconced, however uncomfortably, under the eaves of the Eagles' Hotel California.

Twenty-six-year-old Jules Shear is the first California performer in a dog's age to escape entirely from the narcissism and self-pity endemic to the music of that state; the first to defy the malaise of the "Me Decade" with moral criticism, compassion, and a sense of humor; and the first to overflow with the high-spirited energy of the East Coast's and England's finest bands. Rather than, say, the Eagles or Fleetwood Mac, the pertinent points of comparison are Bruce Springsteen and Graham Parker. In short, this boy can rock with the best of 'em.

And Shear learned how to rock in the very belly of the beast, as it were. A while back he played with Walter Egan in Southpaw, an unrecorded L.A.-based band. Two years ago, he was a member of the Funky Kings, an unwieldy combo of California singer/songwriters who posed on the cover of their one and only album in plaid shirts—pretenders to the Eagles' throne. One of the songs he contributed to that record, *Let Me Go*, contained a prophetic line: "I gotta find myself some stronger stuff."

Jules and the Polar Bears, which Shear formed after the Funky Kings fizzled, are stronger stuff indeed, a raw-boned band that tears into songs with the ferocity of hungry punk rockers—to whom "California" is almost as dirty a word as "disco." There are numbers on "Got No Breeding" (a title, incidentally, that would do any punk proud) whose hell-bent tempos would give even the Ramones pause. Almost every track begins by knocking out the beat with drums and guitar so there'll be no mistaking it: This is real rock & roll. And that beat never lets up. Lead guitarist Richard Bredice is

rough and more than ready with a coarse, distorted sound straight out of a garage rather than a sterile studio. His joyful noise is prominent in the instrumental mix, along with David Beebe's hustling drums.

The hard rock of Jules and the Polar Bears rolls with Shear's melodies, which are pure pop. Many of them sport catchy call-and-response vocal choruses that recall Springsteen and, even more, the 1950s. (Pianist Stephen Hague's occasional triplets, plus the horn arrangements on two of the tracks, reinforce the '50s feel.) To hear a song like *You Just Don't Wanna Know* just once is to hum it forever, and the lyrics are equally memorable.

In fact, Shear, who majored in English at the University of Pittsburgh (in which city he was born and raised), is "a great word-slinger... a scientific master of mad mouthfuls of language," as Allen Ginsberg once called Gregory Corso. Shear spews out so many words at such a breakneck clip (again suggesting Springsteen) that part of the hilarity of "Got No Breeding" lies in simply listening to him cram syllables into his lightning-fast lines. He has a flair for sharp similes ("You just can't check out some religion/And price it like a coat"), startling puns ("The TV newsman met my face/ And he shot a bulletin"), and adroit wordplay ("Oh, to still a doubt/ But still it lingers").

Shear is a joker, all right, but his songs are not in jest. Studded with earnest homilies nearly all of his lyrics are urgent indictments of self-destructive deception ("Now you're acting home free/ But you can't hide in your act") and apathy ("Everyone moves but no hearts react"). While California music is characteristically self-absorbed, Shear's is extroverted. "Stop staring morosely at your navel or murderously at your lover!", he exhorts. "Look life full in the face and learn to love it!"

The word "sane" crops up several times on "Got No Breeding," and the album is indeed an invigorating gust of sanity, the perspective that only a sense of humor makes possible. For this is above all a funny record, thanks largely to Shear's loony vocals. There's more than a hint of Bob Dylan in his phrasing and a dab or two of Jackson Browne. But Shear most distinctly recalls both the Kinks' Ray Davies—as he yelps a song at the top of his natural range—and Jonathan Richman as he fumbles for notes through his apparent head cold. Shear may be flat, but he's having fun—and you will, too. Serious music that never takes itself too seriously, "Got No Breeding" is the year's most delightful and distinguished debut by an American performer.



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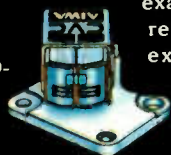
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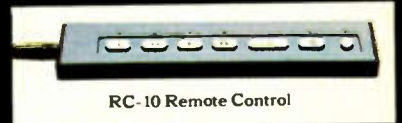
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Singer-Slash-Songwriter Update

by Bruce Pollock

Randle Chowning: Hearts on Fire. Paul Leka, producer. *A&M SP 4715*, \$7.98.

Tape: ●● CS 4715, ●● 8T 4715, \$7.98.

Richard T. Bear: Red Hot & Blue. Jack Richardson, producer. *RCA AFL 1-2927*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● AFK 1-2927, ●● AFS 1-2927*, \$7.98.

Dane Donohue: Terence Boylan. producer. *Columbia JC 34278*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● JCT 34278, ●● JCA 34278*, \$7.98.

Frank Weber: As the Time Flies. Ed Newmark, producer. *RCA AFL 1-2963*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● AFK 1-2963, ●● AFS 1-2963*, \$7.98.

Richard Kerr: Welcome to the Club. Christopher Bond, producer. *A&M SP 4721*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● CS 4721, ●● 8T 4721*, \$7.98.

Steve Forbert: Alive on Arrival. Steve Burgh, producer. *Nemperor JZ 35538*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● JZT 35538, ●● JZA 35538*, \$7.98.

While real singer/songwriters have been around at least since Chuck Berry and Paul Anka, lately the precise definition of the term has become fuzzy. If we are to include everyone who both writes and performs his own material, then we're talking about 86% of the music business. If we restrict ourselves to a more pristine interpretation—the song “poet” or song “novelist” (Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen) who delivers his or her latest works to a cult following of literature buffs—then we're down to about 3%. It's all a matter of where one draws the line.

In order to avoid admitting yet more pretenders to the nomenclature, it becomes necessary to set limits. The field is already overcrowded with singers attempting to be writers, writers pathetically attempting to be singers, and poets writing songs that few can understand.

much less attempt to sing. In truth, both sides of the term should be exceptional. The songs, if not standards, should at least be somewhat unique, able to stand on their own, and not dependent upon performance—as if their creators were no more than free-lancers, selling their work without benefit of band, producer, and a star's charisma. The voice must be equally outstanding. We're not talking about a split personality, just the blistering terrain of the singer/songwriter. If you can't hack the rules then hand in your slash.

Using the above definition, we can eliminate five of the six “singer/songwriters” represented here in their debut recordings. There are some decent if not fine writers and some adequate if not inspired performers, but only Steve Forbert excels from both sides. Randle Chowning's songs, for instance, are the illiterate cousins of the Crosby, Stills & Nash catalog. Musically they rely on the high harmonies of his band, lyrically they completely disintegrate. This man should never be let near a pencil. Whatever impact “Hearts on Fire” has comes

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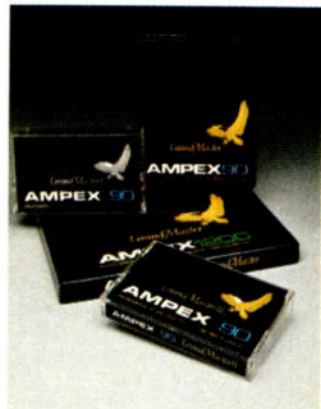
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solely from the tightness of his group.

Similarly, Richard T. Bear is simply given nothing to say. His gruff and road-weary voice merges the street-wise depths of Tom Waits with the philosophical urgency and abandon of Bob Seger (producer Jack Richardson's credits include Seger's "Night Moves") by way of Kris Kristofferson's Nashville. But the songs do not measure up to the image, despite Bear's insistent theatrics.

Dane Donohue immediately evokes Ned Doheny, another justifiably forgettable exponent of the Southern California Zeitgeist. One might tolerate the cryptic cool of a Warren Zevon or a Randy Newman, or the confessional effusions of a Jackson Browne or a Joni Mitchell. But Donohue's simplistic odes, which clearly aspire toward the Eagles, land with a thud near the Beach Boys' recent tepid offerings. With Jimmy Webb and Carole Bayer Sager around, why bother? Donohue, in fact, unwittingly lampoons the whole genre on *Woman*: "I'm gonna quit this crazy city/gonna drown myself in pity." The Eagles are safe for another season.

Frank Weber, like most honorable song students, is prone to imitation. Having not yet absorbed all his influences, his low-key jazz/blues stylings and ultra-clever wordplay only underline his indebtedness to Michael Franks and Barry Manilow. In subject matter—suburban angst—he most closely resembles Dean Friedman. He never comes close to the universality, to say nothing of the full-blooded melodies, of a Billy Joel. It is the lyrics that propel Weber's tunes, and he can create a hook or two or a touching melodic figure. Though this is a promising beginning, he fails to sustain.

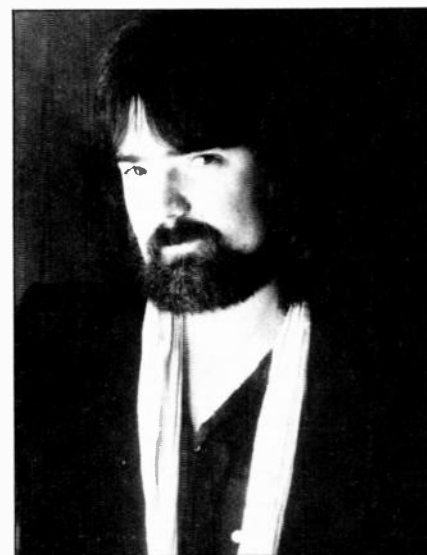
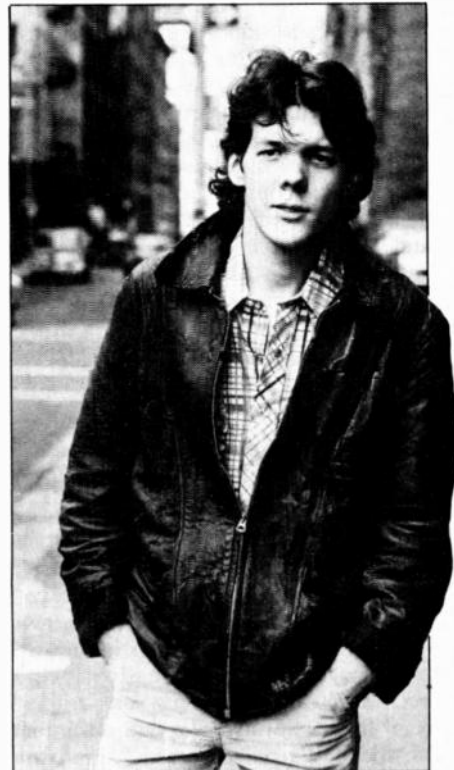
Richard Kerr appears to be one of the legion of successful writers to come out of the backstage closet. The composer of such contemporary standards as *Mandy* and *Looks like We Made It*, he doesn't totally embarrass himself. His collaborations with Will Jennings (*Looks Like's* lyricist) yield several songs that seem candidates for wide coverage—notably *I Know I'll Never Love This Way Again* and *A Hat Full of Rain*. But neither is as strong as its authors' best efforts. That's the problem with songwriters becoming singers—by releasing eight or ten songs at a time, they only dilute their reputations. Kerr isn't a bad singer, so "Welcome to the Club" makes a wonderful demo. But if he spent all of his time writing, he could become a great songwriter. Maybe that's too much to expect these days.

Forbert is clearly the standout of the bunch, a singer/songwriter by anyone's definition. He evokes the open-ended rush of possibility one used to encounter

every other week in the Greenwich Village of the Sixties, when Bob Dylan and his peers were expanding the horizons of songwriting. Forbert is hardly as ambitious as Dylan, but neither is he as elusive or cynical. His songs are closely tied to his acoustic guitar, which he plays here along with the obligatory record company addition of bass and drums.



They are performed with great emotional depth and a husky innocence that belies the ragged landscape they depict. Though not as fully populated as the tales of Bruce Springsteen, they do not depend upon overstatement for impact. Here is a singer with his heart in his throat; his songs may not as yet be part of the language, but give him time. ●



From top left: Randle Chowning, Frank Weber, Dane Donohue. From top right: Steve Forbert, Richard T. Bear.

Continued from page 159

scarcely even riffs, much less songs. When they do come up with a tune, such as *Straight On*, more often than not guitarists Howard Leese and Roger Fisher muster so little energy and imagination that it goes in one ear and out the other. Among the rockers, only *High Time* sticks (and kicks) in the mind.

On the whole, the gentler material is more memorable, even though some of the melodies are amorphous and echoes of Joni Mitchell are at times too pronounced. Nancy, whose voice is deeper and more sedate than Ann's, sings lead on the lovely *Nada One*, which includes an interesting instrumental interlude of strings and acoustic guitar alternating measures of straight and double-time. And *Minstral Wind* leaps dramatically from melancholy eddies of acoustic guitar into surging electric *Sturm und Drang*. Combining the best of both of Heart's world's, the cut is a fitting resolution to an otherwise schizoid album. K.E.

Van Morrison: Wavelength. Van Morrison, producer. Warner Bros. BSK 3212, \$7.98. Tape: ● M5 3212, ● M8 3212, \$7.98.

For much of the past decade, Van Morrison has had an almost spectral presence in rock, his recorded output erratic, his live appearances rare. Yet his influence has cast a lengthening shadow over much of '70s pop, affecting songwriters from Bruce Springsteen and Jackson Browne to Warren Zevon and Graham Parker. Now, just when he seemed dangerously close to becoming a golden oldie, this Belfast original has derailed that image triumphantly with his most energetic work in years.

"Wavelength" has few of the stylistic ambitions posited by last year's "A Period of Transition" and none of its awkward lapses. Compared with the austere beauty of 1974's underrated "Veedon Fleece," it might be deemed reactionary for its prevailing exuberance. Though far from being retreads, these songs bear the ecstatic stamp of his best work of a decade ago: Swinging rhythms, jubilant gospel inflections, and a deceptively seamless command of different melodic styles all nod toward the relaxed ebullience of "Moondance" and "Tupelo Honey," yet the arrangements indicate a keen sense of newer r&b and rock styles. Elemental Morrison—percolating rhythm section, vivid backing vocals, and his own driving rhythm guitar—is laced with liquid synthesizer counterpoint, reggae undercurrents, and even some startling flashes of pure '40s pop.

The sense of regeneration is consciously and wonderfully underlined by

the title song. Whether or not the single is a hit, anyone still curious about the miracle of AM art should take note. It is the sort of anthem to rock & roll and the airwaves that disarms more cynical perceptions. Morrison is singing about himself, about rock in general, about the anxieties that dampen his artistic drive, and even about being in love. When he wails the title phrase, promising he'll never let us down, those impossibly grand parallel themes converge without impeding the momentum of the playing.

Here, as on much of his work, some of Morrison's best moments transcend the lyric sheet. On *Checkin' It Out*, for instance, he transforms what might have sounded like a Scientology jingle into a playful juxtaposition of possibilities: At once sexy, earnest, and probing, he leads us into a murmured "meditation" that snaps back into the here and now with a stunning sax chorus (overdubbed by Morrison, who assumes his most active instrumental role in years).

There are other highlights (*Kingdom Hall*, *Hungry for Your Love*, and the epic *Take It Where You Find It*), but even more telling are his more whimsical moments. *Venice U.S.A.* is little more than a loopy riff that toys with reggae and chants near nonsense phrases, yet Morrison's invention as a singer, and the winsome, rich humor of the arrangement make the song utterly engaging. s.s.

Linda Ronstadt: Living in the U.S.A. Peter Asher, producer. *Asylum 6E 155*, \$7.98. Tape: ● TC5 155, ● ET8 155, \$7.98.

Linda Ronstadt's evolution as a sophisticated pop stylist has proceeded at the sort of pace, and, more recently, with the kind of high-gloss aesthetic, that rankles rock critics. Instead of bold shifts in style, she has always approached any revisions slowly and with great care. While that yields moments where her formidable technical powers overshadow the material at hand, it also yields some of her best performances.

Like its predecessor, "Simple Dreams," "Living in the U.S.A." adheres to the unadorned ensemble approach gradually arrived at over the course of Ronstadt's previous collaborations with producer Peter Asher. The current band is the same one unveiled on that last album, and the partnership sounds further seasoned, distinguished from Ronstadt's earlier bands by the spectrum covered between Waddy Wachtel's razor-sharp electric guitar and Don Grolnick's more rhapsodic, jazz-tinged piano. This group seldom turns in the sort of back-lit, high relief instrumental effects that Andrew Gold's did on Ronstadt's mid-'70s LPs;



Morrison—regeneration

instead, the approach is subtle, never overpowering the singer.

More central to the LP's character is Ronstadt's continued development as a singer. Whether or not you find her impassioned attack thrilling or merely hyperbolic, there is little doubt that she has gained further control over her instrument, displaying greater depth as well as more sheer, visceral power. In particular, her ease with flat-out rock & roll phrasing shows she is no longer afraid to step beyond the conventional prettiness of her full-throated ballad style. She roughs things up more convincingly now, spitting out lyrics or biting them off in taut syncopations. That flexibility also leads to a subtler victory on what might have been one of the set's more obvious choices, Eric Kaz's *Blowing Away*: Instead of the plaintive romanticism we might have expected, Ronstadt sings the title chorus without vibrato, accentuating the song's ennui.

While she again draws from familiar Los Angeles peers (J. D. Souther, Little Feat, Warren Zevon) and rock & roll masters (Elvis Presley and Chuck Berry), there are also some offbeat wrinkles. On the Hammerstein/Romburg chestnut, *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*, her reading is beautifully restrained, shaded by Mike Mainieri's spare vibes setting. Better still is *Ooh Baby Baby*, whose classic Smokey Robinson performance no doubt challenged Ronstadt to provide her most persuasive soul styling yet.

More typical and less compelling are her covers of old Chuck Berry (*Back in the U.S.A.*) and Doris Troy (*Just One Look*). But even the material by her west coast pals gets more imaginative treatment than it has in the past, especially the faithful version of Zevon's *Mohammed's Radio*, and the ambitiously impressionistic Little Feat rocker, *All That You Dream*. s.s.

Richard and Linda Thompson: At First Light. Richard Thompson & John Wood, producers. *Chrysalis CHR 1177*.

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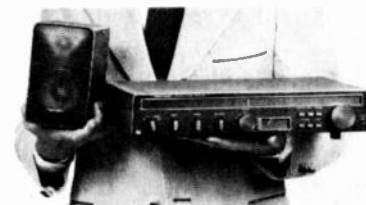
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CIRCLE 26 ON PAGE 127

\$7.98. Tape: ●● CCH 1177, ● 8CH 1177, \$7.98.

Richard Thompson is one of the finest songwriters to emerge from Britain over the past decade, but practically no one is aware of him, let alone his songs. This is especially ironic in light of his past role as lead guitarist and cofounder of Fairport Convention. Rather than pursue commercial exposure, he has chosen a lonelier path, developing a deeply personal style that both refines and expands upon Fairport's synthesis of folk traditions with rock dynamics. Although Thompson has intermittently displayed the bracing electric guitar style that led the late Sandy Denny to introduce him as "possessor of the magic touch," most of his instrumental work since the early '70s has been restrained and ornamental, deferring in mood to his darkly pessimistic ballads.

"At First Light" is his fifth studio album since leaving Fairport, the fourth recorded with wife Linda sharing vocals and liner credit. While the writing retains the thematic gravity and melodic grace of his previous works, Thompson the guitarist and arranger is restored to some of his earlier vivacity. This is at least in part inspired by a larger cast of supporting musicians, some drawn from conventional rock sources, some from his usual English folk/rock axis. In particular, bassist Willie Weeks and drummer Andy Newmark inject an element of syncopated r&b that breaks up the sturdily even meters of much of Thompson's work. Yet never does this new tenor smack of commercialism. *Don't Let a Thief Steal into Your Heart* kicks off with a strutting, sprung bass line and Thompson's deft rhythm work, yet instead of horn choruses or cooing vocal phrases, the backing is colored with concertina and fiddle. On Thompson's *Layla* (not the Clapton/Dominoes classic), the balance between driving rhythm and free-wheeling guitar and concertina sounds like a tryst between the Band and the Chieftains.

As before, the record's most stunning moments come on statelier songs. *Pavanne* personifies the graceful dance of the title in an icy murderess who kills "for the pleasure of the moment"; through Linda's dispassionately beautiful voice and Richard's subdued dulcimer and guitar, the song taps the sort of clear-eyed horror usually associated with Brecht and Weill. Other highlights include a more conventional but no less lovely romantic ballad, *Sweet Surrender*, and a rolling anthem of rootlessness, *Restless Highway*, which serves as a primer to Thompson's skill at juggling electric instruments with lush acoustic



The Thompsons

folk elements.

Production is characteristically clean, spacious, and uncontrived, thanks to coproducer John Wood who has engineered Thompson's work as well as Fairport's. Whether or not this album breaks the vicious cycle of critical praise and public indifference, "At First Light" suggests once again that Thompson will outlive his trendier competition. s.s.

JAZZ

The Brecker Brothers: Heavy Metal Bebop. Randy & Michael Brecker, producers. *Arista AB 4185, \$7.98, Tape: ●● ATC 4185, ● AT84185, \$7.98.*

Most of the currently available "cross-over," "fusion," and "jazz/rock" recordings leave a lot to be desired. For every Return to Forever release there are two or three more from frustrated rock & rollers who have learned how to stretch themselves out over endless one-chord rhythm vamps. Fortunately, there are also recordings from performers like the Brecker Brothers.

Both are gifted jazz musicians, and both have been heavily featured as improvisatory sidemen within many diverse contexts. Of the two, tenor saxophonist Michael is the real find. Randy, a whiz trumpeter with lineal antecedents in the Donald Byrd-Lee Morgan past, is a bright and bouncy improviser, but he needs the overlay of electronics that characterizes most of the Brothers' LPs to make his playing sound more than workmanlike. Conversely, Michael's sax is too often buried by the octave-dividers and ring modulators that they seem to think are necessary to keep them in the fusion mainstream.

A further price they pay is evident on
Continued on page 170

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Bill Withers: Menagerie. *WBP, 9 songs, \$5.95.*

Dan Hill: Longer Fuse. *WBP, 10 songs, \$5.95.*

Three contemporary balladeers offer their own songs culled from past album releases. Stephen Bishop's collection is occasionally derailed by his arranger's penchant for keyboard acrobatics. If played as notated, these tuneful ditties suddenly stop swinging when one is confronted with an uncomfortable stretch of a tenth or unnecessary shift of fingering. Still, the material is worthy of your practicing efforts.

"Menagerie" features some stylistic experimentation by an artist who enjoyed success some years ago and is trying to find his way back onto the charts. Bill Withers is quite resourceful at delineating the universal love experience (with several collaborators) and any of these happy, well-transcribed songs could be personally meaningful to you. On the other hand, Dan Hill opens up his life in what amounts to a musical est session. The outpouring is heartfelt and highly literate, but perhaps, as he himself suggests in *Sometimes When We Touch*, there is such a thing as too much honesty.

Eric Clapton Deluxe. *WBP, 41 songs, \$7.95.*

This folio includes many of the artist's premier recorded performances. The crisp piano-vocals are notated (mostly) in accompaniment form, and the publisher also has given us eighteen lead-guitar arrangements in a special section.

Clapton's formidable talents need no enhancement through gimmicks, but in addition to several pages of nostalgic photos of him with his various past groups (Derek and the Dominos, Cream, etc.), I must call your attention to the two-page "History of Eric Clapton." It's a delicious and informative family tree illustrated and researched by one Pete Frame. A sure winner.

Firefall: Luna Sea. *WBP, 20 songs, \$6.95.*

The well-constructed piano-vocals here seem to reflect the exact intent of this classic rock band. Since chief writer Rick Roberts has published some of his material through Stephen Stills's music company, it is probably no accident that the group bears a passing resemblance to CSN&Y. But there's nothing wrong with that: this is indeed a pleasant and refreshing compilation.

Grease: Original Soundtrack—Songs from the Motion Picture. *WBP, 23 songs, \$8.95.*

Glancing through the many photos in this folio, I somehow get the impression that John Travolta is older than Frankie Avalon. Perhaps it is just an optical illusion.

The likableness of Warren Casey's and Jim Jacobs' show tunes is no illusion. Unfortunately, they are only part of the story. By way of example, the over-exploited typical '50s rock material includes (oh, horrors) a 6/8 version of *Blue Moon*. And the easy-play piano-vocal score suggests that the publisher aims at a market with a median age of eight.

Meat Loaf: Bat out of Hell. *E. B. Marks/Belwin Mills, 7 songs, \$6.95.*

A gentleman choosing to call himself Meat Loaf (frequently mistaken for a helluva nice cat—see *Cat* by B. Kliban) has recorded seven tedious roundelays composed by alter ego Jim Steinman. The two-line piano-vocals are busy, arranger Frank Metis strafes us with incessant eighth notes, and it's all fast and furious.

Marvin Yancy/Chuck Jackson: Our Love. *Theodore Presser Co., 15 songs, \$6.95.*

Messrs. Yancy and Jackson, topflight songwriters and producers, have shaped the recording career of Natalie Cole with such musical syllogisms as *Inseparable*



Yancy/Jackson client Natalie Cole

and *I've Got Love on My Mind* two of the soul/disco hits included in this volume. Since we can't all sing like Ms. Cole, for maximum enjoyment these notated melodies should be seasoned with whatever improvisatory qualities the individual can bring to his or her performance.

Warner Bros. has two new easy guitar folios for those who have palpitation of the plectrum: **Easy Guitar Revised—Eagles Complete** (*WBP, 46 songs, \$6.95*) and **Easy Guitar New Big 76** (*WBP, 76 songs, \$5.95*). Basically, they are collections of leadsheets—melody lines and lyrics with chord frames and strummed beats indicated. Speaking of "New Big 76," Warner's routine monthly additions to the Top-40 folio pile bear careful examination in their respective tables of contents. Five of the songs in **Night Fever Plus 12 Hot Hits** (*WBP, 13 songs \$3.95*) also appear in **Stayin' Alive Plus 24 Super Songs** (*WBP, 25 songs, \$4.95*). **Sometimes When We Touch and Other Love Songs** (*WBP, 31 songs, \$5.95*) contains selections from both of the other folios, as well as five Beatles songs that are not even vaguely contemporary. Purchase what you will, but know what you're buying.

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CIRCLE 31 ON PAGE 127

Continued from page 166

the first track of "Heavy Metal Be-Bop." For reasons probably apparent only to the a&r department of Arista, the Breckers are saddled with a vocal rock number sung by bassist Neil Jason (among others). It sounds as if it was intended for another time and place. The balance of the recording is much more palatable, the high point being Michael's brilliant solo and cadenza on his piece, *Funky Sea, Funky Dew*. (I never said he was a wordsmith.)

It is hard to understand why the Breckers insist upon burying so much of what they have to say under meaningless electronics. It is not, after all, that they have found a new vocabulary to use with the new technology; most of what they play is firmly grounded in traditional jazz procedures. In Michael's case, covering up his fascinating interpretations of those procedures with diversionary textures makes no more sense than, say, orchestrating a Bach violin partita for synthesizer. D.H.

Stéphane Grappelli: Uptown Dance. Et-tore Strata, producer. *Columbia JC 35415, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 35415, ●● JCA 35415, \$7.98.*

If you remember the Stéphane Grappelli of the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, you will be disappointed in this album. The varied and often lively Grappelli of recent live appearances isn't much in evidence either. For on this occasion the violinist is swathed in Claus Ogerman's strings. By his own account in Mort Goode's notes, it is "one of the happiest events" of his career. Of course, Charlie Parker and any number of other jazz musicians have also relished the idea of playing against a backdrop of strings. But like lemmings rushing to the sea, they have succeeded only in burying themselves in glop. Though Parker's string sessions were rescued somewhat by his unquenchable genius, only one performance, *Just Friends*, managed to rank in the Parker pantheon.

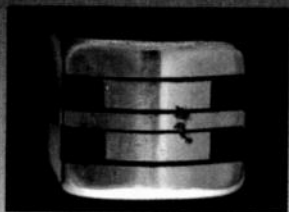
Possibly there is more logic and a greater coloristic potential in surrounding a violinist with additional strings. But the constant droning hum in the background leaves the feeling of moss hanging in a vacuum. The late Joe Venuti might have enjoyed slashing his way through this wall of catgut ("Dragging my canoe behind me," as W. C. Fields declaimed in a somewhat similar situation). But Grappelli is no Venuti: He is very polite to the material, most of it originals that have the same lifeless qualities as Ogerman's arrangements.

The core of the accompaniment is split between two groups, one identified as "contemporary," the other as "jazz." Even the putative jazz group—Jimmy Rowles, Ron Carter, Grady Tate, Jay Berliner—is totally obscured on two of its four pieces. On *Baubles, Bangles, and Beads* and *Nightwind* they do manage to fight off the strings and come to life. To be sure, there are some attractive effects here, such as the rich curtain of cellos through which Grappelli emerges on *Angel Eyes*. And on *Nightwind*, which composer Erroll Garner asked him to record shortly before his death, Grappelli warms to a singing melody. As mood music, this is a perfectly acceptable, sleep-inducing disc. But there must be more creative ways to use a talent such as Grappelli's. J.S.W.

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this is their first recording. It is a rather strange one in that the regular quartet—Hodes, Franz Jackson on clarinet and soprano/tenor saxophones, Jimmy Johnson on bass, and Hillard Brown on drums—is overshadowed by guests Ernie Carson on cornet and Charlie Bornemann on trombone.

Hodes is a very modest leader and takes relatively few solos, seemingly content with introductions and some astute accompaniment coloring. On balance, this works well because Carson and Bornemann are strong musical personalities. Carson is in particularly good form, full of sharp growling lines and of rasps, punches, mutterings, and shakes that echo the vitality of Wild Bill Davison's work. Bornemann is not as consistent but, at his best, has a big, full tone and a jaunty manner that fills out the framework of a traditional huff-and-puff style.

In view of the way in which these two take over, one can only wonder how the Jazz Four makes out on its own. Jackson is a subdued soloist, resembling Barney Bigard's mellow, woody manner in the clarinet's low register. On saxophone he has a rather thick, heavy sound that tends to give the soprano a fuzzy, furry

tone. When Hodes chooses to be heard, he is bright and precise, bustling with energy on *Indiana*, full of trills and rumbles on *Buddy Bolden's Blues*, and rolling through *Washington* and *Lee Swing*. But the prime personality of the Jazz Four is drummer Brown, who sings the blues in a style that has some of the lifts, if not the vocal power, of Big Joe Turner. His extended narrative version of *Oh Didn't He Ramble* is an interesting variation on the customary routine renderings.

The material, apparently drawn from the group's regular repertoire, manages to vary the standard dixieland fare both in choice of tunes (*Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*, for instance, a favorite of Sidney Bechet) and stylistic approach (i.e., *Didn't He Ramble*). It's an interesting collection but scarcely representative of the Art Hodes Jazz Four. J.S.W.

The Jeff Lorber Fusion: Soft Space. Jeff Lorber & Marion McClain, producers. *Inner City IC 1056, \$7.98.*

The line-up for Jeff Lorber's second recording is promising: guest appearances from Chick Corea and Joe Farrell, and a band that includes ex-Crusader's

bassist Lester McFarland, ex-Stan Kenton saxophonist Terry Layne, and leader Lorber (formerly of Oregon) on piano. Alas, the promise is only tentatively fulfilled.

The best moments are clearly those in which the guests come to the fore. Chick Corea is heard to excellent advantage on *Minimoog* on the free-spirited, aptly titled *The Samba* and on *Proteus*. Farrell's soprano saxophone breathes funky life into *Katherine* and his flute warms up the rhythms of *Black Ice*.

Once the guests leave, however, Lorber's Fusion reverts to the less attractive qualities of its name: long one-chord solos, vague melodies, and repetitious rhythms. Layne's saxophone work—especially his wounded moose tenor sound—suffers in comparison to Farrell's bright inventiveness. And Lorber, fast though he may be, is no creative match for the gifted Corea.

I suspect that the appearances of Farrell and Corea may have backfired—throwing off the internal balance and cohesiveness that is probably the Lorber group's most valuable asset. Left to their own devices, they might have made a better recording. D.H.

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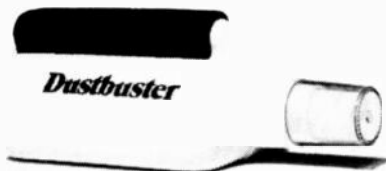
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CIRCLE 70 ON PAGE 127

Joe Pass & Paulinho da Costa: Tudo Bem! Norman Granz, producer. *Pablo* 2310 824, \$7.98. Tape: ●● K 824, ● S 824, \$7.98.

I've never understood guitarist Joe Pass's great ingroup reputation. Though he's magnificent technically, I've found him—both on record and in concert—to be unemotional, limited in expressive range, and too fond of tail-wags-dog cadenzas.

"Tudo Bem!" therefore came as a very pleasant surprise. Framed by the insinuatingly firm parameters of Brazilian rhythmic playing, Pass has, by and large, turned up trumps. A good deal of the credit goes to Paulinho da Costa, a Dizzy Gillespie band veteran and one of the small army of Brazilian percussionists that has been altering our musical landscape over the last few years. For "Tudo Bem!" he brought in three other Brazilians and American pianist Don Grusin, who has been playing with him long enough to know the ropes. The result is that Pass shines, though it is far from being a one-man show.

Generally the music here is the American-Brazilian blend first explored by Charlie Byrd back in 1962. Pass's single-string electric playing doesn't suit this idiom as well as the acoustic work of Byrd or Laurindo Almeida, but his light, melodic jazz style—though not impassioned—is flowing enough to suit the overall mood. Though that mood is more important than individual tracks on these kinds of sessions, the album's cuts are fairly varied. *Wave* starts with some attractive dancing-on-the-water interchanges between Pass and Grusin and moves into some serious piano-guitar dialogue. *Que Que Ha?* accomplishes much the same thing over a rather more funk-oriented rhythm that entices Pass to forget himself and start bending notes on a couple of choruses. These two tracks and *Corcovado* are all midtempo to up-tempo, and they all work. At the other end of the scale is Pass's ballad solo. *If You Went Away*, a more familiar exercise in rather sterile guitarismanship. In between lie several rather limp pieces that hover where jazz and cocktail-lounge piano merge; here Pass is as unimpassioned as a barman's anecdote.

So it's a split verdict. It's a pleasure to hear Pass forget that he's a virtuoso and play, and the album as a whole is an agreeable example of Pablo's usual elegant easy-listening jazz. But Da Costa's first album, "Agora," was a lot more exhilarating than any amount of elegant easy listening: It showed a real urge to experiment as well as a width and depth of percussion talent that is not obvious here.

J.S.R.

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Pop/Rock

BY KEN TUCKER

Axis: It's a Circus World. Andy Johns, producer. *Hologram/RCA ASL 1-2950, \$7.98. Tape: ●● ASK 1-2950, ●● ASS 1-2950, \$7.98.*

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Tony Bird of Paradise. John Lissauer, producer. *Columbia JC 34988, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JCT 34988, ●● JCA 34988, \$7.98.*

A South African with an odd, wildly elastic coo of a voice, Bird melds his native folksongs with the rhythms of pop music. The result is that the chants become hooks, and his voice

takes off. Bird is also capable of a Dylanly rage and howling-at-the-wind frustration, as *Nothing but Time* and *How Much More Do You Want* amply reveal.

Stephen Bishop: Bish. Stephen Bishop, producer. *ABC AA 1082, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 5 1082AA, ●● 8 1082AA, \$7.98.*

Bishop's ambitions multiply like flies on this second album, and they all hover around a Manilow-ish pop: grandly orchestrated songs of missed romance, told solely from the point of view of the shattered narrator. This can tend toward self-indulgence, but Bishop's musical inventiveness and pep carry a lot of the mooning into inviting dreaminess.

Eric Carmen: Change of Heart. Eric Carmen, producer. *Arista AB 4184, \$7.98. Tape: ●● ATC 4184, ●● AT8 4184, \$7.98.*

Carmen's version of his own *Hey Deanie* is much feebler than Shaun Cassidy's taut AM hit single, and for the rest Carmen settles into his familiar post-Raspberries career pattern: an immersion into the banally poignant, the grandly solipsistic, and the overly melodramatic.



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Chicago: Hot Streets. Phil Ramone, producer. *Columbia FC 35512, \$8.98. Tape: ●● FCT 35512, ●● FCA 35512, \$8.98.*

This is at once Chicago's most hard-rocking and their most middle-of-the-road album; sometimes the contrast occurs within the same song. This leaves the band's huge audience plenty to choose from, and a couple of the songs here will sound great on the radio. But more than ever, the monolithic persona of Chicago prevents any passion or other emotion from leaking through.

Gentle Giant: Giant for a Day. Gentle Giant, producers. *Capitol SW 11813, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 4XW 11813, ●● 8XW 11813, \$7.98.*

A real find and a nice surprise: A stuffy artsy-rock band takes sarcastic stock of itself, and finds that it still has a lot of good music left in it. This chipper, witty album includes a jaunty horror movie theme (*Spooky Boogie*), an acknowledgment of the band's fans (*Thank You*), and a sketch of alcoholism (*Little Brown Bag*) that stings. Not a whit of the Giant's former pretensions, and every song but two, the penultimate numbers, is catchy. It's the kind of stuff you wish radio was still adventurous enough to put on the air.

MOLLY HATCHET

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Molly Hatchet. Tom Werman, producer. *Epic JE 35347, \$7.98. Tape: ●● JET 35347, ●● JEA 35347, \$7.98.*

Molly Hatchet is six guys who emulate loud, simple hard rock in general and Lynyrd Skynyrd in particular. The fact that this genre has been worn thin makes the group's solid, stirring debut even more impressive. Nothing too original here (sample song title: *Cheatin' Woman*), but the riffs are cleverly played, and no apologies are made for the humorous macho that pervades it all.

The Ramones: Road to Ruin. T. Erdelyi, producer. *Sire SRK 6063, \$7.98. Tape: ●● M5 6063, ●● M8 6063, \$7.98.*

The Ramones grind some pop, some ballads, and some sweet whimsy into their hard-rock hash, and "Road to Ruin" is their most sustained rumble yet. The lyrics, though spat and quavered by Joey with his usual intensity, are delicately detailed and witty. And even if the nihilism is tempered by melancholy, all the absurd rage is intact. They're still punk champs.

Frank Zappa: Studio Tan. Frank Zappa, producer. *Discreet DSK 2291, \$7.98. Tape: ●● M5 2291, ●● M8 2291, \$7.98.*

Zappa's fulfills his final obligation to his former record company by supplying a version of *Peter and the Wolf*—the sidelong *Greggery Peccary*—as Charles Ives might have conceived it. It's a pleasant, funny-pretty throwaway. Better yet, it proves that Zappa's ambitions still manage to outweigh his self-indulgence.

TRY THE MARANTZ 1 WILL NEVER KNOW OUR

By using a simple test you can prove to yourself that Marantz loudspeakers deliver the same brilliant sound separation over the widest possible listening area:

Here's the test:

Have your Marantz dealer place any pair of Marantz floor standing loudspeakers in a normal listening position. Now, listen as your selection of dynamic music is played through the Marantz loudspeakers. Notice the three dimensional quality of the sound. Now close your eyes and have two people slowly turn the Marantz loudspeakers until they're actually *facing each other*.

Did the sound change?

In almost every case we've found the listener cannot hear a change in the sound... because there isn't any! Even with the loudspeakers facing each other. Incredible!

But if you try the same test with most conventional loudspeakers you'll notice a striking difference. The sound literally falls apart. You'll hear a loss of overtones—sparkle and brilliance—all the qualities that make music open and spacious disappear.

WHY MARANTZ PASSED THE TEST WHILE OTHERS FAIL.

In a nutshell: Constant Radiated Power (CRP)—180 degrees dispersion regardless of frequency. To achieve CRP we consider both the frequency response and dispersion characteristics of each individual transducer in the system; woofer, midrange and tweeter. The result is a unique design approach incorporating three important performance parameters:

1. We know that dispersion is determined by the diameter of the radiating surface—the speaker cone—and the frequency being reproduced. So we pick the precise frequency at which each individual driver radiates 180 degrees and use this as the crossover point.

But many manufacturers often crossover at a frequency where, for example, the woofer's dispersion has already started to beam. Why? They may be trying to save money by using cheaper transducers and crossover networks. Or, perhaps they consider CRP to be unimportant. But you won't!

2. Our transducers are positioned on the baffle to ensure the best possible dispersion.

Other manufacturers may position their driver for eye-appeal, but that's not good enough for Marantz.

3. To control transition between our drivers, we use the most sophisticated, best thought-out crossover networks ever developed.

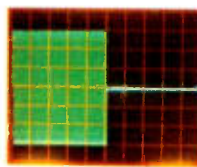
As you can see from the illustration below (Fig. A), wherever you are in the room you hear the same ideal stereo separation and 180 degrees dispersion pattern. Notice how the other speaker

"beams" certain frequencies in a narrow corridor (Fig. B). Unless you sit directly in front of those speakers, you lose part of the music.

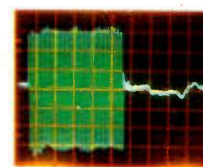
TRANSDUCERS YOU'D EXPECT FROM A WINNER.

Wide sound dispersion alone doesn't guarantee sonic accuracy. You also

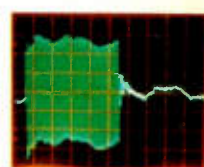
Tone burst test demonstrates superior low stored energy characteristics of Marantz loudspeakers.



Original signal. Note instant start/instant stop of trace.



Marantz loudspeaker. Note close similarity to original signal.



Competitor. Note overhang caused by inability of cone to stop vibrating.

need transducers that exhibit low distortion and low stored energy.

Stored energy is the continued vibration of a loudspeaker's radiating element after the driving force has stopped. It can exist in any loudspeaker; woofer, midrange or tweeter, and is heard as a smearing or running together of the individual instruments.

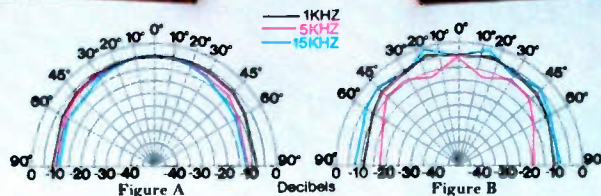
To assure Low Stored Energy, Marantz uses extremely rigid cones and domes tightly coupled to the voice coil to create a homogeneous rigid structure. Accurate control of this structure is then assured by an extremely powerful magnetic motor assembly. The result is that Marantz transducers move as a unit in a smooth, piston-like motion without the slightest hint of cone break-up or flexing—even under the most rapid acceleration and deceleration! You hear precise, sharp instrument definition—the truest musical sound possible—wherever you are in the room!

Your Marantz dealer has the full line of Marantz speaker systems. If you truly want the best—and are willing to spend a little more to get it—then go for it. Go for Marantz.



25th Anniversary **marantz**®

DO NOT TEST. YOUR EARS LOUDSPEAKERS MOVED.



The Marantz speaker disperses all the frequencies 180 degrees.

Conventional speakers tend to narrow certain frequencies.

In actual test, speakers should be placed the same distance apart as you are away from them.

Power-hungry speakers have finally met their match.

If you're enthusiastic about today's less efficient, super-accurate speaker systems, you know you need a very efficient, super-power receiver to drive them.

And if your ears are good enough, you know the value of lots of power to handle critical musical passages with any speaker system.

That's why we created the new KR-8010. With 125 watts per channel, minimum RMS both channels driven at 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.03% total harmonic distortion, you've got all the power you really need.

But more important, the KR-8010 gives you an extremely clean, low-distortion signal at the same time.

For example, the signal-to-noise ratio through the phono input is the best you'll find on any receiver (90 dB). Its overall frequency response is matched

precisely to the RIAA curve ± 0.2 dB. And the tuner delivers sensitivity and selectivity that you'll really appreciate in signal-crowded cities.

To shape that signal into music, the KR-8010 offers a full range of front-panel controls usually found only in esoteric separates and recording studios. Like tape dubbing while listening to another source. And dual FM muting levels. MIC input and fade control. Bass, treble and midrange tone controls. And more.

The point is simply this: At \$675.00,* the KR-8010 is made for the listener who demands as much from his receiver as he does from his speakers.

Next time you're at your Kenwood dealer listen to your favorite speaker with the KR-8010.

We think that your ears will finally meet their match.

*Nationally advertised value. Actual prices are established by Kenwood dealers.



KENWOOD®

For the dealer nearest you, see your Yellow Pages, or write Kenwood, P.O. Box 6213, Carson, CA 90749. In Canada: Magnasonic Canada, Ltd.