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**PRODUCT
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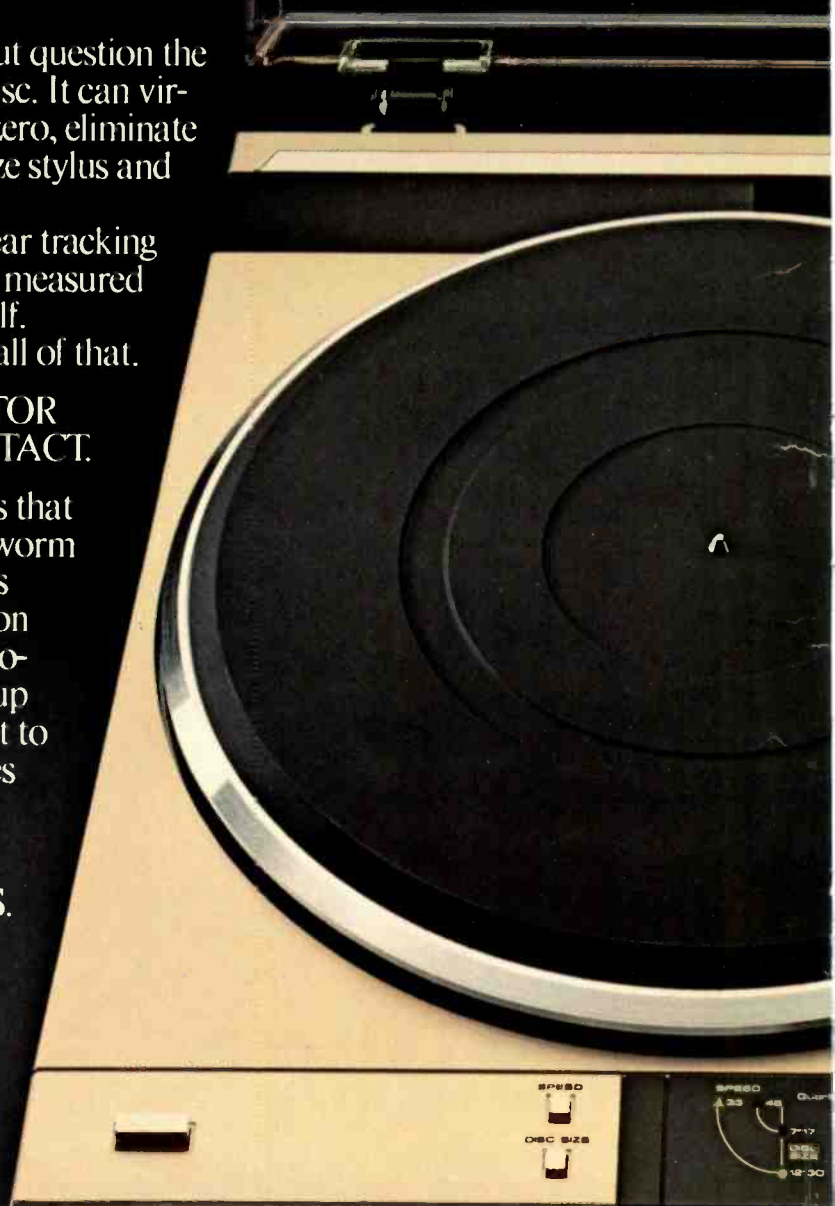
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THE PIONEER LINEAR TRACKING

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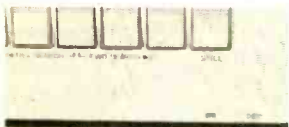


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Circle 2 on Reader-Service Card

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Now Technics lets you hear nothing but the sound of the source. Introducing the SV-P100 Digital Cassette Recorder.

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decks to a digital application. Tape loading is now fully automatic. And, frequently used controls are grouped together on a slanted panel with LED's to confirm operating status.

Despite its compact size, the SV-P100 recorder offers performance beyond even professional open reel decks. Since the digital signal is recorded on the video track, the space usually available for audio can therefore be used for editing "jump" and "search" marks. The unit employs the EIAJ standard for PCM recording. And, in addition, editing and purely digital dubbing are easily accomplished with any videotape deck employing the NTSC format.

Technics new SV-P100 is available at selected audio dealers. To say that it must be heard to be appreciated is an incredible understatement.

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Letters

Minimal Comments

It was a pleasure to see Tim Page's article on continuous music, "Framing the River: A Minimalist Primer [November 1981]." I am honored that he included the recording of my *KMH: Piano Music in the Continuous Mode* in his discography. But I must comment on his use of the term "minimalism."

No word could be more misleading or inappropriate, even for those who profess to espouse the minimalist philosophy. In addition to being wrongly applied to a great many composers, this term is a sorrowful one that causes damage even when used correctly. "Minimalism" is an explicitly negative term; in fact, it is almost insulting. The label "minimal" specifically means that a composer is deliberately (for one reason or another) squashing the dimensions and nature of his work—that he is creating something to be as small as possible or trying to make do with the least amount of material possible. There is, in fact, a school of art that to some extent creates conceptual pieces of this sort, but there is very little music written this way, and certainly most of the composers mentioned in the article do not write from this point of view.

If we are to call this kind of music anything at all, then the most universal term is "continuous music." Minimalism is but one facet of continuous music, and calling us all minimalists is like calling Mozart a twelve-tone composer because Webern was also a composer.

Lubomyr Melnyk
Toronto, Canada

I read with great interest the article entitled "Framing the River." Though all the records mentioned in the article are listed in the discography, the one that I most want to purchase—"Day of Radiance" by Laraaji—is apparently not available to the ordinary reader/collector. The manufacturer's code number is listed, but not the label, the country of origin, or the source within the U.S.A. Could you please check your sources and help me in this matter?

J.R. Frame
Cecilia, Ky.

The record you seek is on the Editions EG label (EGS 203), which is distributed by Jem Records. You can order the disc from Variety Records, 27 The Mall, 5000 Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, Ky. 40207, 502-893-5984.—Ed.

Vox Vexed

We're pleased that Nicholas Kenyon enjoyed the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra's Wassenaer and Pergolesi performances in Vox Box SVBX 5154 ["A Great Pergolesi Mystery Solved," February]. However, he should have contacted us before publicly judging the recording's liner notes. Neither Albert Dunning's new book, which reveals Wassenaer's authorship of concertos once attributed to Pergolesi, nor the manuscript that supports Dunning's assertions was available to the writer of the notes at press time; he had access only to an advance advertisement of the book. The choice of the words "perplexed ignorance" is regrettable, for it misrepresents the

work of a musicologist with several decades of impeccable scholarship to his credit.

A simple phone call to Vox would have sufficed.

Patricia Willard
Moss Music Group
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Kenyon replies: *Sorry, I don't agree. There may be any number of excuses for the distinguished annotator's "perplexed ignorance" in this case, but a reader has to judge what he reads. As for phone calls, why didn't Dr. Braunslein call Albert Dunning to ascertain the facts?*

Old Gold

I recently came across your January 1980 issue and was delighted to see the articles on old recordings by Mr. Biel and Mr. Brooks ["Are Your Old Records Worth \$\$\$?"]. I've stacked away everything from Paul Whiteman to Stokowski, from acoustical discs to microgrooves, and I treasure every one.

Although there is a wealth of information available about the record industry itself, and a little dedicated digging will reveal tidbits about the artists, I haven't found anything that might advise me on what equipment I should use to get the best sound from my collection. I have spoken with a number of collectors and have sought information from local audio dealers, but each of the former has his own pet theories (many of which require some very expensive and elaborate equipment), and the latter have very little time for discussing "low fidelity."

So here's the question: How about an article on this subject—covering, perhaps, the care and cleaning of vintage records, the kinds of styli and turntables available, and the use of noise suppression systems? I'd appreciate any information you might be able to provide.

William Ryan
New York, N.Y.

We covered the subject thoroughly in the April 1973 issue of HF ("How to Play Old Records on New Equipment").—Ed.

Hellenic Hit

The release of the new Arabesque album of Glazunov pieces with its "unusual repertory" ["Reviews," December 1981] gives me hope that another of the Russian composer's works will finally find its way onto microgroove. I am referring to the *Overture on Greek Themes, Op. 3, No. 1*, which—as far as I know—has never appeared on LP. Dimitri Mitropoulos and the (then) Minneapolis Symphony recorded it on a four-side 78-rpm album for Columbia around 1940. A teenager at that time, I heard the overture on the radio one day and went downtown the very next day to buy the album. I still have it and enjoy it, although I've copied it onto tape for the sake of convenience.

My theory is that Mitropoulos liked the work because of its Greek associations and persuaded Columbia to let him record it, but that—because the overture was relatively unknown and unpublicized—it did not do well. That I happened to hear it may only have been because I lived in Minneapolis at the time and was listening to KUOM, the University of Minnesota radio station. I wonder what were the chances that people in Boston or Kansas City ever heard it?

While Glazunov may not have been a musi-

cal giant, I agree with your reviewer John Canarina that he was a "worthy composer." Perhaps the Arabesque album signals a renewed interest in his works. I hope so: we could stand to get along with one less *Sorcerer's Apprentice* in favor of at least one modern recording of this Glazunov overture.

Robert E. Forman
Toledo, Ohio

Thanks from a Ham

Just a short note of appreciation to your magazine and to Michael Riggs for his sensitive comment on ham radio operators in his "CrossTalk" piece titled "Hamming It Up" [January 1982].

It is rare to find such understanding of the

complex issue of radio frequency interference in audio gear. I especially appreciated the way Riggs avoided blaming hams for responsibility for audio RFI—most of which, of course, is caused by inadequate shielding in the audio equipment. I also want to thank you for differentiating between hams and CBers. In general, hams are both sympathetic and technically competent when it comes to interference suppression; all too often, CBers are neither.

John H. Carter, G3PHR/W0
Bloomington, Minn.

Letters should be addressed to The Editor, HIGH FIDELITY, 825 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. All letters are subject to editing for brevity and clarity.



and when you switch over to the 770's
you will smile and say... it's magic
because there is nothing like it
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CrossTalk

Practical answers to your audio questions by Robert Long

How Loud?

I am considering substituting a Carver M-400 Magnetic Field Amplifier, rated at 200 watts [23 dBW] per channel, for the amplifier section of a Tandberg 2025 receiver, which is rated at 27 watts [14 1/4 dBW] per channel into 8 ohms. Do you feel that it would result in any significant improvement, other than increased volume, in driving a pair of Boston Acoustics A-150s?—Emanuel Schwam, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Though I haven't experienced these specific combinations, I'd doubt it. But I'm worried by your reference to increased volume. You should already be able to get fairly high levels with the Tandberg. The usual reason for wanting a superamp like the Carver is for its extra headroom—that is, to reduce the incidence of clipped peaks, rather than to raise the overall volume as such. If your objective really is the latter, it's time to wonder how the A-150s (or most other speakers, for that matter) will accept the gobs of power you evidently expect to hand them.

Out Moded?

The mode switch on my Pioneer SX-1000TD receiver, purchased in 1969, is marked STEREO/LEFT/RIGHT. In playing records only (everything is fine for FM and AM), the right speaker cuts out when I switch to STEREO. It used to be that turning the balance knob a fraction would bring the signal back. (Turning it also creates crackles and pops, but they stop when the turning stops.) But the condition has worsened, and now the right speaker seldom comes on.

When I turn the mode switch to LEFT the "bad" speaker comes on; when I turn it to RIGHT, both it and the "good" left speaker cut out. I never understood the function of this switch or the part of the manual that describes its use. Is the mode control the cause of my problem? Could it simply be a matter of dust getting into the receiver?—Carl Bossio, Dearborn, Mich.

Dust or corroded contacts can cause exactly the sort of thing you describe—including the crackling control. Your receiver is no spring chicken and is due for a little special

attention—including an application of contact-cleaner fluid. (Any electronic parts store should stock it.)

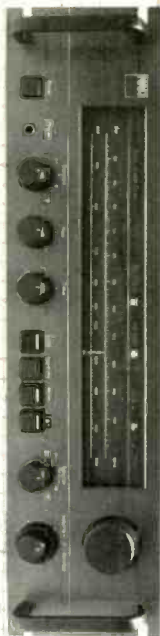
The mode switch is unusual in only one way: the omission of the L+R mono position, which combines both channels and feeds the combination to both speakers. Yours will feed *either* the left or the right signal to both speakers. The right-channel fault evidently is ahead of the mode switch; that's why turning it to LEFT successfully gets a signal (from the left input) to the right speaker.

Head-Wagging Tale

On a cassette deck that has separate re-cording and playback heads permanently aligned within a single housing, how much misalignment can be expected between the two head gaps? In monitoring a stereo recording on my JVC DD-9, there is a subtle, but noticeable, shift in the stereo imaging when I switch between SOURCE and TAPE. If I try the same thing with a mono input and listen to both the source and the playback in mono, there is a significant loss in high-frequency output from the tape. Further checking shows a dip of more than 20 dB at 11.5 kHz when the output from the tape is switched to mono. Optimizing the azimuth of the combined heads for the best playback under these circumstances gets rid of the dip. I reckon the alignment error is only about one tenth of a degree. Am I expecting too much in thinking that it should be less?—Peter Schaff, Port Angeles, Wash.

I wouldn't say so. What you describe is a classic case of significant azimuth misadjustment. It certainly isn't representative of JVC's quality control (or that of any other component maker, for that matter), so it should be brought to the company's attention before your warranty runs out. Of course, the mono measurement that gives you the 20-dB dip magnifies the problem, and most decks are checked out only in the stereo mode on the assembly line from what I've seen. The practice duplicates that of most buyers under most circumstances, but it occasionally does let a potential problem go undetected.

We regret that the volume of reader mail is too great for us to answer all questions individually.



If you cannot readily find an NAD dealer in your neighborhood, send this coupon for literature on the Model 7020 and other fine NAD home entertainment products, as well as a dealer list, to NAD (USA) INC., 675 Canton Street, Norwood, MA 02062.

Name _____

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NAD

Critics' Choice: NAD 7020 Receiver!
HIGH FIDELITY Magazine asked six audio experts to choose **Best Value Systems**. The NAD 7020 was selected **twice**: Once in a system under \$1000, and again, in a system under \$600.
Incredible? See your local NAD audio expert!

December 1981

MAXELL IS PLEASED TO PRESENT AN EVEN HIGHER PERFORMANCE TAPE.



If you're familiar with Maxell UD-XL tapes you probably find it hard to believe that any tape could give you higher performance.

But hearing is believing. And while we can't play our newest tape for you right here on this page, we can replay the comments of Audio Video Magazine.

"Those who thought it was impossible to improve on Maxell's UD-XL II were mistaken. The 1981 tape of the year award goes to Maxell XL II-S."

How does high bias XL II-S and our normal bias equivalent XL I-S give you such high performance? By engineering smaller and more uniformly shaped epitaxial oxide particles we were able to pack more into a given area of tape. Resulting in a higher maximum output level, improved signal-to-noise ratio and better frequency response.

To keep the particles from rubbing off on your recording heads Maxell XL-S also has an improved binder system. And to eliminate tape deformation, XL-S comes with our unique Quin-Lok Clamp/Hub Assembly to hold the leader firmly in place.

Of course, Maxell XL II-S and XL I-S carry a little higher price tag than lesser cassettes.

We think you'll find it a small price to pay for higher performance.



IT'S WORTH IT.

Maxell Corporation of America, 60 Oxford Drive, Moonachie, N.J. 07074

Circle 12 on Reader-Service Card

Basically Speaking

Audio concepts and terms explained by Michael Riggs

How Phono Cartridges Work

LAST MONTH I EXPLAINED how long-playing records are made, touching briefly on the complex subject of how two separate channels of information are pressed into a single groove. Getting the music into the groove is, of course, no mean trick, but getting it back out accurately is even tougher. That task falls to the smallest and probably least expensive component in your system: your phono cartridge.

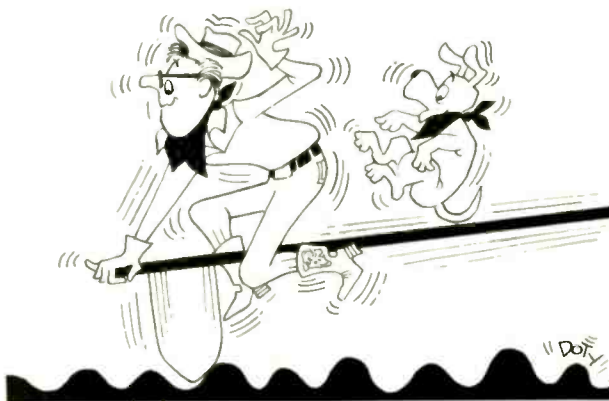
All cartridges share the same basic construction. A tiny jewel (always a diamond in high-quality pickups) that is carefully ground to a specified size and shape and then polished smooth is the only part that actually contacts the record groove. It is connected to a relatively long shaft called the cantilever. Most stylus cantilevers are slender, thin-walled aluminum tubes. Aluminum is the most commonly used material because it is easily worked, has a high stiffness-to-mass ratio (in other words, it's fairly rigid for its weight), and is reasonably nonresonant. Among the other materials sometimes selected—usually for their greater rigidity—are beryllium, boron, carbon fiber, sapphire, ruby, and even diamond.

The cantilever is held in place and supported by a flexible suspension—usually a block of some rubber-like compound that also provides some damping. In piezoelectric cartridges—the so-called crystal or ceramic pickups—the rear of the cantilever is attached to a crystalline substance that emits electricity when stressed. Such cartridges are rare in high fidelity applications, however, where magnetic cartridges are the rule. In these, the cantilever attaches to an armature of some sort: a tiny permanent magnet (in moving-magnet cartridges), a small piece of magnetically permeable material (in variable-reluctance and induced-magnet pickups, known generically as moving-iron cartridges), or a set of coils (in moving-coil cartridges).

Despite these variations in the kind of generator used, the basic concept remains the same. As the stylus travels along the

groove, the serpentine contour of the walls forces the stylus to move in the plane perpendicular to the line of travel. The cantilever transmits this motion, with the cantilever block acting as a fulcrum or pivot point, to the armature. The motion of the armature causes the strength of the magnetic field in the vicinity of a set of coils to vary, thus inducing in the coils a voltage proportional to the velocity of the armature movement.

In a moving-magnet cartridge, the coils are fixed to the body of the cartridge while the magnet itself moves. Moving-iron cartridges are slightly different, in that both the coils and the magnet are fixed. In the induced-magnet version of this system, the fixed magnet is situated so as to induce a magnetic field in the magnetically permeable armature, which then functions in the



same manner as the magnet in a moving-magnet cartridge. The operation of variable-reluctance pickups, however, is a little more subtle.

Reluctance is the magnetic equivalent of what is called resistance in electrical circuits: The higher the reluctance of a material inserted into the magnetic field set up between two poles of a magnet, the weaker the field. Some materials, such as iron, have relatively low reluctance; others, such as air, have high reluctance. In a variable reluctance cartridge, the armature is made of a low-reluctance material positioned so that as it is moved by the stylus it displaces more or less air in the magnetic field, thereby varying the effective reluctance in the circuit. The resulting variations in the strength of the magnetic field induce a correspondingly varying voltage in the coils.

As their name implies, moving-coil cartridges differ from both moving-iron and moving-magnet cartridges in that the coils

are attached to the stylus cantilever while the magnet is fixed to the cartridge body. After a long period of decline, the moving-coil principle has enjoyed something of a renaissance in recent years and is now well represented in the market, along with the various models hewing to one version or another of the fixed-coil approach. This has followed on technological improvements that ameliorate some of the traditional problems of moving-coil design—chief among them that of high moving mass.

Actually, the effective mass of the stylus assembly is a crucial determinant of performance in any type of cartridge: For good tracking at low stylus forces, it is necessary to keep tip, cantilever, and armature masses to a minimum. The traditional difficulty in designing high-performance moving-coil pickups has been that—in order to get reason-

ably high output using magnets small enough to fit into a phono cartridge—fairly hefty coils with many turns of wire had to be used to yield the necessary amount of inductance. In a moving-coil pickup, every extra turn of wire adds to the mass of the stylus assembly. Until recently, the only way out of this dilemma was to reduce the size of the coils and make up for the loss as much as possible by using a larger, heavier, stronger magnet. There is a limit, however, to how far one can carry that brute-force solution.

The development of strong, lightweight magnets has made life easier for designers of all kinds of cartridges, but especially for those of moving-coil pickups. Although most models are still not sensitive enough to drive a standard phono pre-amplifier to adequate output levels without the aid of an intermediary step-up transformer or head amp and are still heavier and require higher tracking forces than most good fixed-coil cartridges, they are steadily improving in all these respects.

Naturally, the state of the art in fixed-coil cartridges is also advancing. Lighter magnets and other new materials and construction techniques have yielded improved tracking ability and smaller, lighter cartridges, plus the ability to get high outputs with lower coil inductances, thereby making performance less dependent on electrical loading. Next month, I'll explore the nature and significance of such loading, what it is that makes a cartridge a stereo cartridge, and some basic specifications. **HF**

...and then came Super Feedforward.

Not many years ago a "high fidelity" amplifier delivered 5 watts with 5% harmonic distortion. Today, distortion levels of 0.05% — or even 0.005% — in amplifiers with hundreds of watts and a much wider frequency range are almost routine.

Reducing harmonic distortion has usually been achieved by using negative feedback. But too much negative feedback can introduce a new kind of distortion, TIM (Transient Intermodulation Distortion) that audibly degrades the musical sound.

To reduce TIM and other forms of residual distortion, Sansui developed its DD/DC (Diamond Differential/

Direct Current) drive circuit. Then, to eliminate the remaining vestiges of high-level, high-frequency distortion in the amplifier's output stage, Sansui engineers perfected a unique circuit which, though proposed years ago, has now been realized in a practical amplifier design. Super Feedforward, the new Sansui technique, takes the leftover distortion products present in even an optimally-designed amplifier, feeds them to a separate, error correcting circuit that reverses their polarity, then combines them so they cancel themselves out against the regular audio signal. What's left is only the music, with not a trace of distortion.

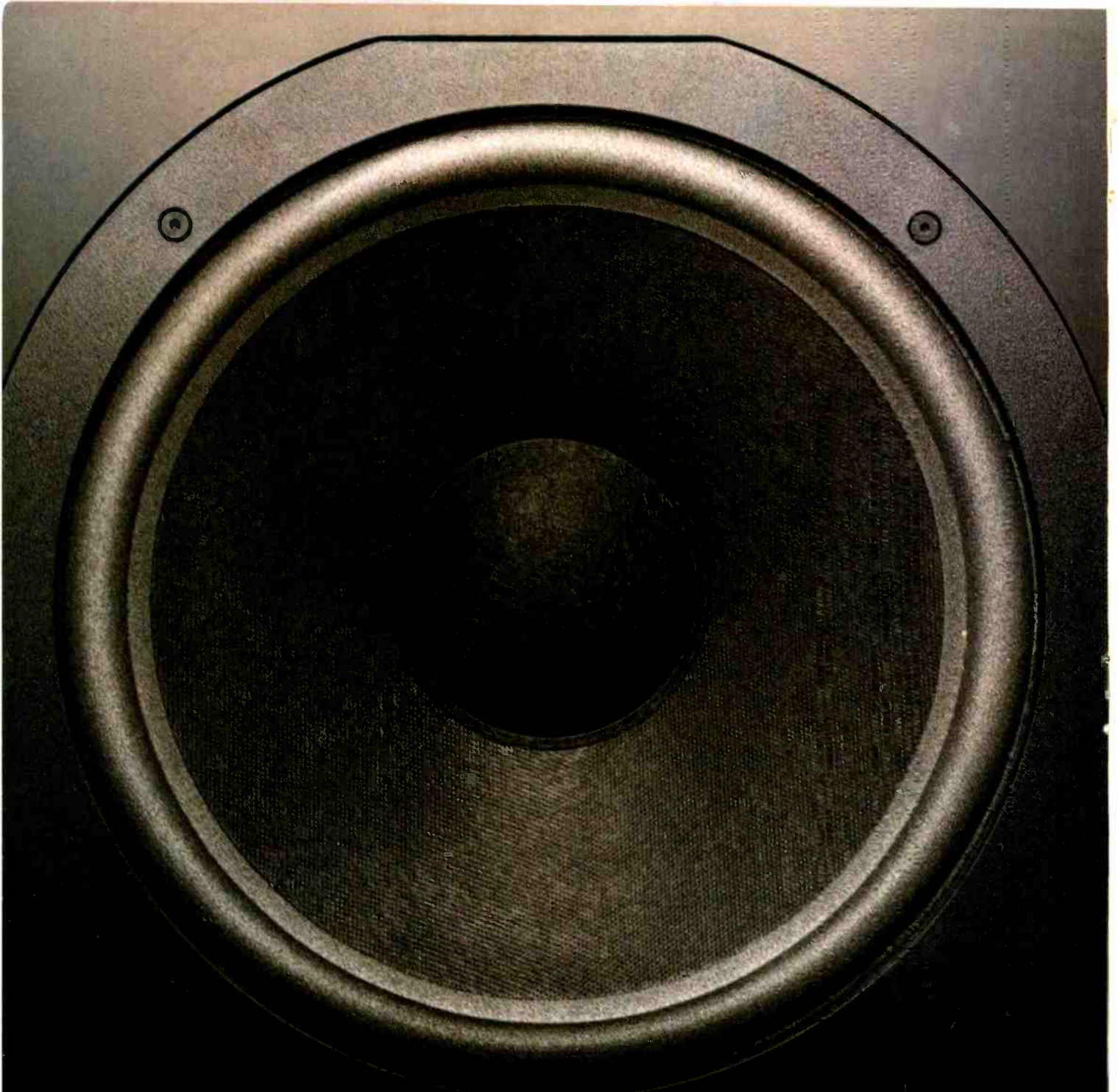
While Super Feedforward circuitry puts Sansui's AU-D 11 and AU-D 9 amplifiers in a class by themselves, all our amplifiers are renowned for their musicality, versatility, and respect for human engineering. Add a matching TU tuner to any of Sansui's AU amplifiers and you'll appreciate the difference 35 years of Sansui dedication to sound purity can produce.

For the name of the nearest audio specialist who carries the AU-D 11 and AU-D 9 or other fine components in Sansui's extensive line of high fidelity products, write: Sansui Electronics Corp., 1250 Valley Brook Avenue, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071.



SANSUI ELECTRONICS CORPORATION
Lyndhurst, New Jersey 07071, Gardena, CA 90248
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THE VIRGIN SOUND.

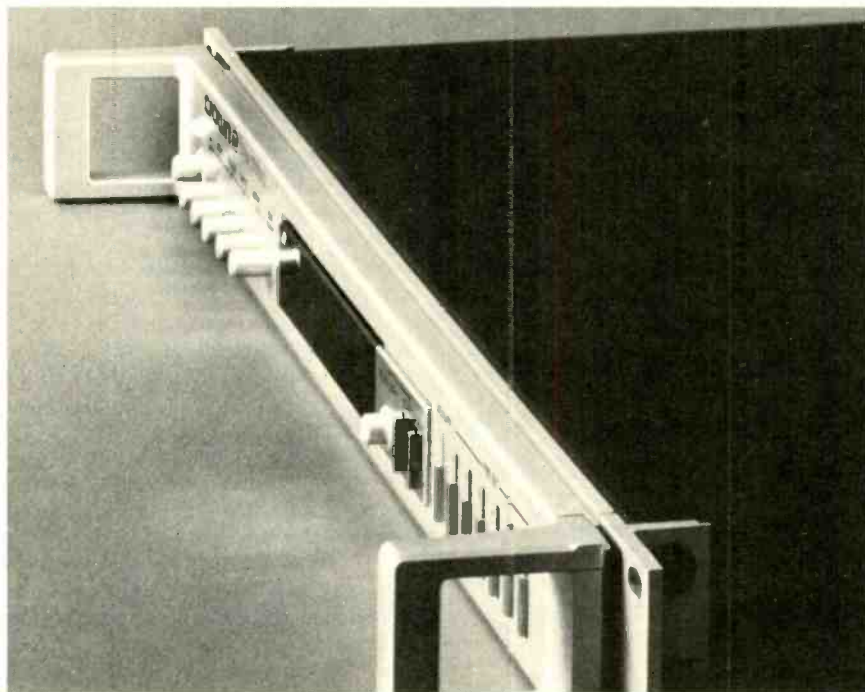
The Jensen System Series Speakers are unique. With uniform power response and ultra-precise crossovers, they're designed to reproduce sound without compromise, without manipulation. In addition, System Series speakers offer a broad range of adjustment to accommodate differences in program material or room acoustics. At Jensen, we believe that choice should be yours, not ours. Our commitment is to bring you exactly the sound that is recorded or broadcast. It is pure, uncensored, virgin sound. Hear it at better audio shops. For more information and dealer locations, call 800-323-0707.



JENSEN

New Equipment Reports

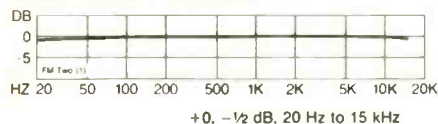
Preparation supervised by Robert Long, Michael Riggs, and Edward J. Foster.
 Laboratory data (unless otherwise noted) supplied by Diversified Science Laboratories.



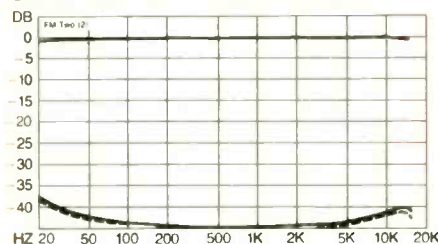
Another Exceptional Crown: FM Two

Crown FM Two FM tuner. Dimensions: 19 by 13/4 inches (front); 10 1/2 inches deep plus clearance for rack-mount handles and connections. Price: \$700. Warranty: "full," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Crown International, Inc., 1718 W. Mishawaka Rd., Elkhart, Ind. 46517.

MONO FREQUENCY RESPONSE



STEREO RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



Frequency response
 — L ch +0, -1/2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
 - - - R ch +0, -1/2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
 Channel separation \geq 40 dB, 30 Hz to 15 kHz

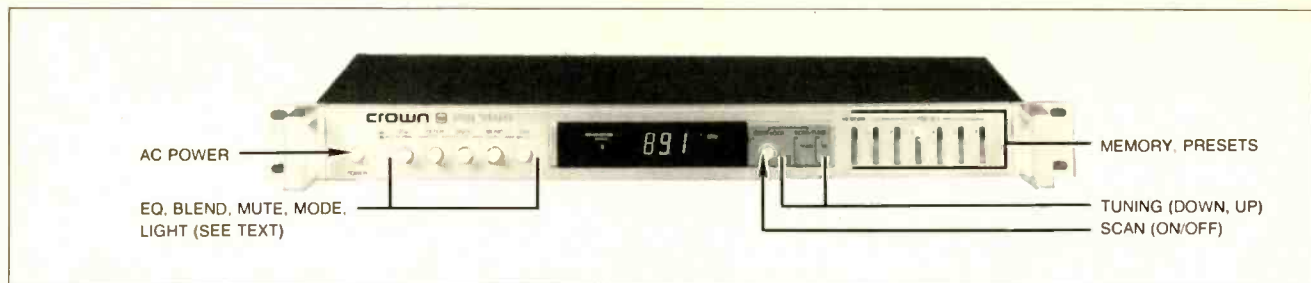
AMONG THE LEAST MERCURIAL of major audio companies, Crown International still is among the most innovative. Its tape recorder line expanded into electronics—separate amps and preamps—only gradually over those years that also saw the overnight blossoming of many a specialty company into one offering "full-line" wares: electronics, speakers and headphones, record-playing gear, tape decks—the works. A decade ago, the Crown name was well-established in power amps, but not yet in preamps; when we reported on the newly introduced IC-150 (December 1971), we considered its radicalism fascinating but a little quirky. Each new preamp from the company as the Seventies wore on was yet more radical and yet more fascinating. Finally came the FM One—an impressive but relatively bulky and expensive model by comparison to the second-generation Crown FM tuner, aptly named the FM Two.

Like most Crown equipment, the Two can be rack-mounted: like several of the company's power amps over the years, it occupies minimum rack space; like virtually all Crown models, it is among the leaders in its class. Its features include a six-station memory, separate muting and mono/stereo switches, two tuning modes, a switchable BLEND (which Crown calls a filter), a 25-microsecond de-emphasis option (for Dolby-encoded broadcasts that you want to

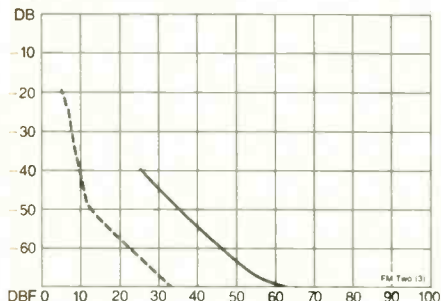
process with a separate decoder), and a feature panel-light control. Some of these features are a little out of the ordinary. The battery-less memory, for example, will hold onto station frequencies for some five days, according to Crown, without power on the line cord. That's long enough to tide you through any power outage but not enough to retain the stations through vacation periods if you run the tuner from a switched AC outlet on your preamp.

The BLEND reduces separation to about 3 dB at frequencies as low as 2 kHz or so, below which separation gradually increases, exceeding 10 dB only below about 500 Hz. These figures, measured by Diversified Science Laboratories, astonished us when we first looked at them. The reduction in hiss and distortion afforded by so extreme a BLEND is admittedly excellent, but the results could hardly be stereo, we figured. Indeed, though a sense of stereo remains, imaging is anything but crisp; the BLEND's use is best saved for really poor reception conditions, in our opinion. Perhaps Crown may eventually offer a BLEND similar to this one in combination with a more conventional circuit for better (but still less-than-ideal) signals.

The tuning modes are straightforward and efficient. The standard mode steps up or down the frequency scale in one-channel (200-MHz) intervals when you tap the controls and advances rapidly when you keep



FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



—	stereo quieting (noise)	
- - - -	mono quieting (noise)	
Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)		
	35¼ dBf at 98 MHz, with 0.35% THD+N	
	(36¼ dBf at 90 MHz; 35½ dBf at 106 MHz)	
Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)		
	12¾ dBf at 98 MHz	
Muting threshold	23¼ dBf	
Stereo threshold	25¼ dBf	
Stereo S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)	70 dB	
Mono S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)	78 dB	
CAPTURE RATIO		
	1¾ dB	
SELECTIVITY (alternate-channel)		
	63 dB	
HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N)		
	stereo	mono
at 100 Hz	0.10%	0.084%
at 1 kHz	0.059%	0.047%
at 6 kHz	0.12%	0.086%
STEREO PILOT INTERMODULATION		
	0.050%	
IM DISTORTION (mono)		
	0.023%	
AM SUPPRESSION		
	70 dB	
PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION		
	80 dB	
SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPR.		
	92½ dB	

pressing on the pushbars. The SCAN zips from channel to channel, stopping wherever it discovers a station carrier.

The only antenna-tuning aid is the usual five-segment signal-strength display, which we find less than ideal for fringe-area reception despite its near-ubiquitousness on today's tuners. Nor is there any way of assessing multipath with the FM Two—a surprising omission in a tuner that has so many features. Of course, if you must listen from a cable or community-antenna system—or if your receiving situation is such that adding an antenna rotator would net minimum dividends—multipath indication would merely document an irremediable condition, not help you correct it.

If you do get your FM from cable or otherwise use 75-ohm lead-in, you'll be pleased that the back panel includes the standard 75-ohm coaxial input. In fact there is no conventional 300-ohm input at all: Crown supplies a balun transformer so you can adapt a 300-ohm twinlead feed to the coaxial input. Nor is there a "floppy antenna" packed in the carton with the tuner. For once, a manufacturer has had the presence of mind to see that its inclusion—expected though it is, at least with receivers—implies endorsement of a design that is cheap but very inefficient (hopelessly so, in some circumstances) and thus demotivates the purchaser from obtaining an antenna worthy of the tuner.

Also on the back panel are the outputs (regular pin jacks) each with a screwdriver level control, and an intriguing multipin jack marked "remote control." Actually, there's no control unit to mate to it yet, but considering the computer-controllability approach that Crown took to the design of the DL-2 preamp, for example, our antici-

pation is intensely piqued by the possibilities. (When the remote control arrives, incidentally, we hope its manual is better written than that for the Two, which communicates its use less clearly than the front-panel design does.)

Considering Crown's performance track record, it's almost an anticlimax to report that the FM Two behaved superbly on the test bench. Perhaps characteristically, Crown rates superlatives even in one area that "nobody ever looks at" (actually, we're not the only exception): adjacent-channel selectivity. We seldom (if ever) have encountered better than 10 dB in this measurement; the Two comes in at a championship 12 dB. (And remember that it does so without resorting to an IF-bandwidth switch that sneaks a little quality away from the response-and-distortion department in order to buy more selectivity.) Our only negative finding, in fact, is one that evidently applies only to an extremely limited number of units from the earliest production: The output channels are reversed. We overcame the shortcoming simply by swapping the plugs of the output cables; you probably won't even have to do that if you buy the Two.

And if uncompromising signal quality combined with practical ease-of-use features is important to you, you doubtless will want to own the FM Two, which takes its place in the Crown pantheon of ultradesirable components. The price (again, not atypically for Crown equipment) is above the moderate range, but it's a bargain by contrast to the \$1,000 supertuners of a few years back—none of which consistently performed this well on a spec-by-spec basis. In brief, Crown has done it again.

Circle 100 on Reader-Service Card



Crown FM Two's front-panel features include de-emphasis switch (for Dolby broadcasts) and dimmer for the front-panel display.

AR



A new chapter in bookshelf speaker design.

Even though they sound fine in scientific test chambers, some of the world's most expensive speakers bomb when you get them home and play a record. Trumpets blur instead of blare. Guitars wimp out. Because the speakers weren't designed to allow for the acoustics of real rooms. Rooms with walls, ceilings, floors and furniture.

Our researchers began to attack this problem years ago, creating highly complex computer software to measure the interplay between room surfaces and speakers. Using AR-built woofers, midranges, tweeters and crossover networks, they designed advanced speaker systems like the AR48s (shown at right). All components in these systems work together with room acoustics in a totally integrated sonic relationship. So that even the most inexpensive AR bookshelf speakers deliver their best performance in your home. Not in a test chamber you'll never see.

Find out why AR speakers keep winning acclaim (and three Grand Prix Awards) from the world's top hi-fi magazines. *For information and local dealer names, call 1-800-824-7888* toll-free. Ask for Operator 14.*

Hear what you've been missing.



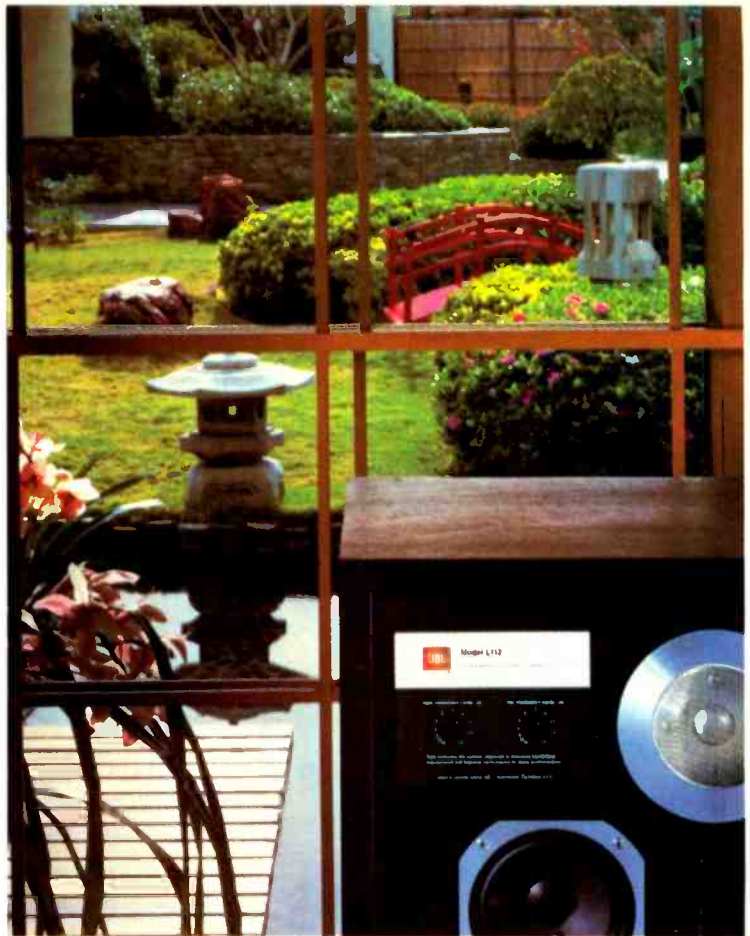
The number one selling audiophile loudspeaker in Japan isn't Japanese.

Over the years, Japan has introduced some of the most innovative audio products in the world. So it's not surprising that the Japanese are highly critical when it comes to selecting components for their own homes. What might surprise you, however, is that the number one selling audiophile loudspeaker in Japan isn't Japanese. It's made in the U.S.A. by JBL.

In fact, in a recent survey conducted by one of that country's most highly regarded audio magazines,* JBL was voted the most desired loudspeaker by an amazing 44% of those surveyed. The closest competitor received only 11.9%. Even more importantly, over 25% indicated that they already owned JBL speakers.

To find out a few more surprising facts about JBL, visit the audio specialists at your local JBL dealer.

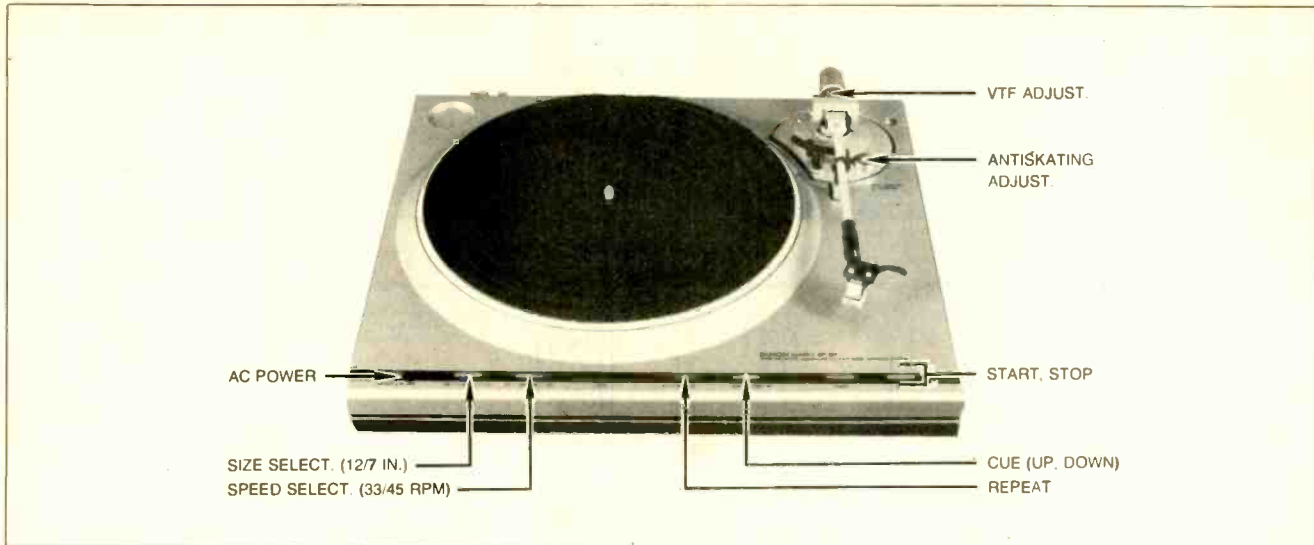
**Stereo Sound*, Summer 1981 Speaker Systems Market Research



First with the pros.

JBL/harman international





An Elegant Automatic from Denon

Denon DP-32F two-speed (33 and 45 rpm) automatic turntable ensemble. Dimensions: 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (top), 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches high with cover closed. Additional 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches vertically and 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches at back required to open cover fully. Price: \$325. Warranty: "limited," four years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Nippon Columbia Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Denon America, Inc., P.O. Box 1139, West Caldwell, N.J. 07006.

SPEED ACCURACY (at 33 and 45 rpm)
no measurable error, 105–127 VAC

WOW & FLUTTER (ANSI/IEEC weighted peak)
±0.10% average; ±0.13% max.
instantaneous

TOTAL AUDIBLE RUMBLE (ARLL) –63 dB

TONEARM RESONANCE AND DAMPING
(with Shure V-15 Type III)
vertical 7.5 Hz; 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -dB rise
lateral 9.5 Hz; 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -dB rise
(see text)

VTF-GAUGE ACCURACY
reads 0.0 to 0.1 gram low, 0.5 to 3.0 grams

TOTAL LEAD CAPACITANCE 85 pF

Report Policy: Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by Diversified Science Laboratories. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Samples normally are supplied on loan from the manufacturer. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report or portion thereof may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested. HIGH FIDELITY and Diversified Science Laboratories assume no responsibility for product performance or quality.

AMONG THE PRODUCTS on which Denon's reputation is based in this country are its excellent direct-drive turntables. The last one we tested—the DP-2500 (February 1979)—was a massive, fairly expensive manual unit that was short on frills and long on performance. In the latter respect, the DP-32F is clearly in the same tradition, but otherwise it is a rather different animal. For one thing, though it's not cheap, it does sell for substantially less than the DP-2500. And it does considerably more.

Operation is fully automatic. To play a record, you press one button to tell the turntable the diameter of the disc (7 or 12 inches) and another to tell it the correct speed (33 or 45 rpm). (These settings remain in force until you change them, even if you turn off the turntable and return to it later.) Then, when you tap the start switch, the arm moves the stylus over the lead-in groove, the platter starts turning at the selected speed, and the arm lowers the stylus onto the disc surface. At the end of the record (or when you push the stop switch), the arm returns automatically to its rest and the platter stops spinning—unless the repeat switch is depressed, in which case the arm returns to the lead-in groove and plays the same record again. And there is a cueing button that lets you raise or lower the arm anywhere you choose.

The DP-32F's direct-drive motor has a quartz-locked servo speed control and incorporates Denon's Magnafloat system, which is said to employ a cushion of magnetic force to decouple the platter from the main-bearing base and the rest of the drive mechanism to reduce bearing wear and rumble. The tonearm is of the increasingly popular straight-tube variety with a low-mass plug-in headshell secured by a set-screw. A dial at the base of the arm governs antiskating and what Denon calls Q-damping. The latter affects the behavior of the arm's electronic damping system, which is designed to control the low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance. Arm and platter are

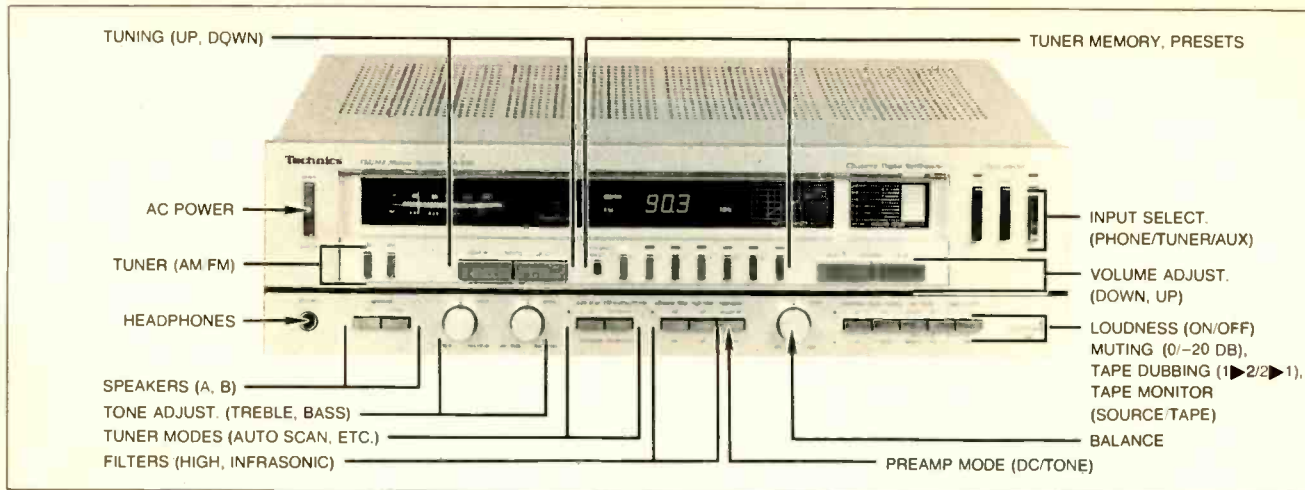
mounted together on a spring-suspended subchassis for isolation from shock and acoustic feedback.

These features proved their value on Diversified Science Laboratories' test bench. The quartz lock kept the DP-32F running exactly on speed over a wide range of line voltages, and the rumble and flutter figures, though not the very lowest we have seen, are quite respectable. Using the Shure V-15 Type III cartridge, whose moderate mass and high compliance are typical of modern high-quality pickups, DSL found almost no lateral resonance and, in the vertical plane, only a mild, well-damped bump centered just a smidgen below the lower edge of the frequency range we consider optimum. Probably because of the arm's electronic damping system, these are exceptionally well-behaved low-Q resonances; as a result, most cartridges should work very well in the DP-32F, whatever their mass and compliance.

We encountered no special difficulties in setting up the turntable, our only complaint being with Denon's instructions for adjusting stylus overhang. They call for a measurement of the distance from the rear of the headshell to the stylus that is difficult to make accurately in practice. A good alignment protractor would greatly simplify this critical procedure.

The action of the DP-32F's microprocessor-assisted controls, positioned on the front ledge of the base outside the dust cover for ease of use, is sure and precise, and the unit's audible performance is excellent. We are also taken by the look of this new Denon, which reflects an appealing amalgam of sturdy construction, attention to detail, and tasteful styling—a sort of casual, unaffected elegance seldom seen in audio componentry. The bottom line, of course, is value: a handsome, high-performance automatic turntable that sells for a reasonable price. We think that's a hard combination to beat.

Circle 99 on Reader-Service Card

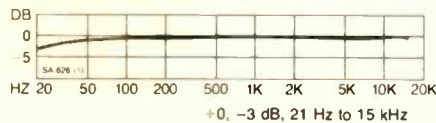


Technics' Modern Receiver

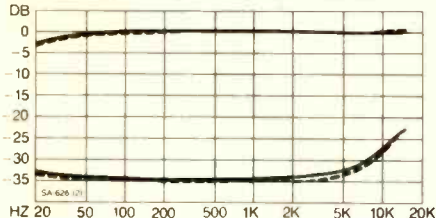
Technics SA-626 AM/FM receiver. Dimensions: 17 by 4½ inches (front panel), 13¾ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: two unswitched (300 watts max. total). Price: \$585. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Panasonic Co. Division of Matsushita Electric Corp. of America, 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, N.J. 07094.

FM tuner section

MONO FREQUENCY RESPONSE

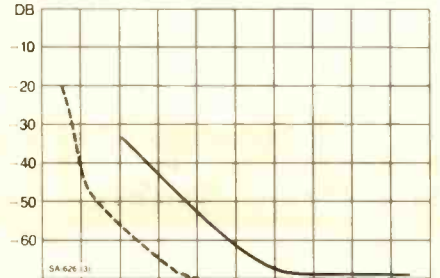


STEREO RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



Frequency response
 — Lch +0, -3 dB, 21 Hz to 15 kHz
 - - - R ch +0, -3 dB, 21 Hz to 15 kHz
 Channel separation
 ≥ 33 dB, 20 Hz to 3 kHz;
 ≥ 23 dB, 20 Hz to 14 kHz

FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



Stereo quieting (noise)
 - - - mono quieting (noise)
 Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)
 37½ dBf at 98 MHz, with 0.37% THD+N
 (38¾ dBf at 90 MHz; 38½ dBf at 106 MHz)

A PROSPECTUS OF FEATURES for a typical modern receiver might include digital tuning with AM and FM memory presets (and a backup battery to prevent "forgetfulness" when the power fails), scan and manual tuning (with separate internal settings for U.S. or European increments, to keep tuning zippy), automatic return to the last tuned station when you turn on the receiver, a five-LED signal-strength indicator, UP and DOWN stepping controls for volume (as well as tuning), two-way tape dubbing, and one of the various amplifier circuits that have been created to deliver the ultralow distortion of Class A operation without its inefficiency. Technics has put all of these into the SA-626 and added one more of its own: an analog tuning "dial" (the manual aptly terms it a frequency meter) to supplement the digital frequency readout.

Also unusual is a switch that gives you the option of running the receiver direct-coupled (DC) throughout (partly to make best possible use of Technics' New Class A power amplification), or of inserting the tone controls and so on into the signal chain. The tone controls themselves shelve at approximately 12 dB of maximum cut or boost. The loudness action, which was not affected by the volume setting within Diversified Science Laboratories' standard test range and therefore appears to be a fixed equalizer (the manual says to switch it on only for low-level listening), boosts the bass below about 100 Hz, raising it some 9 dB above the level of the treble from 1 kHz up. The filters are gentle (with slopes of only 6 dB per octave), and both have relatively high turnover frequencies. This means that the high filter is unusually subtle in its behavior, taking only a nibble from heavy hiss, while the infrasonic filter slightly attenuates response well up into the audible bass region.

We have often complained that the now-standard five-LED signal display is not much help for critical antenna orientation. Technics' is better than average for getting optimum results from borderline reception because the five thresholds are

somewhat more closely spaced than is usual and fall into the range between 28 and 52 dBf. Thus they ignore signals so weak as to make stereo reception offensively noisy and those so strong that tuning them is no problem (multipath aside). They concentrate instead on the region where the indicator can do the most good and increase its responsiveness within the range.

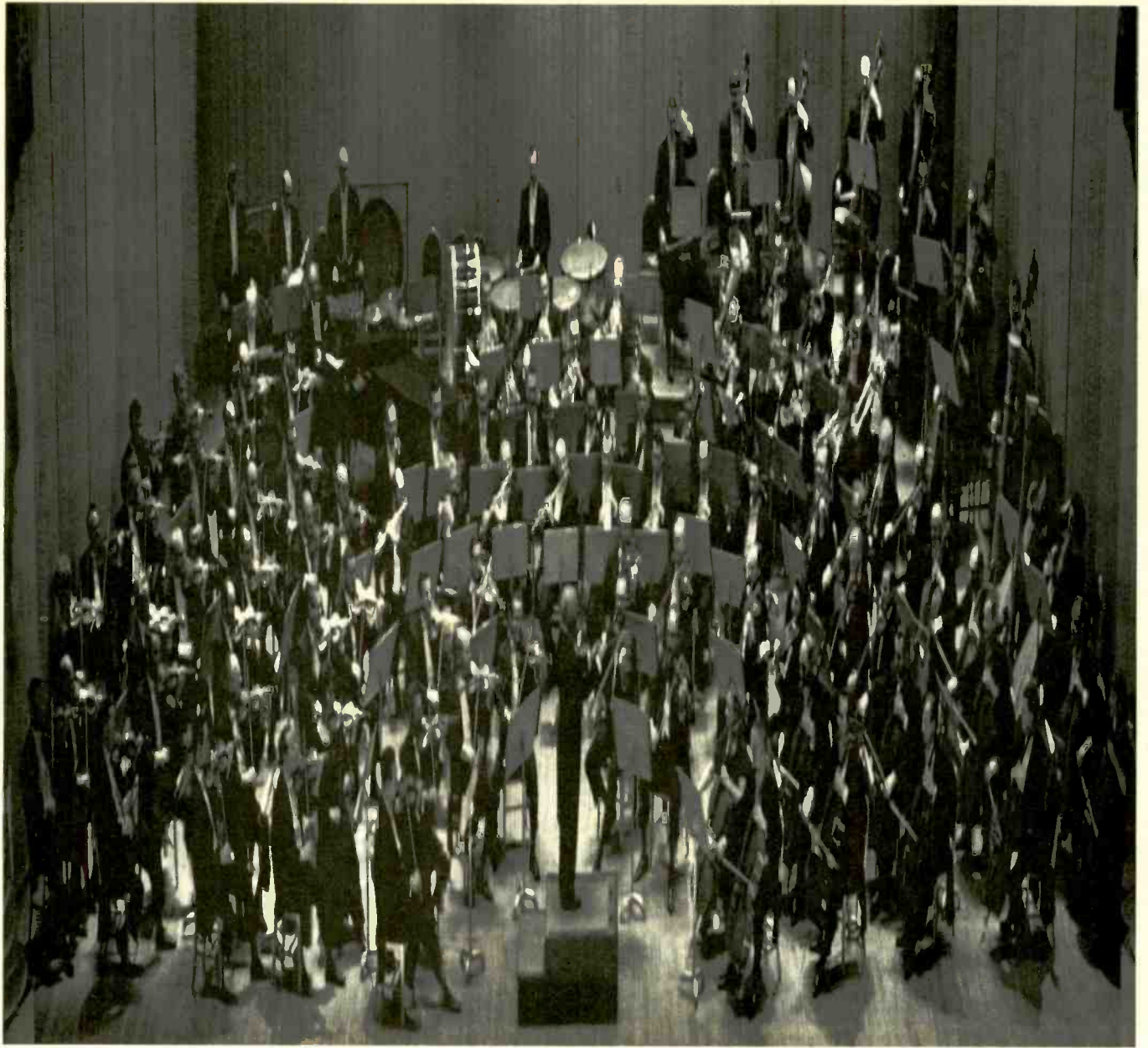
That said, there's surprisingly little to add, considering the number of front-panel controls and back-panel connections (including sturdy, convenient twist-to-lock power terminals) that the 626 offers. In a way, this is a back-handed tribute to Technics: from a literary point of view, there's a boring uniformity to the excellence of the performance throughout the tuner and amplifier sections. No records are set, but they're not missed by much either. In this case, no news most emphatically is good news. The data—and the photographs—speak for themselves. This is an excellent receiver no matter how you look at it.

Circle 98 on Reader-Service Card

About the dBW . . .

We currently are expressing power in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. The conversion table will enable you to use the advantages of dBW in comparing these products to others for which you have no dBW figures.

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



**Sony is about to change
your idea of what you can expect
from an audio tape.**

Hear booming kettle drums with virtually no distortion.

Hear quiet flute passages free of hiss.



Sony introduces and UCX-S, the breakthrough



Sony's UCX-S is a revolutionary new audio cassette tape. A high-bias tape with a wider dynamic range than any other tape of its type. So wide, it actually expands the sound you can hear. (With minimal distortion, hiss or print-through.) That's why we call it Wide Fidelity Sound.

With new UCX-S, you can record the very high notes — as well as the very low. Either way, you'll hear everything with a clarity you've never heard before on a high-bias tape. And you can also record at higher volume levels, so you can record and hear the very soft sounds you lost before in background noise.

How did Sony do it? With three

Hear perfect reproduction from the lowest ranges of the bassoon...

to the highest reaches of the strings.



Philadelphia Orchestra photo by Don Hunstein for Columbia Records

Wide Fidelity Sound tape that makes it possible.

major technological advances. (The kind you expect from Sony.) First, ultra-fine magnetic particles that are significantly smaller than any other conventional Type II tape particles. And a unique orientation process that aligns the particles so they are pointed in the same direction. (No mean feat when you consider there are some 500,000,000,000 magnetic particles in one millimeter of tape.) And third, a never-before-manufactured binder and process to assure a uniform, high density of particles.

If you want to get technical about it, here are the incredible specifications: Retentivity and Squareness higher than any other high-bias tape. Retentivity of 1800

Gauss, and that means greater Maximum Output Level and dynamic range.

Squareness of 93%, an astounding figure, for better recording efficiency. (When you consider that no other tape of this type has ever reached even 90%, you'll realize just how phenomenal UCX-S's 93% is.)

Of course, the real test of UCX-S is not a question of numbers or percentages. It comes when you lean back, close your eyes and listen. You'll hear subtleties in the music you could only hear until now in the concert hall. You'll hear every instrument in the orchestra. You'll hear more than you've ever heard on a high-bias tape. You'll hear it on UCX-S, with Wide Fidelity Sound.

SONY.

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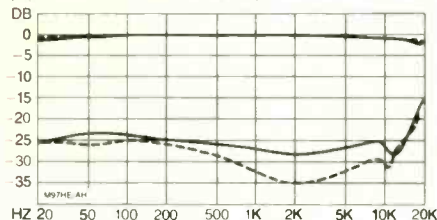
AUDIO New Equipment Reports

Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression) 14 1/4 dBf at 98 MHz	AM SUPPRESSION	57 dB	FREQUENCY RESPONSE	+0, -1/4 dB, <10 Hz to 41.4 kHz; -3 dB at 146 kHz
Muting threshold 21 dBf	PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION	37 3/4 dB	RIAA EQUALIZATION	+1/4, -1/2 dB, 22 Hz to 20 kHz; -4 1/2 dB at 5 Hz
Stereo threshold 20 1/2 dBf	SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPR.	57 3/4 dB	INPUT CHARACTERISTICS (re 0 dBW; A-weighting)	
Stereo S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 68 1/4 dB	Amplifier section		phono input	sensitivity 0.36 mV S/N ratio 77 dB
Mono S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 71 1/4 dB	RATED POWER	18 dBW (65 watts)/channel	aux input	21.6 mV 81 1/2 dB
CAPTURE RATIO	1 3/4 dB	OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (both channels driven)	PHONO OVERLOAD (at 1 kHz)	165 mV
SELECTIVITY (alternate-channel)	62 1/2 dB	8-ohm load	19 1/4 dBW (84 watts)/channel	
HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N)		4-ohm load	20 3/4 dBW (119 watts)/channel	
at 100 Hz	stereo 0.37% mono 0.17%	16-ohm load	17 dBW (50 watts)/channel	
at 1 kHz	0.21% 0.12%	DYNAMIC HEADROOM (re rated power; 8-ohm load)	+1 1/2 dB	
at 6 kHz	0.50% 0.16%	HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)		
STEREO PILOT INTERMODULATION	0.22%	at 18 dBW (65 watts)	≤ 0.013%	
IM DISTORTION (mono)	0.058%	at 0 dBW (1 watt)	≤ 0.01%	
				PHONO IMPEDANCE 48k ohms; 95 pF
				DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz) 78
				HIGH FILTER -3 dB at 8.2 kHz; 6 dB/octave
				INFRASONIC FILTER -3 dB at 33 Hz; 6 dB/octave

Integrated Pickup from Shure

Shure M97HE-AH Headliner phono pickup with integral plug-in headshell for "universal" arms and multiradial diamond stylus. Price: \$133. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Ill. 60204.

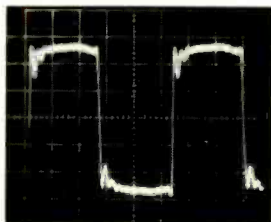
FREQUENCY RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION (test record: JVC TRS-1007 Mk. II)



Frequency response
 L ch +0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
 R ch +0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
 Channel separation
 ≥ 25 dB, 250 Hz to 14 kHz;
 ≥ 15 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

SENSITIVITY (1 kHz) 1.04 mV/cm/sec
 CHANNEL BALANCE (1 kHz) ± 3/4 dB
 VERTICAL TRACKING ANGLE ≥ 24°
 LOW-FREQUENCY RESONANCE (in SME 3009)
 vertical negligible; see text
 lateral 8.6 Hz; 4 1/2-dB rise
 MAX. TRACKING LEVEL (re RIAA; 1 1/4 grams)
 lateral ≥ +18 dB
 vertical ≥ +12 dB
 WEIGHT (including "shell") 12.8 grams

SQUARE-WAVE RESPONSE



MORE THAN MOST MANUFACTURERS, Shure has always tended to make cartridges for virtually every conceivable application, from audiophile to budget to broadcast. (Many can even be fitted with special styli for playing old shellac 78s.) The M97HE-AH is the company's first effort in the increasingly popular integrated-headshell genre. Essentially, it is an M97HE cartridge (test report, September 1980) that can be plugged directly into S- or J-shaped tonearms with the standard "universal" headshell connectors whose best-known adherent for many years was SME. Overhang is set by loosening a setscrew (an Allen wrench with a screwdriver handle comes with the pickup) and sliding the cartridge body forward or backward in the shell until it squares up with the lines on the supplied alignment protractor. Retighten the screw, set tracking force and antiskating, and you're ready to roll without having to fumble with fine wires and tiny nuts and bolts.

In other respects, the AH version is a twin of the original M97HE. It has Shure's hyperelliptical line-contact stylus for low tracing distortion and the Side Guard stylus deflector, which prevents the cantilever from being bent or broken if it is accidentally pushed to one side. The cartridge also has Shure's Dynamic Stabilizer carbon-fiber brush assembly, which cleans the disc ahead of the stylus, drains off static, and damps the low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance for stable tracking of warped records.

Diversified Science Laboratories found that the M97HE-AH could negotiate all bands of our standard pure-tone torture test at the manufacturer's minimum recommended net tracking force of 1/4 gram. At the more reasonable net force of 1 1/4 grams (1/4 gram less than the recommended maximum) used for all other measurements, tracking is uniformly excellent—a Shure hallmark. And distortion—both harmonic and intermodulation—is low by cartridge standards, even at high velocities.

Sensitivity is typical for a high-quality moving-magnet pickup, which means it is high enough to ensure a good signal-to-

noise ratio with standard phono preamplifiers. Channel balance is good. Vertical tracking angle, as measured by the twin-tone method, is greater than the DIN standard of 20 degrees, but no more so than that of many other fine cartridges. Since we have not found any clear correlation between this measurement and sonic quality, we do not see any reason to be concerned about the discrepancy.

Loaded according to the manufacturer's instructions with 47 kilohms in parallel with 250 picofarads, the M97HE-AH has very smooth frequency response, the only significant irregularity being a gentle treble rolloff starting at about 2 kHz and reaching about -2 dB at 20 kHz. Response is virtually identical in the two channels, and separation is excellent across the audio band. Square waves are reproduced with no overshoot and very little ringing, indicating good damping; the tops of the waveshapes are exceptionally flat with little or no rounding of the corners.

Without the Dynamic Stabilizer, the low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance in the SME 3009 Series II Improved tonearm (which has an effective mass of approximately 9 grams) occurs at about 7.5 Hz laterally and at 8 Hz vertically, both with an amplitude of 11 dB. With the stabilizer engaged—the normal, recommended usage—the lateral resonance moves up a little more than 1 Hz in frequency and drops about 6 1/2 dB in amplitude; in the vertical plane, DSL could find no clearly defined resonance. These results attest to the stabilizer's effectiveness and suggest that the M97HE-AH will perform well in just about any arm that will accept it.

Installing the cartridge in our arm was a snap, and in only a few minutes we were sitting back and enjoying the music (a pleasant contrast to the usual tedious installation and setup procedure). And the sound is first-rate. Imaging is stable and precise, while tonal balance is relaxed and essentially neutral. The treble droop shown in the response curves calls little attention to itself on audition (dips are usually less apparent than peaks). Every detail comes through clearly, yet without overemphasis. Track-

ing is squarely in the Shure tradition, which is to say delightfully surefooted: Try as we might, we can't get the M97HE-AH to say uncle.

In short, Shure has delivered itself of

another fine pickup—this one in an exceptionally convenient package and at an attractive price. We feel certain that it will enjoy well-deserved popularity.

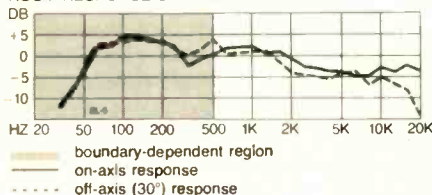
Circle 97 on Reader-Service Card



ULTRA Sonics from Celestion

Celestion SL-6 loudspeaker system, in wood cabinet with walnut veneer finish. Dimensions: 8 by 14 3/4 inches (front), 10 inches deep. Price: \$400. Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Rola Celestion, Ltd., England; U.S. distributor: Celestion Industries, Inc., Kunholme Drive, Holliston, Mass. 01746.

ROOM RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS



SENSITIVITY (at 1 meter; 2.8-volt pink noise, 250 Hz to 6 kHz) 84 dB SPL

PULSED OUTPUT (at 1 meter; 300 Hz) 105 dB SPL from 61 1/2 volts peak

CORRECTION

In our February-issue cassette-tape tests, the heading and photo for Fuji FX-I and FX-II showed C-60 lengths for both, although the tests actually were made with standard C-90 lengths.

FOR SOME TIME ULTRA (Ultra-accurate Laser Topographic Response Analysis) has been a primary design tool at Celestion (see our review of the Celestion Ditton 130, May 1980), but the company says its new SL-6 is the first loudspeaker to be designed from the ground up using the technique. Data derived from a laser Doppler interferometer focused on a loudspeaker driver are fed to a computer, which uses them to generate an enhanced perspective image of the driver's surface. This enables the engineers to observe in detail the driver's motion in response to a signal. According to Celestion, information obtained by this method makes it easier than ever before to isolate and solve speaker design problems.

The company's research has led to the development of two new and unusual drivers expressly for use in the SL-6. The tweeter is a 1/4-inch metal dome. Unlike most other high-frequency drivers—whose voice coils are wound on separate bobbins that must then be glued to the diaphragm—the SL-6 tweeter is constructed so that its entire moving system is a single continuous element: Its voice coil is wound directly onto a cylindrical extension of the dome diaphragm. This approach is said to yield greater rigidity (and therefore lower distortion) and to enable the dome itself to act as a heat sink for the voice coil, reducing the chance of damage at high power levels.

The 6 1/2-inch woofer has a single-piece diaphragm (the dust cap is molded in, rather than glued on in the usual way, again to increase rigidity and reduce distortion) made of a substance called vinyl homo polymer, or VHP, which is joined to a surround of the same material by a molecular bonding process. Celestion says that the two drivers are designed to match well, enabling the use of relatively simple 12-dB-per-octave filters in the 2.3-kHz crossover. Over their respective operating ranges, the drivers are said to operate as nearly perfect pistons.

The acoustic suspension enclosure is itself handsome and unusually small for a speaker that is, in fact, the new flagship of Celestion's U.S. line. The company's reasoning is that a high-quality speaker should not have to be large and that many people, especially those living in small apartments, will prefer a system that doesn't require much space. Amplifier connections to the compact units are made via color-coded binding posts recessed into the rear panel.

Celestion suggests mounting the SL-6 on a bookshelf or on stands a little over a foot high. Diversified Science Laboratories chose to make its measurements with the

speaker resting on a 15-inch stand backed up against the rear wall, but well away from side walls. Sensitivity is moderately low, but power-handling ability is excellent: where high power is necessary to obtain adequate volume the speaker should perform well.

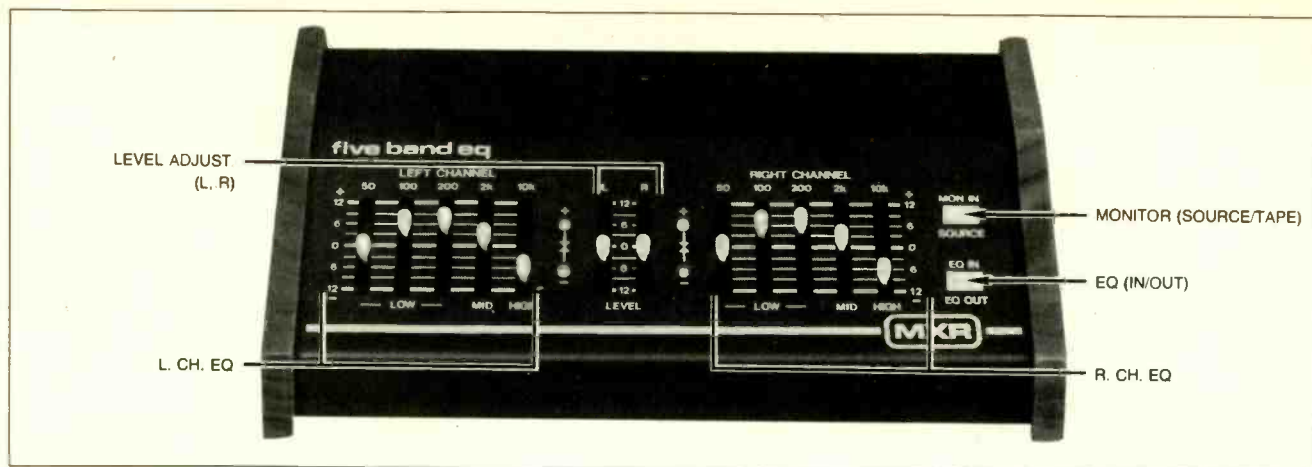
Distortion proved very low, even at low frequencies where one would expect so small a woofer to run out of steam. At a moderate output of 85 dB SPL, total harmonic distortion (THD) never rises above 5% over DSL's entire measurement range of 30 Hz to 10 kHz; for the most part, it remains well under 1%. At a very loud 100 dB SPL, significant distortion begins to appear in the deep bass range, but from 80 Hz up it is still quite respectable, reaching a peak of just over 6% at 6.3 kHz and averaging 2% to 3%.

Celestion has accurately specified the SL-6's nominal impedance as 8 ohms; the impedance curve reaches a minimum of slightly over 5 ohms at 16 kHz. This is an easy load for any amplifier to drive, and most will accept two pairs in parallel without distress. The system's on-axis frequency response slopes smoothly downward from bass to treble (the small notch at 300 Hz is probably a cancellation induced by proximity to the floor or the rear wall), staying within a ± 5 -dB range from 50 Hz to 20 kHz. Off-axis response is flatter in the bass and midrange, but droops more in the treble because of the tweeter's increasing directivity at high frequencies.

After experimenting with various placements of the speakers in our listening room, we settled on a position well out into the room on stands about two feet tall. So placed, the SL-6s sound smooth, clean, and a little to the warm side of complete neutrality. Despite their small size, they do not appear bass-shy; indeed, because they do favor the low end somewhat, we sometimes found ourselves backing off on our preamp's bass control to achieve a better balance. Imaging is both spacious and precise, conveying an unusually good sense of the ambience contained in the recording. When pushed hard, the Celestions just get louder, never sounding stressed or overdriven and never losing the superb clarity they exhibit at low levels.

Although not inexpensive, the SL-6 is a very good speaker that manages to sound bigger than it really is. We are mightily impressed with the technology that has contributed to its design and manufacture and look forward to hearing the products it will surely bring us in the future.

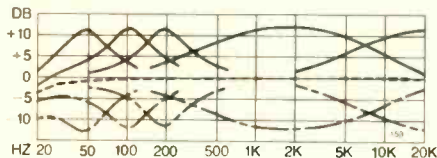
Circle 96 on Reader-Service Card



MXR: Equalization at Your Fingertips

MXR Model 153 five-band equalizer. Dimensions: 9¾ by 5¾ inches (table space), 2¼ inches high. Price: \$150. Warranty: "full," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: MXR Innovations, Inc., 740 Driving Park Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14613.

RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS



— Individual sliders at maximum
 - - - all sliders at "flat" positions
 +1/4, -3 dB, 23 Hz to 79 kHz
 - · - individual sliders at minimum

OUTPUT CLIPPING LEVEL (1 kHz) 4.6 volts

INPUT CLIPPING LEVEL (1 kHz) 4.9 volts

S/N RATIO (re 0.5 V; A-weighted)
 all controls "flat" 95¼ dB
 worst-case setting* 64¼ dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 40 Hz to 20 kHz*)
 2-volt input ≤ 0.17%
 1-volt input ≤ 0.10%

INFRASONIC FILTER -3 dB at 23 Hz; 18 dB/octave

*See text.

TWO INGENIOUS FEATURES overshadow all other considerations in this handy-dandy equalizer from MXR. The first is the tabletop design, intended for chair-side use so you can perform sonic touchups from your listening position—the only place from which such "sweetening" can adequately be judged. The other is the choice of center frequencies for the five sliders in each channel; instead of spacing them evenly (as most manufacturers do, following less-than-thoughtful convention), MXR has tried to

imagine how they will be used and to tailor its engineering accordingly. In both respects, the design of the Model 153 is therefore exceptionally practical.

The marked center frequencies (which Diversified Science Laboratories' data show to be unusually accurate) are at 50, 100, and 200 Hz and 2 and 10 kHz. The first three bands are relatively narrow ("high-Q"), while the top two are about as broad as those of typical tone controls. The 50-Hz band covers the deep bass and addresses the area of bass resonance in typical loudspeaker systems; the next two sliders cover the bass and midbass. Together, this group embraces the area where problems—particularly those associated with speaker placement and room modes—are most likely to exist in typical stereo systems. The 2-kHz control covers the upper-midrange "presence" area; the top slider affects the sibilants, hiss, and general brightness of the sound. All have adjustment ranges of approximately ±12 dB. In addition, there's a nondefeatable infrasonic filter whose effect is just visible at the bass end of our response curves and which rolls off steeply below the audible range to prevent warp "information" from overtaxing woofers or amplifiers, particularly if you choose to bolster weak deep-bass speaker response by raising the 50-Hz slider.

The Model 153 is designed for connection into your system via regular pin-style signal leads and a set of tape-monitor (or outboard signal-processor) jacks on your preamp or receiver. So you don't lose the ability to use a tape recorder when the 153 is connected, MXR supplies a set of tape connections on the equalizer and a source/tape switch on the front panel. This setup lets you equalize the signal coming from the deck, but not the source signal going to it. If you want to use the 153 to adjust the tonal balance of a signal you are recording, you must reconnect the system so it will take the feed to the recording deck from the equalizer's main output.

On the front panel there also are overall-level sliders for each channel and pairs of LEDs to indicate when signal levels

should be adjusted. The excellent signal-to-noise ratio (95¼ dB) with all sliders set at their midpoints confirms that overall level is not critical with reasonably normal signals. When the lab went looking for worst-case conditions in this respect, it still measured more than 60 dB; that was with the 10-kHz slider moved to its maximum while all the rest were dropped to their minimum settings—hardly a likely combination for any type of listening we can think of.

The distortion measurements were made at 2 volts (the standard setting for preamps and "line-level" signal processors) and prove to be quite respectable. Because MXR's own specs are written for a 1-volt signal, Diversified Science Laboratories also took its measurements at that level and found nothing exceeding 0.10% THD in the range above 40 Hz. Even at 20 Hz, distortion remains below 1% at both measurement levels; but because the fundamental is here being rolled off by the infrasonic filter, while the spurious harmonics are not, these figures are somewhat inflated by the standard measurement technique. In any event, distortion is low and, being predominantly the second harmonic, contains no worrisome components.

There are, of course, equalization requirements to which no five-band model would be equal; real virtuosity requires a subtler instrument (at a much higher price). But in its class, we find the 153 unusually capable. If you lower the 2-kHz sliders, for example, you can get something very close to classic loudness compensation—and you can adjust the degree of compensation to the listening situation, which is more than can be managed with the usual on/off loudness switch; if you prefer the bass-boost-only approach favored by recent loudness-perception research, you can get it by pulling down the 10-kHz sliders as well. Though there is little or no difference between the last two calibrated settings of extreme boost or cut in each slider, calibration accuracy is at least par for this type of equalizer, and—again—it is the handiness of the design that is its overriding virtue.

Circle 95 on Reader-Service Card



PHOTO BY GEORGE MENDA

Spring New Equipment Report

The first crop of new stereo goodies blossoms forth from Las Vegas and elsewhere.

PERHAPS BECAUSE LAS VEGAS is such a razzle-dazzle town, our annual trip there to see what's new invariably makes us feel a little as though we might have taken one turn too many around the roulette wheel. Despite the harbingers we talked about last month, there were surprises at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, and despite the protestations of those who made the prototypes we saw and heard, there are bound to be

surprises in the months to follow. Plans—however carefully laid—don't always pan out, either at the manufacturer's level or at the gaming table.

The point should not be labored however; the new equipment we've seen confirms, within reasonable tolerance, the predictions in our March issue. Digital prototypes are everywhere, but neither the laser-read compact disc nor a digital version of

the familiar compact cassette is ready for market. Meanwhile, there are some interesting new analog components, particularly in the high price brackets. In this issue, three of our editors tell you what they've seen in basic system gear: electronics, record-playing equipment, and tape. This is only the first installment, of course; later we'll also be covering speakers and accessories of all sorts in similar fashion.

Electronics: Power and Panache

by Edward J. Foster
Consulting Audio-Video Editor

JUDGING FROM THIS WINTER'S Consumer Electronics Show, you should expect to find many more new separates and fewer new receivers on dealers' shelves this summer than you have in the past. Given the less-than-exuberant economy, this trend was predictable; high-end components have traditionally been more resistant to recession than those at the lower end of the market. Most of the electronics action at the Las Vegas show was in power amps and preamps. New receivers were few and far between, particularly (with some notable exceptions) at the fancy end of the scale.

Power Amps

The trend is toward the exotic: high current capacity, ultrafast response, and Class A operation—real or quasi. Walking off with the blue ribbon for sheer current capacity and response is the Citation XX, with 250 watts (24 dBW) per channel into 8 ohms (440 watts or 26½ dBW into 4 ohms) at less than 0.1% THD from 10 Hz to 100 kHz, a

200-ampere instantaneous current capacity, and a slew rate of 200 volts per microsecond. This outstanding performance is attributed to the use of laser-trimmed hybrid circuitry and gold-plated transmission lines that reduce the inductance of the ground and power-supply paths. Price is a mere \$7,500.

Also in the ultrafast, wide-bandwidth camp are Yamaha, Bedini, Mission, and Audio Design. Yamaha's mono BX-1 is a \$2,000 Class A amp with a 100-watt (20-dBW) rating, 10 Hz to 20 kHz into 8 or 4 ohms at less than 0.002% THD. Slew rate is an outstanding 600 volts per microsecond. Bedini named its \$3,000 amp 100X2 1 Meg to imply its specs: the frequency response extends from DC to 1 MHz, with Class A output stages supplying 100 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads at 0.01% THD.

From Mission Electronics comes the 777 (\$1,200)—a DC-coupled ultrawide-band amplifier using what are known as H-FET output devices—rated at 200 watts (23 dBW) per channel. Open-loop bandwidth is

230 kHz; with only 14 dB of feedback, frequency response extends to 1.15 MHz.

Audio Design's Models 10A, 20A, and 30A are also named to reflect their output specs: 10, 20, and 30 amperes per channel, respectively. The 30A carries a conventional power rating of 100 watts (20 dBW) per channel into 8 ohms; with its 3-dB dynamic headroom, instantaneous power is equivalent to 200 watts (23 dBW) per channel—which, thanks to the 30A's high current capacity, is also its continuous-power rating with 4-ohm loads.

Bipolar and Audionics also emphasize the importance of power supply design. Bipolar Electronic Systems' Model 850 may be rated at only 85 watts (18¼ dBW) per channel, but its regulated power supply is capable of delivering 30 to 40 amperes of current within 50 microseconds. The 850 can drive impedances as low as 2.5 ohms. The Audionics CC-3 (\$742) is claimed to be stable into 2 ohms. Rated at 80 watts (19 dBW) per channel into 8 ohms and 130 watts (12¼ dBW) per channel into 4 ohms,

140 watts (21½ dBW) per channel, none of the integrated amplifiers introduced at CES sports a rating of more than 100 watts (20 dBW) per channel. The A-1060 is still relatively small, however, thanks to Yamaha's X power supply. It also has a built-in moving-coil head amp.

Denon offers three new integrated amps: the PMA-770 (\$620) rated at 100 watts (20 dBW) per channel, the PMA-750 (\$450) at 80 watts (19 dBW) a side, and the PMA-730 (\$300) at 50 watts (17 dBW) per channel. Localized error detection and correction is used to reduce distortion to 0.02% on the top two units, 0.05% on the PMA-730. In addition, the PMA-750 and PMA-770 have variable-bias Class A output stages. Sony's moderately priced (\$320) TA-AX4 has a pulse power supply and delivers 55 watts (17½ dBW) per channel. We reviewed the TA-AX5 (\$410) in our March issue; the TA-AX6 (\$480), with a 75-watt (18¼ dBW) rating, will be available in the late spring.

Sansui has two new Super Feedforward amplifiers, the AU-D22 (\$250) and the AU-D33 (\$350), with ratings of 35 watts (15½ dBW) and 50 watts (17 dBW) per channel, respectively. The units accommodate both fixed- and moving-coil cartridges. Scott's new 458A (\$350), rated at 65 watts (18¼ dBW) per channel, has a DC power amp, high-cut and infrasonic filters, and inputs for both fixed- and moving-coil cartridge. Garrard has entered the electron-

ics derby with five integrated amplifiers produced by its Brazilian parent. Power ratings range from 20 watts (13 dBW) a side on the Model 86 (\$170) to 80 watts (19 dBW) on the Model 366 (\$550). The three top units have what Garrard calls Triple-A Non-Switching power amps. Akai's two newest, the AM-U41 (\$300) and AM-U61 (\$400), use the company's Zero Drive output circuitry to provide close to Class B performance with the efficiency of Class B operation. The AM-U61 delivers 80 watts (19 dBW) per channel; the AM-U41, 55 watts (17½ dBW) per side.

Amber's Series 50A integrated amplifier (\$600) is said to embody all the research and development that has been put into the Series 70 power amplifier and the Control Center preamplifier. And Phase Linear has combined its P-3600 preamp with its equally novel DRS-400 power amp to create the DRS-250 (\$975), rated at 50 watts (17 dBW) per channel, but capable of 400 watts (26 dBW) of momentary power with no more than 0.02% THD.

Finally, there's a new kit available. Heath's \$290 AA-1205, rated at 30 watts (14¼ dBW) per channel, has a separate recording selector, plus dual turnover frequencies for high and low filters and for the BASS and TREBLE.

Tuners

While Carver's TX-11 "multipath-

proof" tuner remains in the wings (projected delivery is May, at a price of \$550), a number of tuners made their debuts at WCES. Most use digital frequency-synthesis tuning, but the conventionally tuned front end is far from dead. Denon's TU-720, for example, is capacitively tuned, with a slide-rule dial—as is one of the two new tuners from KLH. The T-101 (\$230) includes a high-blend switch as well as muting and claims a stereo S/N ratio of 62 dB. KLH's T-201 (\$350) manages 65 dB of S/N ratio and improved selectivity from its digital frequency-synthesis front end and adds seven AM and seven FM presets. Scott also has a foot in each camp; it has added the digital 558T (\$280) to its conventionally tuned 528T. The new model is said to have 6 dB better S/N, 10 dB better selectivity, and slightly better sensitivity than its less expensive brother.

Sony has three new tuners, two of them digital. The conventionally tuned ST-JX3 (\$200) has Acute Servo Lock to ensure low distortion and has the same S/N ratio (80 dB in stereo) as the digital ST-JX4 (\$250). The latter has somewhat lower distortion and better selectivity (85 dB) as well as preset and scan tuning. The ST-JX5 (\$290) adds four-event programmability and further improved sensitivity and selectivity. Sansui's TU-S33 (\$200) has a Floating Circuit System to minimize noise (especially in its AM section), for an ultimate (Continued on page 81)

Tape: Still (Mostly) Analog

by Robert Long

Audio-Video Editor

THE MUCH-BRUIED digital revolution inched closer this year, particularly with Sony's compact PCM-F1 digital audio processor (\$1,900), whose compact size and battery power supply match it to Sony's SL-2000 portable Beta recorder. Although Mobile Fidelity has announced that it plans to offer recorded software for such VCR-based digital recorders, it seems likely that these formats will be upstaged relatively soon by one or more digital versions of the familiar (and less expensive) compact audio cassette. Thus the field remains analog-oriented for all but the most extreme purposes and budgets.

The most interesting technical innovation for those of us who are more conventional is certainly Dolby HX Professional. It is similar to Dolby HX, introduced a year ago, except in one key respect: Whereas the original HX altered recording bias on the basis of the momentary control voltage within the Dolby chip, the Professional version takes its cue from the actual instantaneous recording voltage. The signal therefore effectively becomes a part of the biasing itself, with no intervening assumptions

about the relationship between Dolby action and signal content required of the circuit designer. The purpose of the circuit is to extend high-level high-frequency response by forestalling premature self-erasure. We weren't particularly impressed by the original HX's ability in this respect, but the Professional version gives promise of succeeding through its extra degree of refinement. It was developed by Bang & Olufsen and first incorporated into the Beocord 9000 cassette deck. The second manufacturer to embrace it (under the name HX-Pro) is Harman Kardon, which includes the circuit in the top two models of its four introductions; other Dolby licensees will surely follow suit.

In addition to the \$1,800 Beocord 9000, actually introduced last fall, B&O has imported the much simpler Dolby B Beocord 2400, at \$550. The Harman Kardon HX-Pro models are the \$750 CD-401 and \$530 CD-301; the \$400 CD-201 and \$300 CD-101 fill out the line. All four are designed for ultrawide bandwidth in comparison to other decks in their respective price classes: the top three offer Dolby C as

well as Dolby B noise reduction.

The original HX circuit supplements Dolby B in NAD's latest deck—the 6040A (\$218)—but a great many companies are choosing Dolby C as the feature to add in the middle price range. Sherwood, for example, employs it in the S-5000C CP and the S-6000 CP. Nakamichi's latest—and least expensive—is the LX-3 with Dolby C (just introduced in January, though we have already tested and reported on it in our February issue). Cybernet, in entering the field, has incorporated Dolby C in its top model, the D-801; its most intriguing deck is the dual-transport DD-701, which is capable of double-speed copying.

Teac has introduced its first Dolby C deck in the \$390 V-70C, but it continues its DBX series with two entries—the \$590 V-1RX and the \$625 V-95RX, the latter with bidirectional recording and a computer-age front panel. There's a similar front panel on the \$490 bidirectional V-90R (with no DBX); for more conventional tastes, there's the \$420 V-80. Akai—always prolific when it comes to introductions—has three new "computer-controlled" unidirectional



decks (GX-F31, -F51, and -F71) and two quick-reverse bidirectional entries (GX-F44R and -F66RC), all with Dolby C (and—as in all decks offering “advanced” noise reduction options, of course—Dolby B); prices range from \$300 to \$575. Dolby C even is included in the same company’s three new budget models, which range down to the \$180 CS-F12. Among Aiwa’s varied cassette offerings (including so-called boom boxes and microcomponent systems as well as separate decks), the top introduction is the \$595 multifeatured AD-3800U, which has automatic tape matching and head demagnetization plus Dolby C.

Denon’s two new models, the DR-F7 (\$500) and DR-F6 (\$400) both offer Dolby C and bias adjustment—the latter manual on the F6 and automatic on the F7. Hitachi has four new Dolby C models (five, if you include the D-E57 introduced last fall), ranging from the \$750 D-2200M, with automatic tape matching, down to the \$200 D-E33. Following hard on the heels of the Dolby C TA-2070 (test report, March HF), Onkyo has added the \$360 TA-2055, also with Dolby C, and the \$255 TA-2025 with B only. Sansui’s three new component decks all have Dolby C: the \$420 D-370, with dual memory; the \$525 D-570, with dual memory, program search, real-time indicator, and simultaneous monitoring; and the \$600 D-770R, with instant automatic reverse and program search.

There are several other Sansui cassette introductions for its mini and systems lines; typical of such models, they do not offer Dolby B, though Dolby C is standard. The thinking here, as at other companies, appears to be that C is virtually a “must” for the advanced recordist these days and therefore belongs in separate components above (or even including) the budget level, but that it’s too new—too “esoteric”—to interest the system buyer for the time being. Similarly, though Kenwood has included the original Dolby HX in its Audio Purist

decks, the new models for its systems and casseiver series stick with Dolby B.

Optonica has added another deck in a format it originated, with separate recording and playback wells to permit dubbing: The RT-5050 also includes a double-speed copying option. (And Optonica, too, includes less glamorous decks among its new systems components.) Toshiba’s newest, which feature the squared-off touch-plate look so much in evidence this year, include the budget (\$220) PC-G2 and the PC-G6R—at \$300, said to be the least expensive deck on the market with automatic reverse-direction recording capability.

Sanyo also has a dual-transport dubbing deck (though without the double-speed option) in the RDW-50 (\$220); and four other budget models, including two—the \$180 RDS-35 and \$200 RDS-46—that offer Dolby C. All five have Sanyo’s automatic music search system, dubbed AMSS, which also is incorporated into three new Plus Series decks: the D-57 (\$250), D-58 (\$300), and D-90 (\$380). The D-57 offers the choice of Dolby B or C noise reduction; the other two substitute Sanyo’s own Super D system for the Dolby C. Scott has gone to Dolby C with its new top model, the \$300 658DM. Two other time-honored names, both originally associated with record changers in this country, happen to have entered the moderate-priced components field this year and both include cassette decks in their respective lines. Garrard will begin with the CD-3000 (\$180) and CD-5000 (\$300) and add a third model later this year. It and the 5000 both include Dolby C. BSR’s top model, the CX-300, includes DBX noise reduction (as well as Dolby B) with a disc-decode option; in addition, there’s the CX-100, with Dolby B only, and another model that’s part of a minicomponent system. Also a newcomer, at least in this country, is Germany’s Schneider, with a line of compact systems whose top cassette deck, the SL-7270C, features both

Dolby B and High Com noise reduction systems for playback and High Com for recording. And, of course, there are many other system-design decks (from Pioneer and Fisher, for examples) introduced this year.

Open-Reel Models

Each year the list of new decks for open-reel fans seems to atrophy a little more, so Teac’s announcement of five new models is astonishing. Actually, however, four of them are existing models to which the necessary bias and equalization options to accommodate the new EE tapes have been added: the \$1,090 X-10 Mk. II, the \$890 X-7R Mk. II, the \$790 X-7 Mk. II, and the \$590 X-3 Mk. II. Altogether new is the X-1000R (\$1,400). In addition to EE capability, it features bidirectional recording and playback, DBX noise reduction, and new logic for search operations.

Blank Tapes

Though BASF was among the first companies to experiment with metal-particle tapes, it has been circumspect about marketing the cassettes, which it introduced here in C-60 lengths only last year. This year, it will add C-90s. But the company’s major thrust in recent years has been toward improved chromium dioxide formulations—for video as well as audio—which it is convinced are superior to their counterparts in other brands that rely on ferricobalt technology. Consequently, BASF has added an EE tape for owners of the new open-reel decks with EE switching: the tape is the first of its type to use true chrome instead of the “chrome substitute” pigments. Also new in the BASF line is the upgraded ferric Professional I Super cassette formulation.

The 3M Company, too, has been busy upgrading its Scotch tapes. Among the repackaged cassette formulations, Dyna-

range is said to have been particularly revamped. In video cassette tapes, Scotch uses what it calls its micro-fine Anachron particle—a ferricobalt—to ensure high performance.

New to the TDK cassette line is AD-X, a ferric for use with 120-microsecond playback EQ. Like SA-X (and SA), it employs a ferricobalt particle derived from the company's Avilyn technology. AD-X is said to achieve 1½ dB more dynamic range than any TDK normal-bias tape to date. The technology also is responsible for the new Super Avilyn L-750 HG (High Grade) Beta video cassettes. Sony also has new HG Beta tapes, employing a particle it calls Dynamicon. Lengths run from L-125 to L-750. Sony's biggest news is a new Type 2 (for 70-microsecond playback EQ) audio cas-

sette called UCX-S, which it believes to be the best of its type on the market—thanks, in particular, to a significant improvement in magnetic retentivity. Also new in Type 2 tapes is a revised formulation from Loran, to be called High Bias Type II. (The earlier one was called simply High Bias.)

Maxell has changed its packaging on several products. Most significant, perhaps, is a change in the open-reel series to rename the former UD-XL as XL-I to match the style (XL-II) of Maxell's EE tape. An addition to its microcassette line is the metal MC-46MX. Maxell evidently is one of many companies that believe the microcassette is on the brink of a true high fidelity future (though the necessity of using metal formulations like Maxell's, at premium prices, and the restricted playing

time would seem to put the format at an inherent disadvantage compared to the familiar compact cassette). Fuji's news this time around is confined to the video field, where it will be offering a formulation that outstrips its own HG: Super HG, which it believes will lead the entire field into another round of product improvement. Among other benefits, Super HG employs back coating on the tape and ABS resin in the case. VHS cassettes are available now; Fuji says Betas will follow. And, to conclude, JVC has formulated its new HG VHS tape specifically for high performance in slow-speed (EP and LP) recording. A key factor, JVC says, is improved tape-to-head contact, resulting from the tape's ultrasmooth surface. (*Video equipment coverage begins on page 37*).

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Record-Playing Equipment: Style and Performance

by Michael Riggs

Associate Audio-Video Editor

FEW MANUFACTURERS SAW FIT to bring out entirely new lines of turntables or cartridges at this winter's Consumer Electronics Show. Instead, most chose to fill out existing lines, usually at the top or bottom. As expected, there were a number of prototype digital disc players, designed to accommodate the Sony/Philips compact disc, but none ready for the market. That will take another six months to a year. Perhaps in anticipation of digital design trends, however, there was a strong emphasis on compactness in many of the new analog units. Judging from the number of new turntables that you could almost hide under an LP jacket, more and more manufacturers are coming to believe that small is beautiful.

What did surprise me was that there was no avalanche of new linear-tracking turntables. Some were there, to be sure, and at lower prices than ever before, but it appears that the conventional pivoted tonearm is not headed for an immediate demise. Also unanticipated was the preponderance of moving-coil pickups among the new cartridge entries: Only a few companies had new fixed-coil models.

Although not really a surprise, Nakamichi's entry into the turntable business is certainly noteworthy, as is the product they did it with. Like the company's first cassette deck, Nakamichi's TX-1000 turntable breaks new ground. Basically a very fine, massive direct-drive unit capable of accepting two tonearms, the TX-1000 also includes a special system for sensing and correcting for record eccentricity, thereby eliminating the principal remaining source of wow and flutter. Such marvels come only for a price, however—\$7,000 in this case, without arm.

A less expensive, though still unusual, first turntable comes from Mission electronics. Basically, it's just a substantial belt-drive turntable; the uniqueness of the Mission 775 (\$800, without arm) is in its suspension, which dispenses with springs in favor of an elastic polymer called Sorbothane. According to Mission, Sorbothane absorbs as much as 95% of the energy that impinges on it without the resonances inherent in spring suspensions. This is said to yield exceptional immunity to acoustic feedback. Others continue to feel that the traditional spring-suspended subchassis is the best approach to turntable isolation. One such company is Ariston, whose new top model, the RD-11 Superieur (\$900, without arm), has a heavier subchassis and an improved spring arrangement for better rejection of lateral excitation than the original RD-11. Other features of this belt-drive model include a two-speed Hall-effect motor, an absorbent mat, and a screw-on record clamp. Another company using a spring-suspended subchassis is Dunlop, whose circular Systemdek II (\$400, without arm) preserves many of the features of the original Systemdek at a lower price.

Onkyo's high-end entry, the PX-100M (\$2,500, without arm) ensures stability with sheer mass—88 pounds of it. The platter—made of pure copper and weighing 22 pounds—serves as the rotor of Onkyo's linear-induction motor system, which is said to hold wow and flutter to 0.0005%. At less stratospheric levels of performance (and price) are the automatic CP-1028R (\$260), which enables you to program as many as eight bands in any sequence, and the semiautomatic CP-1017A (\$160). Both have direct-drive motors and straight arms.

Holding out for the advantages of belt drive is Thorens of Switzerland, with new models at the top and bottom of its line. The TD-226 (\$2,000) is similar to the established TD-126, but can accommodate two tonearms, one with automatic end-of-side lift. An auxiliary vacuum clamp is also available to pull records down flat against the platter mat. The TD-115 Mk. II (\$435) includes Thorens' low-mass Iso-track tonearm and Ortho-Inertial spring suspension, a DC servo drive motor, and controls placed in front of the dust cover for easy access.

Prices for linear-tracking turntables hit new lows with Technics' compact SL-5 (\$200) and full-size SL-DL5 (\$250), both sold without cartridges. Hitachi's first linear-tracking model, the HT-L70 (\$370), is approximately the size of a record jacket and comes equipped with a moving-magnet cartridge. (All cartridges designed for use with the Technics linear-tracking turntables can be used with the Hitachi, and vice versa.) At the top of Mitsubishi's line of three new turntables is the LT-20 (\$410), a fully automatic linear-tracking model with a direct-drive motor and a 14-gram static-balance tonearm that can accept any cartridge. The automatic DP-EC8 (\$300) and semi-automatic DP-6 (\$220) are also direct-drive units, but with conventional tonearms.

Sansui's new linear-tracking turntable, the \$350 P-M7, is also about the size of an LP jacket. A built-in microprocessor enables you to program as many as seven bands in any order and to use the P-M7 in conjunction with Sansui's D-M7 cassette deck for computer-controlled record dubbing. Although it uses a pivoted tonearm, the company's new XR-Q7 turntable (\$500) is certainly no less innovative. It



Thorens TD-226

Sony PS-155

JVC QL-Y7

Luxman PD-300

Denon DP-11F

Technics SL-5

incorporates Sansui's "Silent Synchronator"—a motor that is mounted coaxially with the drive motor and governed by the same control signals, but that runs in the opposite direction to cancel out motor vibrations that might otherwise be transmitted through the turntable base to the cartridge. More conventional is the \$270 FR-D40, an automatic direct-drive turntable with a straight static-balance tonearm.

Unlike other turntables of the LP-size genre, Denon's DP-11F (\$200) does not have a linear-tracking tonearm; instead, it has a straight, pivoted "Dynamic Servo Tracer" arm that is said to damp the low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance electronically for improved tracking of warped records and lower susceptibility to acoustic feedback. Two new conventionally sized turntables, the DP-51F (\$425) and DP-52F (\$525), also have Dynamic Servo Tracer tonearms.

One of the first companies to introduce such electronically damped tonearms, JVC, has a new model incorporating one this year. The \$750 QL-Y7 has a direct-drive motor and fully electronic controls for maximum reliability and performance.

Other manufacturers have chosen to refine tried and true design principles for higher performance. Among these are Kenwood and Luxman. Kenwood's \$375 KD-670—a new member of the Audio Purist line—is fully automatic with a direct-drive motor and a straight low-mass tonearm designed for high rigidity. The base is made of a special antiresonance resin to combat acoustic feedback. Similarly, Luxman's automatic PD-289 (\$400) and semiautomatic PD-284 (\$230) have direct-drive motors and straight double-tube tonearms for low mass combined with high rigidity. And for more rarified tastes, Luxman has the belt-drive PD-300 (\$1,000), with an isolated subchassis and a hand-operated vacuum record "stabilizer."

Akai has two new automatic and two new semiautomatic turntables. The top model, the AP-Q41 (\$250), is a direct-drive unit with a straight low-mass tonearm made of carbon fiber. The least expensive of the new introductions is the belt-drive AP-B110 (\$100), which has a straight tonearm with a removable headshell. NAD's latest turntable is the \$150 Model 5025—a belt-drive semiautomatic unit whose straight tonearm is said to have an effective mass of only 9½ grams. It has an anti-resonant base, and the tonearm counterweight is placed so that the arm's center of mass is below the vertical pivots for improved stability.

Looking to its growing minicomponent line, Fisher has two new turntables that are scarcely more than thirteen inches square. Both the automatic MTM-301C (\$290) and the semiautomatic MTM-300C (\$230) are direct-drive models with straight tonearms and magnetic cartridges. And Toshiba has three new turntables with straight tonearms, front-mounted controls, and bases made of Toshiba Resonance-Blocking Compound (TRBC) for improved resistance to acoustic feedback. They range from the automatic direct-drive SR-Q650 (\$220) to the semiautomatic belt-drive SR-B150 (\$115).

Sanyo and Vector Research have one new turntable each. The former's TPQ-5 (\$170) is an automatic direct-drive unit with a straight tonearm and a floating-subchassis suspension. Vector Research's VT-150 (\$120) is a semiautomatic turntable with a straight tonearm and a four-pole synchronous motor.

Two recent semiautomatics from Scott have straight tonearms and front-mounted controls. The PS-68A (\$190) is a direct-drive unit, while the PS-48A (\$160) uses belt drive. Radio Shack's Realistic LAB-395 direct-drive turntable (\$170, with cartridge) also has front-mounted controls, but uses an S-shaped arm.

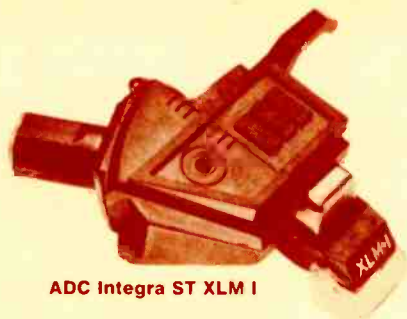
Four of BSR's five new turntables come with ADC induced-magnet cartridges, and all five are belt driven. They range from the multiplay Quanta 75MX (\$110) to the multiplay 26CX (\$70), which has a ceramic cartridge. Aimed at much the same market are Mesa's four new turntables, two multiplay units (the 200C and 100C, at \$90 and \$85, respectively) and two semiautomatic single-play models (the \$85 600S and the \$80 500S).

Finally, one of the most unusual new turntables takes its cue from the personal portable craze its maker started. The Sony PS-155, a direct-drive semiautomatic, includes a cartridge, a phono preamplifier, and a headphone amplifier, enabling you to listen to records with nothing more added than a set of headphones. It can also be connected to a portable radio/cassette player or to the line inputs of a home stereo system. Price for this unique turntable is \$175.

Tonearms and Cartridges

New from France is the most expensive tonearm I know of, the \$2,500 Goldmund T-3. Price aside, it is still a member of a rare breed: a separate linear-tracking tonearm. Only a few such have ever been designed, and I know of only one other—the Souther—presently being manufactured. The low-mass cartridge carrier is guided across the disc's surface by a servo drive system. The arm tube is damped, and there is additional silicone fluid damping to control the main low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance.

The only other new arm seen at CES is a more down-to-earth design from Signet, the XK-35. It is almost identical to the established XK-50, except for its lower price and its use of an integrated arm tube and simplified counterweight assembly. The tube is tapered to reduce mass and arm resonances, and there is a fluid-damping



ADC Integra ST XLM I



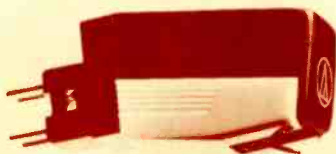
Dynavector DV-23R



Fidelity Research
MC-202



Boston Acoustics MC-1



Audio-Technica AT-122EP



Signet XK-35

mechanism to help control low-frequency resonance. The arm also incorporates Signet's Signetrace planar-pivot system, which keeps the stylus, counterweight, and pivots all in the same plane to eliminate tracking-force variations.

Signet also has a goodly number of new cartridges, starting with the exotic TK-100LC moving-magnet pickup, which has a tubular ruby cantilever and toroidal coils hand-wound with silver wire. In addition, the company has completely redone its standard line with seven new pickups, ranging from the low-end TK-1Ea to the TK-9LCa, which also has toroidal coils for high efficiency, along with a beryllium cantilever and a line-contact stylus. All use Signet's traditional dual-magnet design, as do the first two cartridges in the company's new HiTec line, the H-Ten and H-Twelve, aimed mainly at buyers who want to upgrade their prepackaged systems. And finally, Signet has two new Laboratory Series moving-coil cartridges, the MK-111Ea and the MK-110E, both of which weigh less than five grams. The MK-111Ea is said to be designed for maximum performance and has a tapered beryllium cantilever and an elliptical stylus. The MK-110E has a user-replaceable stylus assembly and a tapered cantilever tube.

Dynavector has three new moving-coil pickups. The DV-17D (\$650) has an extremely short (1.7-millimeter) diamond cantilever for low moving mass combined with high rigidity and freedom from resonances. Almost as short is the 2.3-millimeter ruby cantilever on the DV-23R (\$310), while the more conventional DV-50A (\$200) has a 5-millimeter aluminum tube cantilever.

The latest from Fidelity Research is its MC-202 "Gold" moving-coil cartridge (\$350) with a Vital line-contact stylus. The MC-202 uses coreless coils for lowest possible distortion. Yamaha's two new moving-coil pickups use the company's Cross-

Matrix coil system, whose unconventional orientation is said to enable individual adjustment of vertical and horizontal compliance. The MC-9 sells for only \$90, while the MC-3, with a tubular beryllium cantilever, bears a \$200 tag.

Denon also has a low-price moving-coil cartridge, the DL-300 (\$100). Weighing barely more than four grams, it has a cross-shaped coil armature, a two-part telescoped cantilever, and a relatively high output of 0.3 millivolts per centimeter per second. Designed to track at less than 1½ grams, the DL-207 (\$275) has a boron cantilever for high rigidity and low mass and individual damping elements for low and high frequencies.

Another relatively inexpensive moving-coil pickup is Adcom's \$130 HCE, which uses the company's Crosscoil design and weighs less than five grams. The Sony Esprit XL-88 cartridge (\$350) has a Figure-8 coil assembly and a composite cantilever made of beryllium, carbon fiber, and aluminum for high rigidity and low mass.

Heretofore known only for its loudspeakers, Boston Acoustics has jumped into the cartridge market with a moving-coil design. One version, the MC-1H (\$200) has a Van den Hul line-contact stylus, while the less expensive MC-1E (\$140) has an elliptical tip. Because of its low output impedance, high sensitivity (approximately 0.7 millivolts per centimeter per second), low mass, and moderate compliance, the MC-1 is said to sidestep the arm and preamp matching problems that plague some phono cartridges.

Both of Sumiko's new moving-coil models—the low-output Premier LMX (\$200) and the high-output Andante FGV (\$200)—have FGV styli, which are said to approximate the shape of those used in disc-cutter heads for low tracing distortion, but without the danger of cutting into the grooves posed by some similar designs.

Audio-Technica has three new mov-

ing-coil cartridges, ranging from the high-output AT-30HE (\$135) to the AT-35E (\$250), which has a tapered beryllium cantilever. Its other new entries are all moving-magnet pickups using the company's dual-magnet system. Two are plug-in models designed for use with Technics and other similar linear-tracking turntables. The AT-112EP sells for \$70, the AT-122EP for \$95. The remaining three are really all different configurations of the same low-mass cartridge. The lightest is the three-gram AT-55XE (\$125), which has a standard screw mount. The AT-57XE (\$145) is an integrated headshell version with a standard universal bayonet mount for J- and S-shaped arms, while the AT-59XE (\$145) is designed to fit most straight tonearms.

Also designed for straight tonearms are the ADC Integra ST induced-magnet cartridges, all of which can be adjusted for offset angle, overhang, and vertical tracking angle. Prices are \$135 for the Integra ST XLM III, \$120 for the Integra ST XLM II, and \$80 for the Integra ST XLM I. All three have carbon-fiber bodies and headshells and weigh about nine grams. And, finally, Nagatronics has its \$90 IMS 1460IE induced-magnet cartridge with an integrated headshell for straight tonearms.

It seems more apparent than ever that manufacturers are treating the market for record-playing equipment as two markets: one for maximum convenience of set-up and operation, the other for all-out maximum performance. Of course, these two aims are not really mutually exclusive—they can even be complementary—but they do often give rise to different design goals. The distance separating the philosophies behind, say, a Nakamichi TX-1000 and a Technics SL-5 is fairly large. It is remarkable how much progress has been made on both fronts, however, with the result that the overall levels of convenience and performance available to the audiophile are higher now than ever before. **HF**

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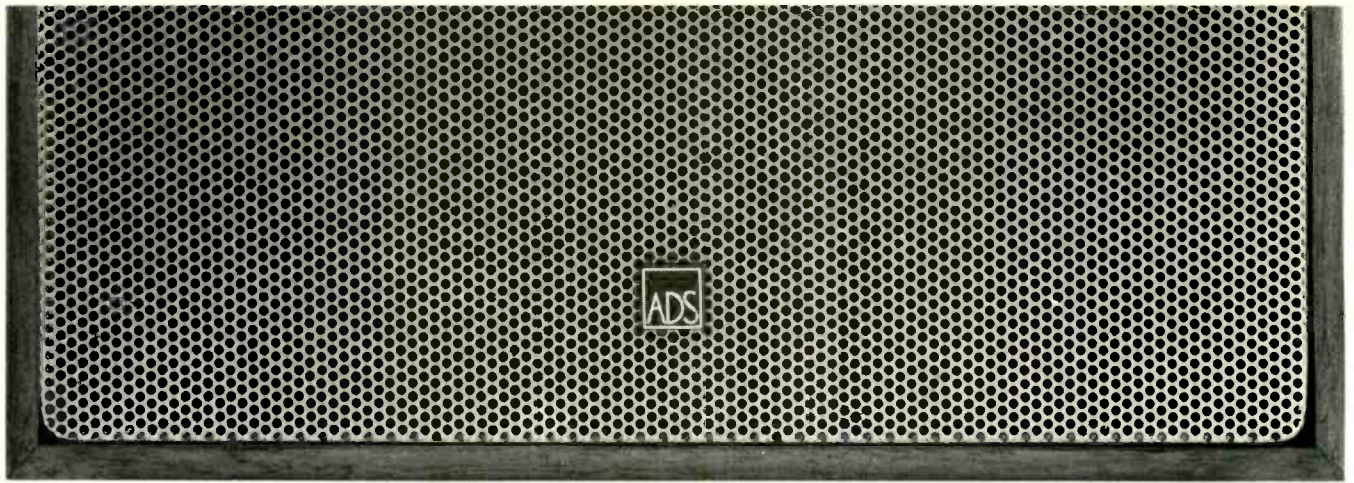
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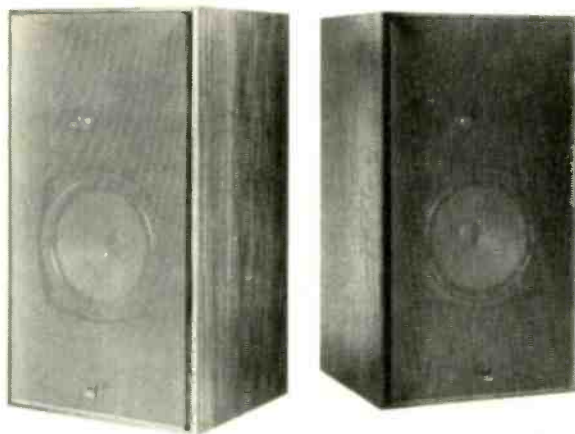
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VIDEO TODAY & TOMORROW

VideoFronts

Latest video news and products by the Editors

Spring Video Equipment Report

REFINEMENT OF EXISTING DESIGNS best characterizes the crop of new video components introduced at the recent Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show and scheduled to reach dealers' shelves by late spring or early summer.

Along with the continuing trend to smaller and lighter portable video cassette recorders, more companies were showing new front-loading VCRs. First introduced by Sony, this format is aimed at those who want to shelve their VCR along with their audio components. Audiophiles will remember that audio cassette decks underwent a similar style transition in the mid-Seventies.

Video cameras generally are evolving along two lines—one aimed at the less

sophisticated user who wants to "point-and-shoot," and the other at the more serious video movie maker. Auto-focus designs are increasingly available.

Single-unit projection-television systems are tending to adopt a standardized 45-inch (measured diagonally) screen, and increased emphasis is being placed on system designs that blend well with home decor. One of the most innovative approaches is a "two-piece" model from Kloss that uses any standard white room wall for its screen.

Video disc players should make a bigger splash as the new catalogs of discs are released. Pioneer's Laser Vision optical system is scheduled to add a player incorporating CX noise reduction, and RCA

intends to offer a stereo version of its CED player, both by early summer. A third incompatible video disc system, JVC's VHD format, is also planned for introduction by summer.

The variety of video accessories continues to proliferate. Among the new categories in evidence are specialized video component interconnect cables, which are aimed at providing a high quality video picture through improved conductivity and shielding from spurious RF signals.

For this month, we've assembled a sampling of the new video components; more will appear in future issues. New video software is listed in our TubeFood column, and coverage of new blank video tapes appears on page 31 of this issue.



A newcomer to home video is Sansui, which is offering its first video component—the SV-R5000 video cassette recorder. This VHS deck has separate sets of heads for the two-hour and six-hour modes and can be preprogrammed to record up to eight events in a fourteen-day period. Other features include bidirectional frame search at up to twenty-one times normal speed (with picture visible), full-logic controls with feather-touch buttons, and automatic rewind. A wired remote control contains all the VCR transport functions as well as channel selection and frame search. Front-panel audio and video inputs are provided. Price is \$1,200.

Circle 79 on Reader-Service Card

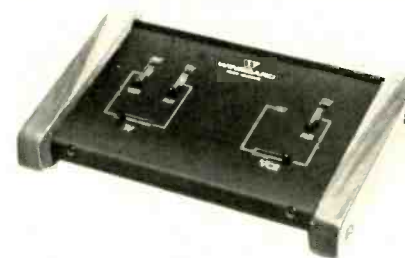
Expanding its video line in the U.S., NEC Home Electronics is offering the \$830 VCP-1000E portable Beta VCR. Features include Betascan (nine times normal speed in forward and reverse), feather-touch controls, and a five-function wired remote control. With the quick-recharge battery pack in place, the deck weighs about 12 pounds.

Circle 82 on Reader-Service Card



Both video and audio heads on your video cassette recorder are cleaned by Discwasher's new Video Head Cleaner. This dry system uses a special fiber grid to clean all of the elements along the tape path. The process takes about 30 seconds. The distinctively packaged cleaners, which are said to be completely nonabrasive, are available in both VHS and Beta formats for \$20.

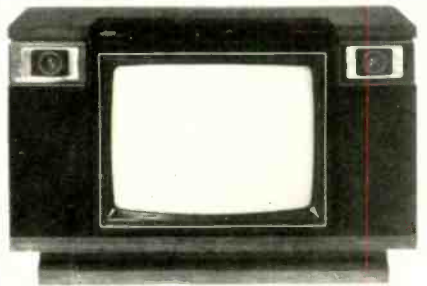
Circle 88 on Reader-Service Card



A wide range of applications is possible with Winegard's new second-generation video selector. Designated the VS-4002, this device has four 75-ohm inputs to accept

such video sources as cable TV, broadcast TV, video cassette recorders, video games, and computer terminals. Via slide switches, you can select one input for viewing while your VCR records from a second input. Three 3-foot coaxial cables are included. Price is \$125.

Circle 74 on Reader-Service Card



Stereo sound from your television set is possible with Fisher's HT-800. Designed for reproduction of such stereo video sources as tape and disc, this set has a five-watt-per-channel amp; a pair of built-in two-way speakers; separate controls for bass, treble, balance, loudness, and stereo matrix; and two sets of audio and video inputs and outputs. The video section features Phase-Lock-Loop (PLL) digitally synthesized tuning circuitry and vertical interval reference (VIR) signal processing for improved tuning and color reproduction. A seventeen-key infrared remote module tunes the cable-ready set's 105 chan-

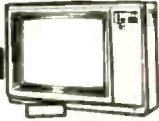
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Circle 19 on Reader-Service Card

nels, provides search and recall functions, and allows you to adjust volume up, down, and to mute. The HT-800 has a 25-inch screen and is priced at \$1,550.

Circle 87 on Reader-Service Card



Dolby noise reduction enhances the stereo recording capability of JVC's new HR-7650U VHS-format front-loading VCR. The 105-channel cable-ready deck incorporates a tuner/timer on which 16 channels can be preset and eight events can be pre-programmed over a two-week period. The deck is said to be uniquely capable of both audio and video insert editing. To ensure clean sequential (assembly) edits, a special circuit automatically backspaces the tape when PAUSE is pushed. This provides a stable signal base for the transition to the next scene. Other features include shuttle search (with picture visible), adjustable slow motion (1/5 to 1/30 normal speed), and an infrared remote control. Separate sets of heads are used for the two-hour and six-hour record and playback modes. The deck also plays back VHS tapes recorded in the older four-hour mode. An LED lights when ten minutes remain on a tape and blinks when there are five minutes remaining. The price of the HR-7650U is \$1,595.

Circle 85 on Reader-Service Card



No projection screen is needed for the new Kloss Novabeam Model Two projection TV system. Designed specifically for use in a darkened viewing room, this compact portable video projector, when placed at the recommended four-foot projection distance, throws a three- by four-foot image on a regular white room wall. The Model Two, which will sell for about \$2,000, is unusual in several ways. Because the picture is not viewed on a curved screen, brightness tends to be uniform over a wider range of viewing angles. The set omits the customary TV tuner section, which Kloss claims merely duplicates the tuner built into home VCRs. A hinged top conceals and

protects the projection lenses when the set is not in use. The system is slightly more than 21 inches high when closed and 30 inches high when open. It weighs 60 pounds.

Circle 84 on Reader-Service Card



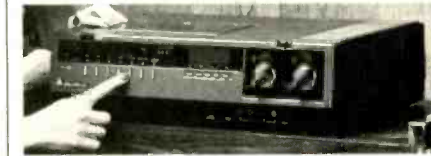
Aimed at sophisticated video photographers, Panasonic's PK-805 Omnipro color video camera incorporates an imaging tube designed for low lag and improved sensitivity in low-light conditions. Among the many features are a two-speed motorized f/1.4 6:1 zoom lens with built-in macro (super close-up) and auto-focus functions, an auto white-balance control, an automatic gain control (AGC), a fade control, color-temperature and color-preference switches, a power-standby switch, a shoulder rest with hand grip, and a tally light that flashes to alert the subject that recording is taking place. Price is \$1,200.

Circle 81 on Reader-Service Card



Flagging caused by copyguard encoding of prerecorded video cassettes is said to be corrected by Showtime Video Ventures' new VV-170S video stabilizer. To counter flagging (the bending of the TV picture at the top of the screen), this device generates a new vertical interval, reshapes the horizontal sync, and reinserts the serration pulses into the vertical sync interval. A front-panel LED on the \$212 unit indicates that the signal is stabilized.

Circle 78 on Reader-Service Card



Lowest priced model in Quasar's line of five video cassette recorders is the new VH-5021TW, a table model that sells for \$875. This basic deck features picture search; still image; frame-by-frame advance; a one event, twenty-four-hour programmable timer; and feather-touch controls.

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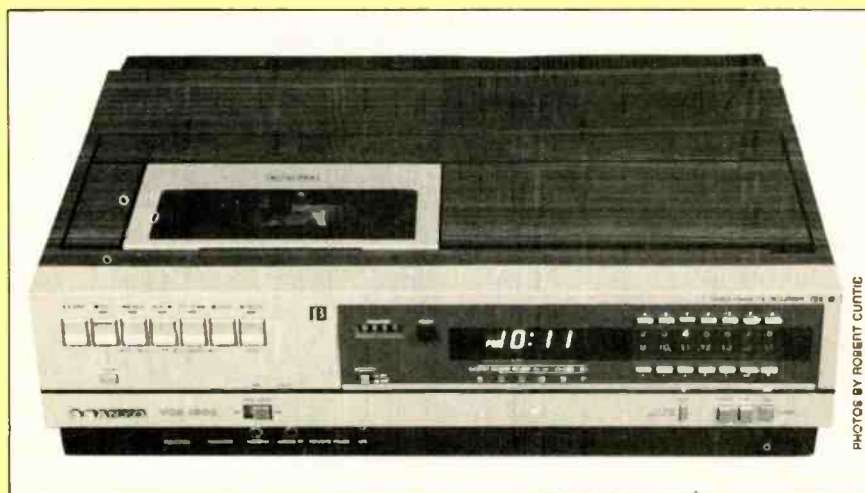
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HANDS-ON REPORT

Sanyo's 4300 Beta Recorder

For picture resolution and sound quality,
it stands head-to-head with the competition.
by Edward J. Foster



IF A NONPORTABLE VCR with a single-event programmer fits your needs, then Sanyo's Model 4300 Beta-format deck is worth careful consideration. Priced at \$800, the VCR-4300 records and plays at the two newer Beta speeds—Beta II (2 centimeters per second) and Beta III (1.33 cm/s)—with a maximum program length of three hours, twenty minutes in Beta II or five hours in Beta III with an L-830 cassette. There are no provisions for playing back tapes made in Beta I (the format is now obsolete for recording), but, unless you have a library of old tapes, that should be of little concern. You can mix Beta II and III speeds on the same tape when recording, and the 4300 will automatically adopt the correct playback mode. The recording format is selected by a large slider on the front panel. An LED indicates when you are in Beta III, a handy feature since still frame, frame-by-frame advance, and fast search function only in that mode.

The VCR-4300's fourteen-position varactor tuner comes set for VHF Channels 2 through 13 and has two spares. You can reassign channels by raising the hinged lid on the top of the deck and setting the three-

position slide switch to VL (for Channels 2 through 6), VH (for Channels 7 through 13), or U (for UHF stations). Then rotate the tuning control for the best picture on the desired channel. An LED under the lid will light up when the signal is tuned properly, but it's also a good idea to keep an eye on the screen.

Each channel-selector button (they're labeled A through N) has its own band-selection switch, tuning control, and pointer (to indicate the position in the band). You can change the labels on the front panel to correspond to channels you've selected. Raising the hinged lid automatically disables the AFT (automatic fine tuning) circuit to facilitate manual adjustment, and closing the lid re-engages the AFT, unless you set the switch on the lid to AFT-OFF.

Clock-set and programming controls are on the front panel directly below the time display, and a nifty interlock system prevents any accidental resetting: Two buttons must be pressed simultaneously to enter any change. For example, to set the clock you must hold CLOCK SET while pressing DAY/HOUR or MIN. to advance the hours or

minutes digits. Each tap advances the count by one; continued pressure advances the setting rapidly.

Sanyo's Digitron programmer is set in a similar way: Press and hold REC-DAY and advance the count with DAY/HOUR. Today is "Day 1," tomorrow is "Day 2" and so on. As with other single-event, seven-day programmers, you can begin recording at any time of any day within a seven-day period. Sanyo's system also has an eighth position marked "E." In this setting, the deck will record for a designated time period every day until it runs out of tape. The start time is set by pressing and holding REC-START while advancing the timer via DAY/HOUR and MIN. Stop time is entered by holding REC-STOP while advancing the display. The channel is selected in the normal manner.

You can check what you have entered in the memory by pressing REC-DAY, REC-START, or REC-STOP, and the data pertaining to each will appear in the time display. (If you lose line current, there is no backup power to retain the data; the time display flashes as a warning when power has been restored.) Once you have set the programmer, press TIMER, and an indicator light will show that the system is set for automatic recording.

The ON and OFF buttons for manual operation are to the right of the timer, TV/VCR switch is to the left. This last determines whether your TV receiver is fed directly from a cable, or an antenna TV or from the deck's electronics or a tape (VCR). Once set to VCR, the deck remained in that mode, even when the power was turned off. In order to watch cable or broadcast television, we had to manually reset the control to TV, a minor inconvenience that some other recorders avoid by switching automatically back to the antenna feed when the deck is turned off.

Following usual practice, the VCR-4300 delivers its RF output on either Channel 3 or 4, selectable via a switch under the lid on the top panel. A single 75-ohm coax fitting serves as the antenna input for both the UHF and VHF bands, and a similar single connector conveys output to the TV set. Since many television sets have separate VHF and UHF inputs, Sanyo provides a signal splitter that is connected to the VCR's output via a supplied length of coax. The splitter has separate VHF and UHF 300-ohm twinlead outputs for connection to the set. Also supplied is a balun transformer, which matches your antenna's 300-ohm twinlead to the 75-ohm coax input on the VCR. While the accessories provided should be fine for a cable-fed system or for a home antenna using a single lead-in wire, you will need to purchase a combiner, or reverse splitter, to feed the VCR-4300 if you have the usual separate VHF and UHF downloads.

Adjacent to the RF fittings on the back panel are direct audio- and video-output



An accessory splitter separates UHF and VHF signals from the single VCR output.

jacks (of the standard pin type) for connecting the deck to a monitor or high fidelity system. Also on the back panel is an unswitched convenience power outlet with a 500-watt maximum rating.

On the lower front of the deck are direct audio and video inputs (pin jacks) for a video camera, a second VCR, or some other video/audio source. A miniature phone jack serves as the microphone input (a high-impedance mike is suggested); a subminiature phone jack provides a connection for a camera's REMOTE-PAUSE switch. There is no camera/tuner switch; instead, the VCR-4300 senses the presence of a plugged-in camera and automatically turns off the tuner feed.

Also on the front are the tracking control (which adjusts head alignment and works only in normal-speed viewing) and an eight-pin DIN jack for the twenty-foot remote-control cable. The remote unit duplicates the deck's REWIND, PLAY, FAST-WIND, PAUSE/STILL, and STOP controls; the

only ones missing are RECORD and, of course, EJECT.

Recording is governed by the RECORD button. Rather than pressing RECORD and PLAY simultaneously, as with many decks, you first must press LOCK and then, within one second, RECORD. If the erasure-prevention tab is missing from the cassette, the RECORD LED flashes a warning. There are also LEDs on both the deck and the remote unit that blink when PAUSE is engaged.

The 4300 features Sanyo's Time Phased Editing (TPE) system, which minimizes picture breakup when PAUSE is used to delete commercials. While the electronic "splice" is not quite seamless, we judged the system to be quite effective, particularly at the faster Beta-II speed, in which the edits caused only a very brief flash on the screen. When editing from the remote unit, be careful not to press PLAY or STOP accidentally—they're located on either side of PAUSE. As a safety measure, the 4300 reverts to STOP if you hold it in PAUSE for more than about five minutes. Whether this is better than going to the record or play modes is a matter of opinion. With the Beta system, the tape retracts from the deck's tape path when you stop the machine; it takes about four seconds for the tape to reload and come up to speed after you press PLAY or RECORD.

Still frame and accelerated forward and reverse scanning (without audio), are available in Beta III, in addition to conventional fast wind and rewind. Though you cannot adjust the scanning speeds, the one chosen by Sanyo—nine times normal—seems appropriate. When the machine is in PLAY,

press PAUSE for still frame, FAST-WIND for accelerated forward, or REWIND for accelerated reverse. The picture in the still and accelerated modes is quite viewable, if not perfect; usually there were three or four noise bars visible in the high speeds and one in still frame. In addition to some bending at the top of the picture, still frame occasionally suffered from some interlace problems, producing a herringbone pattern on the screen. To return from the accelerated modes and still frame, you simply press PLAY; it takes about one-and-one-half seconds for the sound to return.

If you just want to wind the tape fast without a viewable picture, press STOP and then either FAST-WIND or REWIND. The 4300 rewinds an L-500 cassette in 151 seconds and fast winds the same tape in 138 seconds—both considerably quicker than Sanyo's 240-second specification. There's also an automatic end-of-tape rewind and a memory-rewind function that employs the 4300's four-digit mechanical counter.

We found the deck's mechanics somewhat noisy, especially in high-speed operation and in fast forward and rewind. That aside, its performance was quite good. The tuner is sensitive—a real boon in our fringe location—and in Beta II the recording and reproduction resolution was as good as we've seen. In Beta III, picture quality was somewhat softer, but this is to be expected. At both speeds, gray-scale and color accuracy were excellent, although the color was "noisier" than we have experienced with more expensive VCRs. You can find Beta-format VCRs with more features than the Sanyo VCR-4300, but for picture resolution and sound quality, it stands head-to-head with any of the competition. **HF**

Inputs and transport controls are on the left of the front panel, the timer and single-event programmable tuner on the right. A flashing LED over the record button warns you against taping over a previously recorded program. The deck reverts to STOP after five minutes in PAUSE.



TubeFood

New video programming
edited by Susan Elliott

Video Cassettes

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- **MCA:** *How to Watch Pro Football*.
- **MGM/CBS:** *Greatest Fights of the '70s*.
- **Paramount:** *Aerobicise* (stereo).
- **Sports World Cinema:** *Complete Tennis from the Pros* (4-part series).
- **VidAmerica:** *Sugar Ray Robinson—Pound for Pound*.

ARTS

- **Electric Video:** *La Sylphide* (The French Radio Orchestra, Lille).
- **Mastervision:** *Ballerina Karen Kain*, *Ballerina Lynn Seymour* (with Nureyev), *All the Best from Russia* (The Bolshoi Ballet, the Moscow Circus, and others).

■ **Thorn/EMI:** *I Am a Dancer* (Rudolf Nureyev).

CHILDREN

- **ATI Video Enterprises:** *BBC Children's Favourites*, *Hoppity Goes to Town*.
- **Magnetic Video:** *Dot & the Kangaroo*.
- **Mastervision:** *Aesop and his Friends/The Owl and the Pussycat*, *Four for Thrills* ("Casey at Bat," "The Hangman," others).
- **MCA:** *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Spider-Woman*.
- **Video Gems:** *Animation Wonderland*, *Mini-Musicals*, *Mr. Too Little*.
- **Videospace:** *Video Playbox II*, *Flower Stories*.
- **Walt Disney Home Video:** *Dumbo*, *Pollyanna*, *Herbie Rides Again*, *The Sign of Zorro*, *A Tale of Two Critters*.
- **Warner:** *Pinwheel Song Book*.
- **Warner** (rental only): *Animalympics*.

TV CLASSICS

- **Video Yesteryear:** *The George Burns Show* (1959), *The Three Stooges* (1936, '47, '49), *The Jack Benny Program* (1959), *The \$64,000 Question* (1957), *I Married Joan* (1955, two episodes).

TV DOCUMENTARY

- **ATI:** *Treasures of the British Crown*, *Graf Spee/Battleship Bismarck*, *Salute to Edinburgh Tattoo*, *Great Railways Vol.1*.

■ **CBS Video Enterprises:** *Franklin D. Roosevelt*.

■ **Video Gems:** *Fishing U.S.A.*

POPULAR MUSIC

- **Mastervision:** *Mahalia Jackson—Elev-en Greatest Songs*, *Harry Belafonte presents "Fincho."*
- **MCA:** *An Evening with Ray Charles*, *Olivia—Physical*.
- **Media Home Entertainment:** *Cream's Farewell Concert*, *Jimi Hendrix*, *Edgar Winter Live*, *Blood Sweat & Tears Live*, *Stevie Wonder Live*, *A Tribute to Billie Holiday*, *Rock Stars Studio Sessions*, *Alice Cooper & Friends*, *James Brown in Concert*, *Magical Mystery Tour*.
- **MGM/CBS:** *Harry Chapin—The Final Concert*.
- **Thorn/EMI:** *Picture Music* (Duran Duran, Classix Nouveaux, the Tubes, Genesis, and others), *Rockshow* (with Paul McCartney and Wings), *Times Square* (Joe Jackson, Talking Heads, Patti Smith, the Ramones).
- **Twentieth Century-Fox Video:** *Peter Allen and the Rockettes*.
- **Vestron Video:** *Rust Never Sleeps*, *Gladys Knight & the Pips/Ray Charles in Concert*.
- **Warner** (rental only): *Divine Madness*, *Liberace in Los Angeles*.

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Video Q.&A.

by Edward J. Foster

Q. In "CrossTalk" [November 1981] a reader described how he attempted to get better television sound by connecting the speaker leads on his TV set to his stereo system. Since he did this using a cable that terminated in alligator clips, he asked whether it was a safe alternative to spending \$75 for a commercial adapter. You replied "absolutely not" and went on to warn of possible electrocution should the clips move and touch a high-voltage source.

I disagree, and I think your answer was inadequate. I have been connecting my TV set to my stereo system for years. Of course, I do have some technical experience in electronics, but it doesn't take a lot of knowledge to solder a wire to each of the speaker terminals and then wrap the connections in insulating tape. I suspect that most readers of your magazine have enough intelligence to do this.

Another way to achieve better sound

is to take the signal from the headphone output on the television set. Two adapters are required for this: one with a miniature phone plug on one end (to insert in the earphone jack) and a pin (or "RCA") jack on the other; the second is a Y adapter with a pin plug for input from the first adapter and two pin jacks for output to the stereo system.—T.C. Howard Jr., Charlottesville, Va.

A. Although you and other readers might be able to make the internal connection to 112V TV receiver safely, it would be highly irresponsible for us to suggest this as a do-it-yourself procedure. There can be dangerous voltages in a television set even after the power is disconnected. Furthermore, tampering with the internal workings of a set can invalidate the warranty. If you're not concerned about the voided warranty and you want a permanent hookup, I suggest that you find a competent technician to wire it. For a temporary connection to a set that has a headphone jack, I see no reason not to try the Y adapter hookup you suggest, unless the owner's manual expressly prohibits the procedure. (You can run into problems in attempting to connect a battery-powered TV receiver, for instance, to any stereo system.) Switchcraft offers a series of pin-plug/phone-jack adapters for this purpose, while such companies as Recoton, Rhoades, and Total Video Supply all sell inexpensive TV-to-stereo adapters.

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CLASSICAL

Behind the Scenes

Music news and commentary by James R. Oestreich

Footnote to an *

Happy to report, the asterisk in Curtis Davis' discography elsewhere in this issue denoting the domestic unavailability of Stokowski's 1927 Bach represents no insuperable obstacle for the late-coming collector. A new British company, Dell'Arte Records (P.O. Box 26, Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2NL, England), has assembled an album that includes excellent transfers of that D minor Toccata and Fugue and the 1929 C minor Passacaglia and Fugue as well as some Bach new to LP—most notably, the 1928 Second *Brandenburg* Concerto (DA 9001).

Of course, no one should approach these interpretations with any lofty expectations of "authentic" baroque style. While it is certainly not true that everything Stokowski touched turned to transcription, the editorial pencil did fall heavily here, even on the concerto, adding inner-voice frills to the Andante and rendering the trumpet largely ineffective. In appropriately feisty annotations, Stokowski expert Edward Johnson leaps to the defense both of the arrangements ("It is no heresy to say that Bach was capable of writing much that was dry and tedious in equal measure with that which was truly inspired and uplifting. So let not Stokowski be criticized for breathing life into J.S.B.," etc.) and the performances ("it would be as useless to criticize Stokowski for conducting Bach like Bruckner as it would be to criticize Toscanini for conducting Brahms like Rossini"). And so the only "authenticity" here consists of hearing how Bach was in fact performed in Philadelphia in the 1920s—not always wisely, but very well.

Dell'Arte's initial release also offers more recent Stokowski: the 1952 *Boris Godunov* highlights in Mussorgsky's original scoring, an electric performance by bass Nicola Rossi-Lemeni and San Francisco Opera forces (DA 9002), and an ebullient 1976 collection of overtures (*Don Giovanni* with a Stokowski twist, *Leonore No. 3*, *Rosamunde*, *Roman Carnival*, and *William Tell*) with the National Philharmonic (DA 9003). American distribution for the Victor/RCA-derived Bach and Mussorgsky is being negotiated, but Dell'Arte will have no foreign distribution rights for the Pye recording of overtures. In any case, all three discs are available by direct mail for \$10 each in U.S. funds, surface-mail postage included.

Current plans call for more Stokowski releases as well as performances by Toscanini, Koussevitzky, and Sviatoslav Richter.

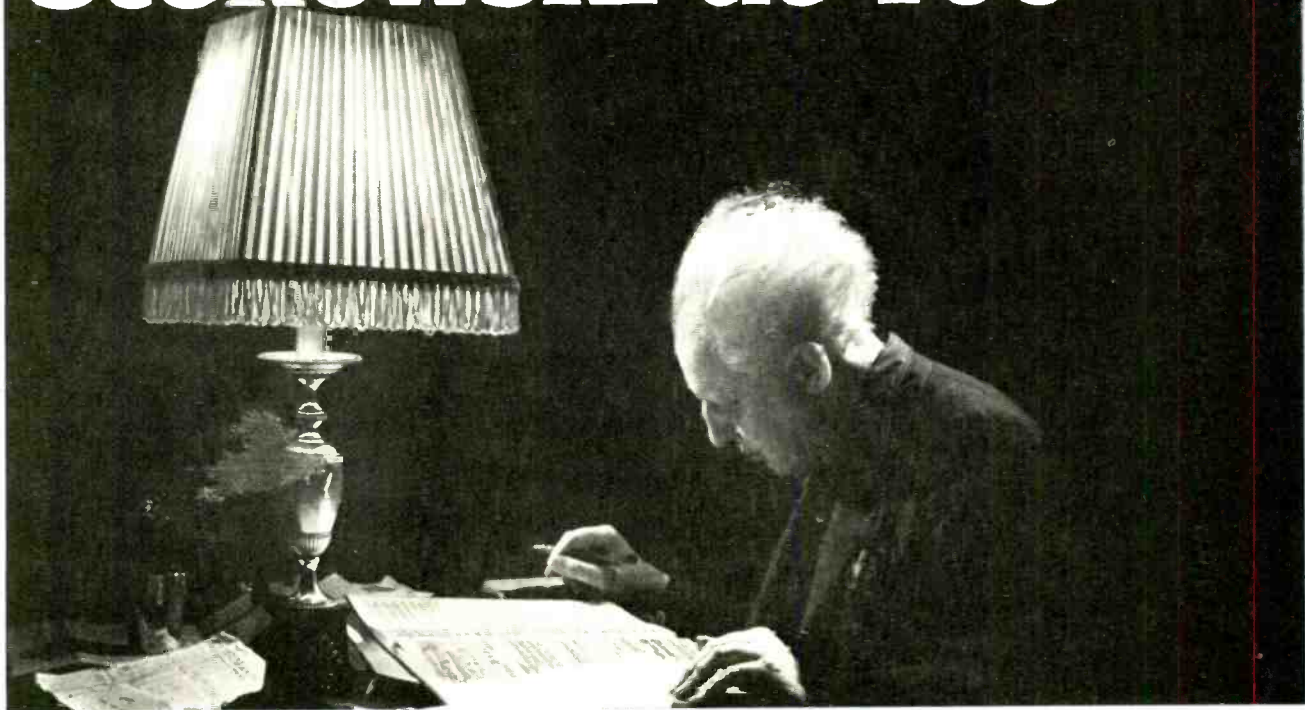
Britons in Boston

The Boston Symphony recently recorded two works commissioned for its centennial season, Roger Sessions' *Concerto for Orchestra* and Andrzej Panufnik's *Sinfonia votiva* (Symphony No. 8), under music director Seiji Ozawa. And what brave label tackled this worthy bit of Americana? Hyperion. That's right, Hyperion. Despite the enthusiastic reception accorded the Sessions in particular and the offer of substantial subsidies, the major American labels declined, leaving the field to the wee British label headed by Edward Perry, which has so far concentrated almost entirely on smaller-scaled projects involving British performers. The project coordinator was John Goldsmith, who only recently left Unicorn, the label he founded some fourteen years ago, and the producer was Harold Lawrence, fondly remembered for his contribution to the Mercury glory days, now an independent. Release is projected for the summer. Hyperion is distributed in America by Brillly Imports.

All Things Cultural

In the face of straitened financial circumstances, National Public Radio is taking the stance that the best defense is a good offense. A major new venture debuts on April 4, a live five-hour weekly broadcast, *The Sunday Show*. The concept—an "investigation" into the state of the arts in America and worldwide—resembles that of NPR's daily general news program *All Things Considered* in its comprehensive scope and its reliance on the resources and initiative of member stations; in fact, the show was developed under the working title "All Things Cultural." It will originate from noon to 5 p.m., Eastern time, and feature performances—live and taped, musical and otherwise—from a variety of sources, in addition to criticism and commentary. Even where performers are involved, the attempt will be to develop an informal medium and style appropriate to the home rather than the theater or concert hall. The April 4 broadcast will offer rare early recordings of and interviews with guitarist Andrés Segovia. **HF**

Stokowski at 100



PHOTOS COURTESY CURTIS DAVIS JACK BAUNGARTEN MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

Only slowly do legends give way to the facts surrounding the career of this most elusive maestro.
by Curtis Davis

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER HIS BIRTH, still one of the best-known musical figures in the world, Leopold Stokowski remains a self-made enigma. Few know the whole truth about his birth and upbringing. Abram Chasins' recent biography notwithstanding, "Stokie," as friends later knew him, hid himself resolutely from the world, and even from himself, leaving his biographers to hammer at the facts following his death.

Close members of his family know little about his mother, father, sister, or brother, though his mother lived until 1952 and his brother survived him. Stokie didn't want people to know that his forebears had been tradesmen, merchants, and handicrafters, or that his brother was a used-car dealer in Hampstead. He preferred to make a mystery of his origins, speaking vaguely of his grandfather, "Polish patriot from Stokki, near Lublin." He seems to have remained profoundly ashamed of his true

Curtis Davis, director of program services for ARTS, the Hearst/ABC cable program service, is working on a biography of Stokowski scheduled for publication by Coward McCann in the spring of 1984. Between 1963 and 1970 he produced five telecasts with Stokowski; he won a 1971 Emmy for Leopold Stokowski at Eighty-Eight.

origins, those of a lower-middle-class boy from central London. As late as 1967, during a radio interview in Chicago, he disputed his interlocutor's contention that his mother was English, asserting "No, she was Polish."

The elusive maestro first captured my attention in 1938, when, at age nine, I saw him in the movie *100 Men and a Girl*—playing himself, appropriately enough. My fascination only grew in subsequent years, and in 1979 I decided to attempt to unravel the various mysteries surrounding the legend. Many of the facts revealed here, some published for the first time, came to light in that research.

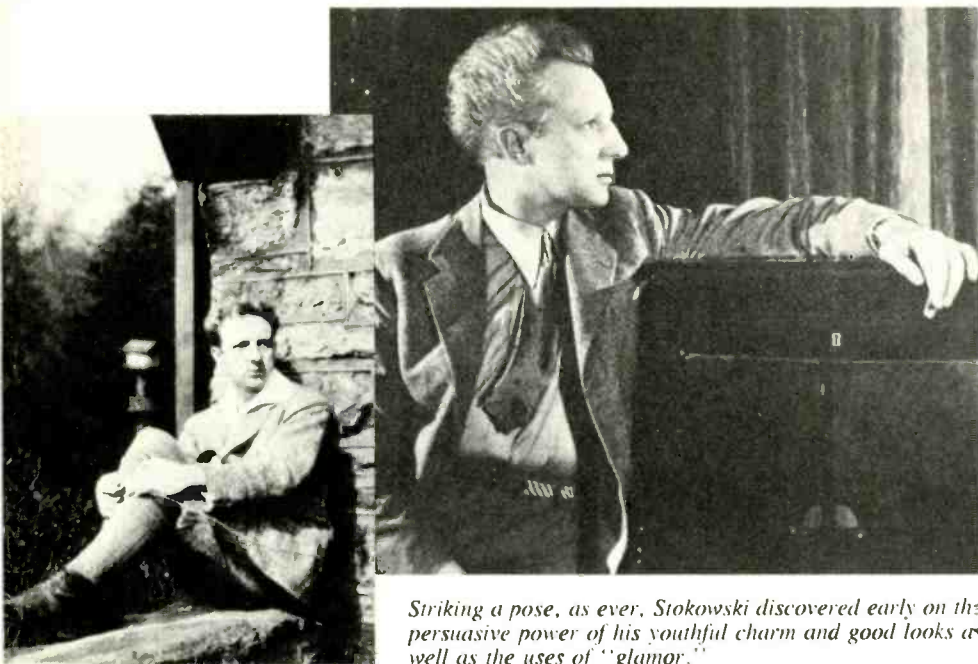
Stokowski was born on April 18, 1882, at 13 Upper Marylebone Street, the home of his mother's parents. The building stood in a district of sooty brownstones and small shops, poorly lit and far more run-down than it is today. His grandfather, a cabinet-maker of Polish origin also named Leopold, did business at 36 Castle Street East. He was married to Jessie Sarah Anderson, probably Scottish. Their only child, Joseph Kopernik Boleslaw Stokowski, born on February 3, 1862, at No. 9 Oxford Market, learned his father's trade. In 1879 his father died, and two years later, at nineteen,

Kopernik married Annie Marion Moore, twenty-two-year-old daughter of an Anglo-Irish bootmaker.

The next year our Leopold was their first-born, followed in 1884 by Lydia and in 1890 by Percy John, later known as "Jim." The children attended the public school run by St. Marylebone Parish Church, where Leopold became a choirboy. His musical talent surfaced early, for in 1896, at thirteen, he was admitted to the Royal College of Music, the youngest yet to enter that institution.

Leopold's Marylebone accent was definitely "non-U" to his upper-class peers at the college, and he was equally self-conscious about his name. But Henry Walford Davies, the composer and outstanding teacher of English choirmasters, took the youngster under his wing. Thanks to Davies, upon graduation in 1900 Stokowski secured his first church post, at St. Mary's in Charing Cross Road. Only eighteen, he was already a full-fledged choirmaster and organist, yet later that year his mother nearly brought him to tears by criticizing the post, in front of the rector and full choir, as "beneath your talents."

In March 1902, again thanks to Davies, Stokowski moved on to the far more posh St. James's Church in Piccadilly.



Striking a pose, as ever, Stokowski discovered early on the persuasive power of his youthful charm and good looks as well as the uses of "glamor."

Stokowski was an absolutely natural-born conductor.

behavior and speech that were to make up the Olympian figure of later years. "Since I've found my native country," he had already written in 1908 to his former mentor Davies, "I've acquired an American form of vulgarity which I've richly blended with my English callowness." Stokie had begun to hide his true self from the world, to build a new image, to make good on the vaguely Central-European association of his name.

In Philadelphia, he also learned to wield the conductor's power to hire and fire. He kept all his players on tenterhooks via the annually renewable contract. While the personnel turnover was not as extensive as some have suggested—actually from six to a dozen per year—there was never any doubt as to who was boss. He took to designating players by their instruments, impersonally and abruptly. "You there, third oboe," he would admonish, "more tone, do better." From the beginning he was correct but aloof. As he hoped, it would all go into the making of a legend.

The first two decades of his tenure in Philadelphia were among the most spectacular in the history of conducting. Stokowski initially led twenty-five concert pairs per season, plus innumerable tour performances, including the series in New York, Washington, and Baltimore. By 1927 the number of Philadelphia pairs had risen to twenty-nine, of which he led twenty-seven. He hated to relinquish the podium.

His achievements in Philadelphia can be compared only to those of Arturo Toscanini worldwide in the same years. Stokowski conducted an astounding number of contemporary works—among them, the American concert premiere of *Le Sacre du printemps* in 1922, and the Sibelius Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies all in the same season, 1925–26. He led world premieres of scores by Edgard Varèse and Henry Eichheim and conducted for the International Composers' Guild. Serge Diaghilev even invited him to Paris in 1924 to lead the final performances of the Ballets Russes season, but Stokie did not go; Diaghilev could not meet his stringent demands for top players and lavish rehearsal time. Stokowski gradually built the Philadelphia Orchestra into the premier showcase among American symphonic ensembles; it responded to the slightest flicker of his baton—he used one into the 1920s—or of his eyes, always the ultimate source of his power. Small wonder that he had no time for anything else during these years, least of all for his family back in London.

These were critical years in another

ly. He was admired by all for his good looks and his dynamic, robust organ playing. From time to time he persuaded the rector to let him hire an orchestra for oratorio performances. On one occasion, he led a concert in St. James's Hall—where Hans Richter and Arthur Nikisch reigned—in a program featuring Dvořák's *New World* Symphony. In due course he became engaged to Gertrude McCormick, the rector's youngest daughter, a frequent soprano soloist at Sunday services.

At about this time, standing up in the "gods" at Covent Garden one night with his friend Bill Harris (later Sir William Harris, organist at Windsor), who loved opera as much as Leopold did, Stokowski suddenly announced, "I think I'm going to go West to try some conducting." To America he did go, in June of 1905, recruited by New York's prestigious St. Bartholomew's Church. He hit the city just in time to witness the fabulous New York Philharmonic debut of the batonless Russian wizard, Wassily Safonoff, whose supercharged conducting of Tchaikovsky won him the directorship of that orchestra for the next three years.

Stokowski also met—and fell in love with—Olga Samaroff (real name: Lucie Hickenlooper), a concert pianist from San Antonio. They were of the same age, and she was far enough along in her career to be able to help him. On his next trip to England, in the summer of 1906, en route to Leipzig where he was to study conducting in Nikisch's famed master classes (and would meet pianist and fellow student Ossip Gabrilowitsch), he broke off his engagement to Gertrude. Soon after his return to New York, he persuaded St. Bartholomew's to let him hire the New York Philharmonic for special Sunday afternoon concerts. At one of these, in 1907, he pref-

aced Brahms's *German Requiem* with the march movement from Tchaikovsky's *Pastoral* Symphony. He would show Safonoff a thing or two.

In 1909, to everyone's astonishment, Stokowski snagged the leadership of the newly re-formed Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, by dint of his charm and extraordinarily good fortune. Olga had helped him secure an engagement in May of that year as a last-minute substitute leading a Russian program by the Concerts Colonne in Paris, for which she was the scheduled soloist. His professional conducting debut, this amounted to his "graduation" thesis for Cincinnati. Three short years later, he maneuvered the Cincinnati board into firing him, setting Mrs. Christian Holmes, president of the orchestra, against Mrs. Charles Taft, chairman of the board, and going public with his complaints in the newspapers published by their respective husbands. All this because he had already accepted the post of conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra and had to force Cincinnati to break his contract.

During those three years in Cincinnati, apart from mastering the basic orchestral repertory, with which he had had hardly any practical experience, he made a fateful discovery: He was an absolutely natural-born conductor. In less than a year, he had put Cincinnati back on the musical map. From the very first, even critics from New York and Chicago praised the work of the twenty-seven-year-old maestro. The orchestra was invited to play in all the major midwestern cities. Stokowski knew that he was responsible for this success, and he lost no time in turning it to his own benefit.

It was at this time, too, that he discovered the uses of "glamor" and began the slow accretion of those myriad details of

respect. Samaroff, whom he had finally married in 1911 in Cincinnati, presented him with a child in 1921, a daughter Sonya. Less than two years later, Olga and Leopold were divorced. In 1926 he married Evangeline Johnson, a twenty-eight-year-old heiress to the medical and baby-oil empire, in one of the most highly publicized weddings ever—even for glamor-conscious Philadelphia. Leopold, though forty-three, billed himself as thirty-eight; the dispute about his birth date begins here. The following year, Evangeline bore him a second daughter, Luba. And Leopold took a one-year sabbatical.

He had to. All those years he had conducted with a baton, a rather sturdy short stick that Sonya now owns. His style was dynamic and abrupt, with a frequent whip-lash action of the right arm and hand. By the early '20s he had begun to abandon the baton. Through 1925 and 1926 he developed painful bursitis in his right shoulder. (This affliction, as common among conductors as among baseball pitchers, also sidelined Toscanini twice.) By March of 1927, Stokowski was conducting with his right arm in a sling. He wrote to his friend Varèse, "I am very much disturbed in my mind because last Wednesday at a concert in Chicago my right shoulder broke down again, and I am unable to use my right arm. I am trying to continue to the end of the season using only my left arm, but it is very diffi-

cult, because that is becoming very fatigued. I am writing this to suggest that you have somebody in reserve for the concert on April 17th, in case I am unable to do it."

The sabbatical in 1927–28 did help, but Stokowski had already found that he could use the baton equally well in his left hand as in his right. He began shifting it back and forth, while developing a metronome technique for his right hand and wrist, which he brought into play as needed. By 1930, like Safonoff before him, he gave up the baton altogether. The great hands, poised like swans or darting like swallows, shone forth, lit by high spots in the dome of the Academy of Music, which just touched a halo to his aureole of hair. Over the past decade he had developed the mongrel polyglot accent that he was to sport for the rest of his life, as some men do face hair. The transformation was complete. Stokowski, at forty-eight, had emerged from the chrysalis. That year his third daughter, Sadja, was born.

The rest, as they say, is history. The Stokowski career over the next two decades has taken its place in the mythology of music. To touch just the highlights, there were the American stage premieres of *Le Sacre* in 1930, danced by Martha Graham to Massine's choreography, and of Berg's *Wozzeck* in 1931, with designs by Robert

Edmond Jones. There were the American concert premieres of Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* in 1932 and Shostakovich's First Symphony in 1933; more transcriptions of Bach and symphonic syntheses of Wagner; the lectures addressed from the podium to latecomers in the audience. In 1936 came the celebrated final break with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the flight to Hollywood—"a higher calling," in Stokowski's phrase—though for another four seasons his profile still dominated the orchestra's programs, in first position, upper left, facing that of his successor, Eugene Ormandy. There were the films, *100 Men and a Girl* and *Fantasia*, and the headlines marking his romance with Greta Garbo—over which Evangeline divorced him in 1937; the two great seasons with the All-American Youth Orchestra in 1940 and 1941; the stint with the NBC Symphony in 1941–43; the leadership of the short-lived New York City Symphony in 1944–45; the two summer seasons with the Hollywood Bowl Symphony in 1945 and 1946; and the shared leadership of the New York Philharmonic in 1947–50 in one of the most peculiar of all orchestral triumvirates, with Bruno Walter as senior musical advisor and Dimitri Mitropoulos as co-conductor. There were the hundreds of recordings, many of them best-sellers and virtually all well in advance of their time technically. Finally there was the stormy, controversial

Leopold Stokowski: A Select Chronological Discography

Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Philadelphia O. April 1924. VICTOR 6481. * One of the few acoustic recordings to reveal the high quality of the Philadelphia at its 1920s peak.

Bach: *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor*. S. 565. Philadelphia O. April 1927. RCA VIC 6060. * An early electrical recording of the classic, controversial Bach transcription from the year after its Philadelphia premiere.

Albeniz: *Iberia: Fête-Dieu à Séville*. Philadelphia O. September 1928. VICTOR 7158. * One of Stokie's earliest non-Bach transcriptions; lush and full, it shook our rafters when I was a boy.

Rachmaninoff: *Piano Concerto No. 2, in C minor*. Op. 18. Sergei Rachmaninoff, Philadelphia O. April 1929. RCA ARM 3-0296. Follows a failed attempt to record the work acoustically in 1924; legendary, historic, and definitive.

Stravinsky: *Le Sacre du printemps*. Philadelphia O. September 1929. VICTOR M 74. * Far preferable to the later Disney version, a historic first recording that tested to the full the capabilities of the time.

Wagner: *Tannhäuser: Overture*. Philadelphia O. March 1930. RCA LM 11669/70. * Raised goose bumps when I first heard it at age eight in a record store, and still does.

Schoenberg: *Gurre-Lieder*. Soloists, chorus. Philadelphia O. April 1932. * RCA AVM 2-2017. * The first recording, "live" and complete; an astounding achievement.

Prokofiev: *Love for Three Oranges: Three*

Scenes. NBC SO. November 1941. VICTOR 18497. * Strings sound like Stokie's old Philadelphia bunch; Toscanini wouldn't have dreamed of asking for such lushness or abandon from his four-year-old ensemble.

Orff: *Carmina burana*. Soloists, chorus. Houston SO. April 1958. SERAPHIM S 60236. A work seemingly tailor-made for Stokowski: a performance that reveals the high standard he achieved so quickly with the Houston, formerly in the bush leagues.

Debussy: *Nocturnes (3)*. BBC Women's Chorus. London SO. summer 1960. SERAPHIM S 60104. A lifelong specialty recorded only once in up-to-date stereo; mature, secure, and ripe. (The haunting "offstage" trumpet effect in "Fêtes," as I found out in 1964 while taping the work with Stokie for NET telecast, is achieved by using cloth bags over the bells.)

Mahler: *Symphony No. 2, in C minor (Resurrection)*. Soloists, chorus. London SO. April 1963. PENZANCE 37. * "Live" from the Royal Albert Hall, one of the most superbly controlled total performances of any work that I have ever encountered—unlike the later RCA.

Ives: *Symphony No. 4*. Schola Cantorum. American SO. April 1965. CBS MS 6775. A landmark achievement, launching into the international repertory a work that had waited half a century for a full hearing.

Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 (Emperor)*. Glenn Gould. American SO. March 1966. CBS MS 6888. Despite insufficient rehearsal time, a unique reading from two idiosyncratic interpreters—the elder of whom disdained concertos as a species.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op.*

64. New Philharmonia O. September 1966. LONDON SPC 21017. * Ineffable personal touches from the definitive Tchaikovsky interpreter of our time; splendid sonics.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Russian Easter Overture, Op. 36*. Chicago SO. February 1968. RCA LSC 3067. Product of a rare Chicago visit, displays the Windy City's brasses at their fabled best.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*. New Philharmonia O. January 1975. LONDON SPC 21139. * Absolute control in a Stokowski (as well as Toscanini) staple, following a close call with pneumonia.

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod*. Royal PO. October 1973. RCA ARL 1-0498. A superb performance from a lifelong Wagner champion; superior sonics.

Bach: *Unaccompanied Violin Partita No. 2, in D minor, S. 1004: Chaconne*. London SO. April 1974. RCA ARL 1-3656. Several London Symphony members contend that the orchestra's greatness began with its late-'50s association with Stokowski; the playing here reflects it.

Rachmaninoff: *Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 44*. National PO. May 1975. DESMAR DSM 1007. A flawed performance by a weakened maestro, but at its best, as in the irresistibly powerful finale, nonpareil.

Bizet: *Symphony No. 1, in C*. National PO. June 1977. CBS M 34567. Stokowski's last record disproves, as nothing else can, that he had in his midnineties become a powerless senile hulk; note especially the breathless, jaunty finale.

*Currently unavailable domestically; number given refers to last available format.



The Stokowski of middle years at the piano; the elderly maestro conducting, his aureole of hair touched by spotlights from ahigh, and toasting his ninety-first birthday on the stage of Royal Albert Hall, with British Prime Minister Edward Heath

marriage to Gloria Vanderbilt in 1945, just a year after her friend Oona O'Neill had married Charlie Chaplin. And then—

By the summer of 1950, Stokowski was last year's legend, a tarnished victory cup, an out-of-fashion Tiffany lampshade seemingly ready for the attic. Mitropoulos got the New York Philharmonic post, promising no changes in personnel. Now hardly any American orchestra bothered to offer Stokowski so much as a two-week guest engagement. When an old friend phoned from California to ask how he was, he replied dejectedly, "Oh, I'm just here existing." He had long since lost his power base, an orchestra of his own—the conductor's ultimate source of patronage. But he had immense tenacity and recuperative powers. Besides, in August 1950 came another crucial event—the birth of his first son, Stanislas. Then in January 1952 Gloria bore him a second son, Christopher. That April Stokowski turned seventy.

It was as though the boys relaunched the old man. For the first time Stokowski placed himself in the hands of a real manager, Andrew Schulhof, who proceeded to rebuild a European career for this ever idiosyncratic maestro. Overseas his legend was undimmed; though he had been seen rarely, his recordings were prized by musicians and the public alike, and his films were wildly successful. Now Sir Thomas Beecham, whom Schulhof also managed, invited Stokowski to lead the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in its 1951 spring tour of England, as part of the Festival of Britain, a signal event in the postwar rebirth of the beleaguered empire. This invitation had

Stokowski never forgot that Beecham was his old rival.

irresistible appeal, of course, and Stokowski promptly accepted. His first concert, on April 27, was at the Central Hall in Bristol—a program of Wagner, Villa-Lobos, De Falla, and Brahms. The next night, at the Winter Gardens in Bournemouth, he presented a program of Berlioz, Ruggles, Debussy, Stravinsky, and Tchaikovsky. An admiring and sometimes bemused member of that concert's audience was his ninety-two-year-old widowed mother, Annie Marion Moore Stokowski, brought from a nearby retirement home to occupy the seat of honor, front and center.

Stokowski's tour took him to Cardiff, Birmingham, Leicester, Hanley, Nottingham, Bradford, Newcastle, Manchester, and Oxford—and finally to the original seat, the Holy of Holies, the Royal Albert Hall off Kensington Park, across the street from the Royal College of Music. Stokowski had come home. He had not forgotten, however, that Beecham was his old rival, three years his elder, endowed with a moneyed birthright from his father's pills ("Hark the herald angels sing, Beecham's Pills are just the thing, peace on earth and mercy mild, two for man and one for child"). Stokowski, ever quixotic, told the press at the end of the tour that the Royal

Philharmonic was "the worst orchestra I have ever conducted." Beecham never asked him back and never spoke to him again.

Touring Europe continuously thereafter, Stokowski saw his star slowly rise. In 1955 he became director of the Houston Symphony. Then, early in 1960, he made a sensational return to Philadelphia. The crowd, packed with his old fans, went wild for minutes at his first appearance. After relishing the triumph to the full, Stokie held up the celebrated hands and, when the proper hush fell, said, "As I was saying . . ." The tumult broke out afresh, the rebirth was complete.

A premature end almost came at Christmastime, 1960. Playing touch football in his New York apartment with his two small sons, Stokie slipped, fell, and broke a hip. The hospital stay, at nearly seventy-nine, was unbearable; it brought him face to face with the unthinkable. Besides he had a date six weeks later with the Metropolitan Opera—another highlight of his incredible Indian summer. He had the hip fixed with a platinum replacement and, on crutches, made his scheduled debut at the Met in a staggeringly brilliant performance of Puccini's *Turandot*, with Birgit Nilsson and Franco Corelli.

In 1962, at the age of eighty—as he now gallantly but tacitly admitted—he founded the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall; the city would have a second orchestra for the first time since the 1928 merger of the Philharmonic with Walter Damrosch's New York Symphony (ex-
(Continued on page 82)

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Muscovite Phoenix: The Taneyev Phenomenon

Pro Arte's bold release doesn't yet insure a full-fledged revival, but it's an auspicious beginning.

Reviewed by R.D. Darrell

IT HAS BEEN a long, hard, often seemingly hopeless struggle to win for the greatest Russian musical polymath, Sergei Taneyev (1856–1915), international—and especially American—recognition comparable to that accorded him in his native country. It began, for me, way back in late 1932, when I commissioned a *Music Lovers Guide* article, "Neglected and Recorded Russian Music," from friend Benny (more formally, Bernard) Herrmann, then a twenty-two-year-old aspiring conductor and composer, later a master of film music. His section on Taneyev made me—and others, I'm sure—sit up and take notice. Though not a note of the music was then available on disc, Herrmann presciently glimpsed its artistic stature. He did, however, overromanticize the composer himself as personifying "the shining ideal of a musician who lived only for his art and became a high priest of it"—an exaggerated characterization that ignores the man's robust earthiness, seemingly inexhaustible energy, and extraordinary versatility in maintaining a fiercely independent private identity while successfully holding rank in the tsarist-Russian musical establishment.

But probably no American could appreciate then just how remarkable was Taneyev the man as well as the musician. No political radical, he was nevertheless progressive enough to be one of the first Russian proponents of equal rights for women and, in the 1905 revolution, to resign his directorship of the Moscow Conservatory in order to found an independent "peoples'" music school. And in one of the most tobacco-addicted societies of all time, he was a defiant nonsmoker—much to the annoyance of Rimsky-Korsakov and other colleagues when Taneyev's stern

edict, "No smoking here!," blighted their enjoyment of one of their musical Friday evenings ("Les Vendredis") at Mitrofan Petrovitch Beliaev's home.

Musically, Taneyev was a prodigy. Tchaikovsky's prize student, he became a lifelong friendly critic of that composer and a widely successful virtuoso concert pianist. He was also the first Russian composer (and one of the earliest in Europe) to study at first hand the medieval and Renaissance polyphonists. Alone among his compatriot colleagues, he consistently and richly exploited the potentials of counterpoint in his own compositions, and he endeavored to teach the ancient techniques to others via a comprehensive textbook, *Invertible Counterpoint in the Strict Style*, and a treatise, *The Study of Canon*, that was published only long after his death, in 1929. And no less remarkable than the number and fame of his pupils (Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, Medtner, Miaskovsky, Gretchaninoff, et al.) was his ability to teach them so well without imposing his own powerful personality on their diverse individualities, then just developing.

Some of the obstacles to Taneyev's worldwide recognition have been piddling—yet by no means insignificant: long uncertainty over the foreign-language spellings (more precisely, transliterations) of his name: confusion with another, much lesser, composer with the same family name, Alexander Taneyev (1850–1918), only recently established to have been a very distant relation of Sergei, not his uncle, as previously thought; and putative personal as well as musical resemblances to Brahms, real enough but negligibly slight.

Other handicaps have been more serious: Perhaps (foremost, as neither an overt



Sergei Taneyev, a remarkable musician

nationalist nor an unabashed romanticist, Taneyev got lost in the abyss between, on the one hand, the favorites of connoisseurs, the Mighty Handful (Mussorgsky, et al.), and on the other, the darlings of the mass public, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff. Then too, the popular forms are in relatively short supply in Taneyev's output; for many years only one of his four symphonies was generally known to exist, and he wrote no true concertos or tone poems. And until quite recently recordings of his music have been grudgingly sparse and often short-lived—and even those appeared mainly in Russia.

After my own original stimulation, I had to wait many years to experience the music. I didn't have even a single Taneyev entry in my 1936 *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*. At about that time, or soon thereafter, the first, rather primitive, Soviet recordings were beginning to appear, yet I had to wait for the pioneering American late-'50s releases (mono, of course) of the Op. 28 *Suite de concert* and Op. 22 Piano Trio. And it was considerably later still that I began a series of Taneyev reviews: the haunting choral

works on Melodiya/Angel SR 40151 (May 1971) and the superb coupling of the cantata *John of Damascus* with the Second Symphony on Melodiya/ABC (later MCA) AY 67043 (June 1979)—both of which went out of print far too soon; and the long-legendary opera *Oresteia* on Deutsche Grammophon 2709 097 (May 1980). Later in 1980 I had to pass up the chance of reviewing the invigorating Fourth Symphony (Arabesque 8074) in favor of writing the disc's jacket notes.

So it's with highly personal as well as professional delight that I greet Pro Arte's bold release of three Taneyev masterpieces that until now have been unrepresented by modern recordings in American (and perhaps even Russian) catalogs.

Since all three are works of the composer's maturity, they are all most welcome. However, highest honors must go to the composer's only piano quartet, his Op. 20 of 1906 (the same year he completed his pedagogical magnum opus, *Invertible Counterpoint*). In many respects this quartet is an ideal exemplar of Taneyev's sometimes dense but always tautly woven tonal textures, consistently distinctive rhythmic and melodic ideas, and magisterially sure command of his materials. He has been accused (mainly by those only superficially acquainted with his music and those with insatiable cravings for schmaltz) of excessive cerebralism—and certainly only a very powerful intellect could achieve the intricate mosaic craftsmanship and soaring sweep of his formal structures. But he is also capable of poetically eloquent, never tritely formulated, melodism—as in the quartet's memorably haunting second movement (*Adagio piú tosto largo*, with a contrasting *Allegro agitato* midsection).

Dating from a period when—after many years of string-quartet writing—Taneyev was concentrating on large-scale chamber works for piano and strings, this quartet also offers near-ideal solutions to the tricky problems of its instrumental combination. Surprisingly few really successful piano quartets have ever been written, and this certainly must rank among the very best of them. To be sure, like others by much better-known masters, it has been criticized as being less a chamber work than a miniature piano concerto with trio accompaniment—an accusation decisively refuted by a single hearing of this performance.

Cantilena pianist Frank Glazer has given many fine ensemble as well as solo performances in the past, but surely his deft and zestful virtuosity has never been more beautifully integrated with that of adept colleagues (violinist Edna Michell, violist Philipp Naegele, and cellist Marcy Rosen) than it is here. Engineers MacDonald Moore and Ray Hall seem to have been similarly stimulated to their best efforts: The digitalism (system unspecified) brings complete lucidity to the most complex of Taneyev's textures and the varicolored

The Cantilena performance reveals a work of genuine stature.



Cantilena Chamber Players: pianist Frank Glazer, violinist Edna Michell, cellist Marcy Rosen, and violist Philipp Naegele

sonorities are balanced to perfection. Above all, the performance, as recorded, radiates not only marked tonal charm, but spellbinding dramatic conviction. Moreover, the chromium-tape cassette edition, no less well processed than the silent-surfaced disc, affords equal aural satisfaction: it comes in a premium box with the same musical annotations and lacks only the double-folder disc jacket's additional description of digital technology.

Such an equable combination of executant and technical merits sets a standard that the other present releases inevitably can't match, even though their strictly musical worth is nearly as great. The quasi-concerto Op. 28 Suite of 1910 is of considerable, if more specialized, interest on two counts: It is a prodigally ingenious experiment in setting up and solving the problems of creating a bravura concerted work for violin and orchestra, and it was the first major representation of Taneyev's music to be fairly widely heard in the West via David Oistrakh's concert tours and his mono HMV/Angel recording, c. 1956.

On first acquaintance, one may be overconscious of the work's scarcely dis-

guised contrivance; on rehearsals, however, one will respond more readily to its genuine attractions—especially those of the piquant Gavotte, the oddly evocative (indeed, Berliozian) *Conte*, and the extended *Tema con variazioni*. This last, a suite within a suite, comprises seven markedly contrasting variations, including a very limp and Slavic waltz, a Hungarian-paprika'd mazurka, a tenderly expressive nocturne, and a brief but marvelously energetic double fugue.

The present performance stars the technically gifted young German virtuoso, Christian Altenburger, with the Vienna Symphony under Yuri Ahronovitch, the Russian expatriate conductor who earlier demonstrated his Taneyevian affinities in the Arabesque Fourth Symphony. The solo playing is dazzlingly brilliant but—for me, anyway—more impersonal, even coolly objective, than one would expect from so prodigiously talented a fiddler still in his early twenties. However, that impression may be partly the result of, or at least is italicized by, the recording's somewhat sharp-edged high register and none-too-warm acoustical ambience—both typical flaws of early digitalism. (The recording date and digital system are unspecified.) Again the disc surfaces are almost ideally quiet, but here the chromium-tape edition (in a Prestige Box) displays slightly tamed highs and generally darker overall sonics than the disc, making it a less brilliant but aurally less demanding choice.

It's only the last recording, the 1978 Munich Pro Arte analog taping of the Op. 22 Piano Trio (sponsored, like the digitally recorded suite, by the Beliaev Foundation of Cologne), that calls for a more cautious approach, even by Taneyev cultists. Although he wrote three string trios, this 1906–08 work, like the earlier piano quartet, is the only one of its kind; and it's a fine one—perhaps especially for its finale, now wayward, now proudly imperious. But its only superficially "Brahmsian" qualities seem unduly stressed by the Odeon threesome, noted for its recent Quintessence/Musical Heritage Society recordings of the Brahms trios. And while the playing here is boldly assured and powerfully dramatic, it is too often unduly vehement. Again, the recording may be at fault; perhaps some of the overemphasis should be blamed on close miking and a dry acoustical ambience. In any case, the sonics are unconscionably harsh; I suggest passing up the disc, however silent its surfaces, for the ferric cassette taping, even though the latter obviously has been processed with considerable high-frequency reduction.

And except to fans of the younger Tcherpnin, there is not much reward in his overside Op. 34 Piano Trio of 1925. It is extremely competently crafted, but its watered-down Prokofievian materials seem inconsequential in such close proximity (Continued on page 80)

Reviews



Prize-winning pianist Paul Schenly in an impressive recording debut—see page 62.

Reviewed by:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| John Canarina | Nicholas Kenyon |
| Scott Cantrell | Allan Kozinn |
| Kenneth Cooper | Paul Henry Lang |
| R. D. Darrell | Irving Lowens |
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| Joseph Horowitz | Susan T. Sommer |

year (Astrée AS 56, September 1981); her voice is sophisticated and varied, and she provides her own accompaniments, inventing preludes, interludes, and postludes. "A que Deus ama," performed by voice alone, is particularly moving: Throughout, there is a feeling of concentrated fervor in the singing and genuine improvisational flair in the accompaniments. Mary Criswick, with a plainer, straightforward voice (almost in the Jantina Noorman tradition), makes the songs sound more rustic and direct. Her instrumental collaborators are sensitive, though I don't care for the recorder that figures in a couple of tracks.

More successful—indeed, strikingly beautiful—are the seven songs *Cantigas de Amigo*, love songs by Martin Codax, on the first side of the HM disc. These small early-thirteenth-century pieces, discovered bound into a manuscript in 1914, represent an amazing survival. There's nothing to say who provided the music for "Eño sagrado," for which only the poetry survives, but these taut little visions of the Bay of Vigo, whence a lover has departed to fight the Moslems, are simple and affecting.

N.K.

BACH: Concertos for Harpsichords and Strings (6).

Ton Koopman, Timi Mathot, Friederike Ernst*†, and David Collyer†, harpsichords; Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Ton Koopman, dir. PHILIPS 6769 075, \$21.96 (two discs). Tape: 7654 075, \$21.96 (two cassettes).

Concertos for Two Harpsichords: No. 1, in C minor, S. 1060; No. 2, in C, S. 1061; No. 3, in C minor, S. 1062. Concertos for Three Harpsichords*: No. 1, in D minor, S. 1063; No. 2, in C, S. 1064. Concerto for Four Harpsichords, in A minor, S. 1065.†

BACH: Concertos: for Three Harpsichords, S. 1063–64; for Four Harpsichords, S. 1065*.

Trevor Pinnock, Kenneth Gilbert, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, and Nicholas Kraemer*, harpsichords; English Concert, Trevor Pinnock, dir. [Gerd Ploebusch and Andreas Holschneider, prod.] ARCHIV 2543 001, \$12.98 (digital recording). Tape: 3311 001, \$12.98 (cassette).

BACH: Concertos for Harpsichord and Orchestra: No. 3, in D, S. 1054; No. 6, in F, S. 1057; No. 7, in G minor, S. 1058.

ALFONSO EL SABIO: Cantigas de Santa Maria (9).

Esther Lamandier, soprano, portative organ, harp, and vielle. [Michel Bernstein, prod.] ASTRÉE AS 59, \$13.98 (distributed by Audio-Source, 1185 Chess Dr., Foster City, Calif. 94404).

A que Deus ama, amar devemos; A que por muy gran fremosura; A Virgen, que de Deus Madre; Como pod' a Groriosa; Entre Av' e Eva; Non devenos por maravilla teer; Non sofre Santa Maria; Virga de Jesse; Virgen Madre groriosa. ALFONSO EL SABIO, MARTIN CODAX: Cantigas (13).

Mary Criswick, mezzo-soprano; Euterpe Ancient Music Ensemble of Paris. HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 1060, \$11.98. Tape: 40.1060, \$11.98 (cassette). (Distributed by Brillly Imports, 155 N. San Vicente Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211.)

ALFONSO EL SABIO: Cantigas de Santa Maria: A virgen mui groriosa; Des oge mais quer'eu tobar; Des quando Deus sa Madre; Pois que dos reys nostro Sennor; Tan beeyta foi a saudauçon; Tod aqeste mund' a loar deveria. MARTIN CODAX: Cantigas de amigo: Ay Deus, se sab' ora meu amigo; Ay ondasque eu vin veer; Eño sagrado, en Vigo; Mandad'ey comigo; Mia irmana fremosa; Ondas do mar de Vigo; Quantas sabedes amar amigo.

The *Cantigas de Santa Maria* is one of the most remarkable bodies of monophony to

have survived from the medieval world. The songs were assembled at the Spanish court of Alfonso the Wise in the late thirteenth century. The manuscript in which they are preserved is among the most beautiful of all such compilations. There will never be agreement on how to perform them: an entire conference was recently devoted to the subject in New York. Illuminations in the manuscript depict a wide variety of instruments, but the songs are preserved as monophonic lines: How should they be elaborated?

Both these new discs are surely right to respect the importance of the voice and its melody: in the lavish versions by the Clemencic Consort (Harmonia Mundi France HM 977/8) the melodies are smothered in flamboyant instrumental display. Moreover, both new versions are better, musically, than the set that won a special award from the International Record Critics last year (Monumentos Historicos de la Musica Española MEC 1022/3, December 1981), though neither is so lavishly provided with illustrations, extracts, or transcriptions from the manuscript.

Of the two, I marginally prefer the interpretations by Esther Lamandier, whose striking record "Decameron" appeared last

CHRISTIAN STENNER

English Chamber Orchestra. Raymond Leppard, harpsichord and dir. PMLP 9500 962. \$10.98. Tape: 7300 962. \$10.98 (cassette).

BACH: Concertos: for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord, and Strings, in A minor, S. 1044*; for Oboe d'amore and Strings, in A, after S. 1055†; for Three Violins and Strings, in D, after S. 1064‡.

Aurèle Nicolet, flute*: Manfred Clement, oboe d'amore†; Gerhart Hetzel‡, Walter Forchert, and Rubén González, violins‡; Munich Bach Orchestra. Karl Richter, harpsichord and dir. [Gerd Ploebach, prod.] ARCHIV 2533 452. \$10.98. Tape: 3310 452. \$10.98 (cassette).

It is a real tribute to Gustav Leonhardt's recordings of the Bach harpsichord concertos (Telefunken 56.35049) that they continue to provide worthy insights into the music. But those interpretations were recorded as long as nineteen years ago, and much has happened since in the field of baroque-music performance. It is thus a pleasure to welcome the new Ton Koopman release, a worthy offering from the next generation of the Leonhardt "school."

A Leonhardt protégé himself, Koopman has already issued some fascinating recordings of organ and harpsichord works of Sweelinck, Bach, and Couperin. In his creative approach to rhythm and articulation, he reveals the obvious influence of his distinguished teacher, but there are also signs of more recent emphases on early fingerings and considerations of musical rhetoric. To judge from these performances, moreover, Koopman's approach is strongly shared by his wife, Tini Mathot, and students Friederike Ernst and David Collyer.

Joined by Koopman's Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, the assembled harpsichordists provide the finest available readings of these works. Throughout, the playing is wonderfully vital and spirited, with a lively approach to articulation and phrasing. The fast movements fairly bristle with energy—the effect as much of rhythmic subtleties as of tempo—while the slow ones embody what baroque composers must have meant by the designation *affettuoso*.

Even in the solo episodes of the fast movements, interestingly, the harpsichordists manage some singularly effective agogic accents and caresses of phrases, although some may find the delayed downbeats overdone at times. There are also some nice decorations in the slow movements of S. 1060 and 1061 and an elegantly handled little cadenza in S. 1064. And the string playing, though entirely "up-to-date" in style, happily eschews the more extreme *messa di voce* swells heard on some recent recordings. The recorded sound blunts the strings just a bit, and the bass seems unduly heavy, but these are relatively minor reservations.

Trevor Pinnock's new recording of the

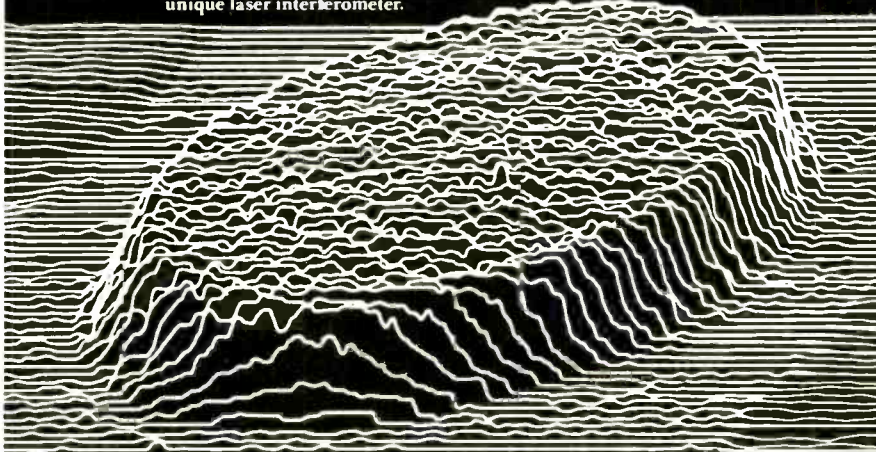
three- and four-harpsichord concertos, also thoroughly up-to-date, benefits from the particularly refined sound of the English Concert strings. The problem is the rather tight-lipped playing of the harpsichordists, whose approach seems doubly odd in juxtaposition with the extravagant "lozenge dynamics" of the strings. If the strings are sometimes overindulgent, the harpsichord playing is understated to a fault: The solo episodes, in particular, tend to sound like mindless tinkles. Everything is neat and tasteful, of course, but only in a nicely handled cadenza in the slow movement of S. 1063 does one of the harpsichordists "let go," and that just accentuates the stilted

effect elsewhere. Even the somewhat larger-than-life recorded sound (more the result, presumably, of multiple microphones than of digital processing) contributes to a certain mechanical impression.

Turning to Raymond Leppard's recording of three single-harpsichord concertos, one is immediately struck by the creamier string sound. His players are using modern instruments, of course, but he elicits from them remarkable clarity and alertness. Apart from the rather disagreeable *nasale* heard in the slow movements of S. 1054 and 1058, the harpsichord sound is adequate, and the recorder playing shows real artistry. Indeed, only the hardest-nosed

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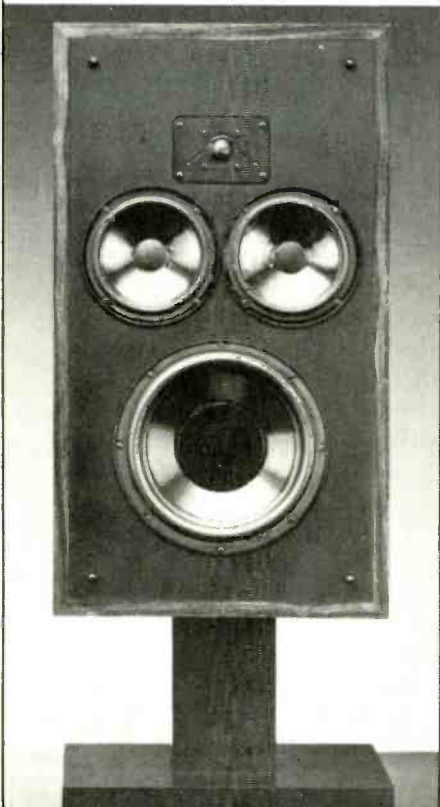
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 BERLIOZ: *Requiem*. Tear. London Philharmonic. Previn. ANGEL DSB 3907 (2). Jan.
 BIRTWISTLE: *Punch and Judy*. Roberts, Wilson-Johnson, Atherton. DECCA HEADLINE HEAD 24/5 (2). Dec.
 DELIUS: *The Fenby Legacy*. Royal Philharmonic, Fenby. UNICORN-KANCHANA DKP 9008/9 (2). Feb.
 DVOŘÁK, MENDELSSOHN: *String Quartets*. Orlando Qt. PHILIPS 9500 995. Feb.
 FRANCK, SZYMANOWSKI: *Violin-Piano Works*. Danczowska, Zimerman. DG 2531 330. March.
 GLAZUNOV: *Orchestral Works*. Bamberg Symphony. Ceccato. ARABESQUE 8091. Dec.
 HAYDN: *Miseri noi . . . Funesto orror: Arias*. Mathis, Jordan. PHILIPS 9500 929. Feb.
 MAHLER: *Symphony No. 5*. STRAUSS: *Tod und Verklärung*. Mitropoulos. NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC 881/2 (2). Nov.
 MUSSORGSKY: *Orchestral and Choral Works*. London Symphony. Abbado. RCA ARL 1-3988, Jan.
 ORFF: *Carmina burana*. London Symphony. Mata. RCA ATC 1-3925. Jan.

PROKOFIEV: *Film Music*. St. Louis Symphony, Slatkin. VOX CUM LAUDE VCL 9004X (3). Jan.
 PUCCINI: *Tosca*. Scotto, Domingo, Bruson, Levine. ANGEL DSBX 3919 (2), March.
 SCHUBERT: *Song Cycles and Songs*. Hüsch. ARABESQUE 8107-3L (3). March.
 SCHUBERT, WOLF: *Songs*. Pears, Britten. BBC REGL 410. March.
 SMETANA, SUK: *String Quartets*. Bohemian Quartet. PARNASSUS 1001. Feb.
 TELEMANN: *Instrumental Works*. Aulos Ensemble. MUSICMASTERS MM 20009, Dec.
 TIPPETT: *King Priam*. Harper, Tear, Bailey, Atherton. LONDON LDR 73006 (3), March.
 WEILL: *Songs*. Stratas, Woitach. NONESUCH D 79019, Feb.
 WOLF: *Songs (138)*. Various (Wolf Society recordings, 1931-38). EMI RLS 759 (7), Nov.
 BOLCOM AND MORRIS: *Rodgers and Hart Album*. RCA ARL 1-4123. March.
 GERMAN CHAMBER MUSIC BEFORE BACH. Cologne Musica Antiqua, Goebel. ARCHIV 2723 078 (3). Jan.
 LILI KRAUS PLAYS KEYBOARD FANTASIES. VANGUARD AUDIOPHILE VA 25003, Jan.
 KIRI TE KANAWA: *Song Recital*. CBS M 36667, Feb.
 HEAVY METAL. Film score by Elmer Bernstein. FULL MOON/ASYLUM 5E 547, Jan.

"purist" could complain about performances as intelligent and sympathetic as these. They do not quite have the dramatic individuality of Koopman's approach, but among modern-instrument performances they are unlikely to be dramatically bettered. The recorded sound is satisfactory if unremarkable.

The Karl Richter disc includes the Triple Concerto in A minor, and "reconstructions" (by Wilfried Fischer for the New Bach Edition) of the conjectural original versions of two of Bach's harpsichord concertos. Though the latter have obvious archival interest, the performances are hardly likely to excite much admiration. The playing is competent and presumably well-meaning, yet there is scarcely anything to suggest that the performers are enjoying themselves. This sobriety is particularly disconcerting in all three finales, which plod along with an apparent utter lack of enthusiasm. The Romantic vibrato of flutist Aurèle Nicolet and the three violinists is made to take the place of real sympathy and warmth, which are sadly lacking. S.C.

BLOCH, E.: Suite for Viola and Piano—See page 61.

CHERUBINI: Symphony in D. ROS-SINI: Sinfonia "al Conventello"; Grand Overture.

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. Gerard Schwarz, cond. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH D 79023. \$12.98 (digital recording). Tape: DI 79023. \$12.98 (cassette).

An interesting record, this. Cherubini's music has always remained on the fringe of the repertory. Not so distinctive a composer as to capture the imagination of musicians and the public, at least in our time, he was nevertheless too good to pass into oblivion. Beethoven admired him greatly; so did Berlioz, in spite of a love/hate (or perhaps hate/love, or maybe just hate) relationship that began when Cherubini was the prim and proper director of the Paris Conservatory and Berlioz a wild-eyed, rule-breaking student.

The Symphony in D is Cherubini's only work in that form and one of his few purely orchestral compositions; opera and sacred music were his prime interests. A melodious, thoroughly engaging, somewhat quirky piece, this is a sort of cross between a Haydn and early-Beethoven or Schubert symphony, with a touch of Rossini and even Verdi thrown in. (The Minuetto's delightful trio section anticipates the

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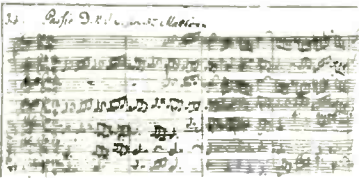
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Johann Sebastian Bach.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 St. Matthew Passion Anonim in Bethany. The Lord's Supper. | 12 Mass in G minor. Mass in G major. | 23 Cantata for Palm Sunday. Cantata for the 1st Day of Easter. | 40 Brandenburg Concerti Nos. 6 (Bc major), 3 (G major), 1 (F major). | 57 Sonata in C major. Sonata in E minor. Sonata in E major. Partita in A minor for Solo Flute. |  |
| 2 St. Matthew Passion In Gethsemane. False Witness. | 13 Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied. Der Geist hilft unserer Schwachheit auf. Jesu, mein Freude. | 24 Cantatas for the 2nd and 3rd Days of Easter. Cantata for the 1st Sunday after Easter. | 41 Brandenburg Concerti Nos. 2 (F major), 4 (G major), 5 (D major). | 58 Trio Sonata for 2 Flutes & Continuo. Sonatas No. 3 (G major), No. 1 (G major), No. 2 (D major). | |
| 3 St. Matthew Passion Interrogation by Caiaphas and Pilate. Jesus's Delivery and Flagellation. | 14 Fürchte dich nicht. Komm, Jesu. Lobet dem Herrn. Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren. Ich lasse dich nicht. Sacred songs. | 25 Cantatas for the 2nd and 3rd Sundays after Easter. | 42 Concerti (2) for Harpsichord and Orch. in D minor and E major. | 59 Suite No. 1 in G minor. Suite No. 2 in D minor. | |
| 4 St. Matthew Passion Crucifixion. Burial. | 15 Christmas Oratorio For the 1st Day of Christmas. For the 2nd Day of Christmas. | 26 Oratorio for Ascension Day. Cantata for the 5th Sunday after Easter. | 43 Concerti (3) for Harpsichord and Orch. in D major, A major and F minor. | 60 Suite No. 3 in C major. Suite No. 4 in Eb major. | 74 Organ Works |
| 5 St. John Passion. Betrayal and Capture. Denial. | 16 Christmas Oratorio For the 3rd Day of Christmas. For the 2nd Day of Christmas. | 27 Cantatas for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Days of Whitsun. | 44 Concerti (3) for Harpsichord & Orch. in F major, C minor, for 2 Flutes & Orch. in C minor (BWV 1056). | 61 Suite No. 5 in C minor. Suite No. 6 in D major. | 75 Organ Works |
| 6 St. John Passion. Interrogation and Flagellation. Condemnation and Crucifixion. | 17 Christmas Oratorio For the 3rd Day of Christmas. For New Year's Day. | 28 Cantatas for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays after Trinity. | 45 Concerti (2) for 2 Harpsichords and Orch. in C major & C minor (BWV 1052). | 62 Musical Offering. | 76 Organ Works |
| 7 St. John Passion. The Death of Jesus. Burial. | 18 Christmas Oratorio For the 1st Sunday in the New Year. For the Feast of Epiphany. | 29 Cantata for the 2nd Sunday after Trinity. | 46 Concerti (3) for 3 Flutes & Orch. in D minor, C major, in A minor & Orch. in A major. | 63 Organ Works | 77 Organ Works |
| 8 Mass in B minor. Kyrie. Gloria. | 19 Magnificat. Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland. | 30 Cantata for the 3rd Sunday after Trinity. | 47 Concerti (3) for 2 vns., str. & continuo in D major, for vln., str. & continuo in A minor & E major. | 64 Organ Works | 78 Organ Works |
| 9 Mass in B minor. Gloria. Credo. | 20 Christum wir sollen loben schon. Sehet, weiche eine Liebe. | 31 Cantatas for the 5th and 15th Sundays after Trinity. | 48 Concerti (3): Triple in A minor, for oboe, str. & cont. in D minor. | 65 Organ Works | 79 Suite in A minor. Suite in Eb major. 12 Little Preludes. 8 Little Preludes. 3 Minuets. |
| 10 Mass in B minor. Credo. Sanctus. Agnus Dei. | 21 Cantata for New Year's Day. Cantata for the Feast of Epiphany. | 32 Actus tragicus. Cantata for the 19th Sunday after Trinity. | 49 Sonatas: No. 1 in B minor, No. 2 in A major, No. 3 in E major. | 66 Organ Works | 80 Inventions. Sinfonias. |
| 11 Mass in F major. Mass in A major. | 22 Cantata for the 3rd Sunday after Epiphany. Cantata for the Feast of the Annunciation. | 33 Cantatas for the 22nd Sunday after Trinity. Feast of the Visitation, 24th Sunday after Trinity. | 50 Sonatas: No. 4 in C minor, No. 5 in F minor, No. 6 in G major. | 67 Organ Works | 81 The Well-Tempered Clavier, Part I. |
| | | 34 Coffee Cantata. Peasant Cantata. | 51 Sonata No. 1 in G minor. Partita No. 1 in B minor. | 68 Organ Works | 82 The Well-Tempered Clavier, Part I. |
| | | 35 The contest between Phaulos and Pan. | 52 Sonata No. 2 in A minor. Partita No. 2 in D minor. | 69 Organ Works | 83 The Well-Tempered Clavier, Part II. |
| | | 36 The pacification of Aëolus. | 53 Sonata No. 3 in C major. Partita No. 3 in E major. | 70 Organ Works | 84 The Well-Tempered Clavier, Part II. |
| | | 37 Music to celebrate the birthday and nameday of King Augustus III. | 54 Suite in G minor. Prelude, Fugue & Allegro in Eb major. | 71 Organ Works | 85 The Well-Tempered Clavier, Part II. |
| | | 38 Overture No. 1 in C major. Overture No. 4 in D major. | 55 Suite in C minor. Prelude in C minor. Fugue in C minor. Suite in E major. | 72 Organ Works | 86 Toccata in G minor. Toccata in D major. Toccata in F minor. Toccata in C minor. |
| | | 39 Overture No. 2 in B minor. Overture No. 3 in D major. | 56 Sonata in B minor. Sonata in Eb major. Sonata in A major. Sonata in G minor. | 73 Organ Works | 87 Toccata in D minor. Toccata in E minor. Toccata in G major. Fantasia & Fugue in A minor. |



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Aida ballet music.)

Arturo Toscanini performed the work from time to time and gave it an exciting recording, no longer available. If anything, Gerard Schwarz delivers a performance even more driving and more precise than Toscanini's, though of course, with a smaller orchestra. The fast movements fairly crackle with electricity, yet the lovely *Larghetto* is imbued with great tenderness and sensitivity. Schwarz relaxes more in the *Minuetto* than did Toscanini in his scherzolike treatment. Conversely, Toscanini was less strict than Schwarz with the finale's curious syncopated cadential passages, allowing the afterbeats a little more time to register.

This late-Cherubini work is nicely complemented by two early-Rossini overtures. Rossini not only used the same overture to accommodate several operas, but used the same theme in more than one overture: the principal theme of the *Sinfonia "al Conventello"* is identical to that of the Overture to *Il Signor Bruschino*. The "Grand Overture with an obbligato part for contrabass" (which means simply that the basses have a part independent of the cellos) may not be Rossini's, as Philip Gossett's excellent notes explain, yet both works, if decidedly formative efforts, are ebulliently and insouciantly Rossinian.

As with the Cherubini, Schwarz captures the spirit of these works beautifully, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra plays brilliantly throughout. The Nonesuch digital recording, with extremely quiet surfaces, is among the best I've heard. My only complaint is that the twenty-seven-minute symphony is not confined to one side, leaving room for another overture or two.

By the way, why have even the more familiar Rossini overtures virtually disappeared from our concert life in recent years? They certainly would provide a leavening for some of the stupefyingly ponderous programs turning up these days. J.C.

CHOPIN: *Andante spianato and Grande polonaise brillante*. Op. 22—See Mussorgsky.

DEL TREDICI: *Final Alice*.

Barbara Hendricks, soprano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, George Solti, cond. [James Mallinson, prod.] LONDON LDR 71018, \$12.98 (digital recording).

David del Tredici's series of *Alice in Wonderland* settings, which date back over more than a decade, has established him as one of the prominent American composers of his generation. The blatantly "popular" character of these works has met with great enthusiasm from concertgoers and considerable skepticism from many of the composer's professional colleagues. But one thing stands uncontested: During the past

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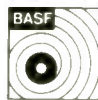
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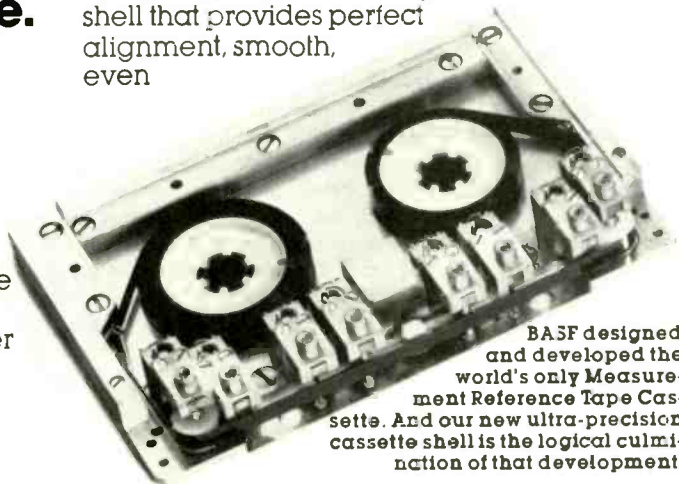


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Misremembering Bayreuth

by David Hamilton

UNDER THE RUBRIC "Memories of Bayreuth," Discocorp has recently published two discs of apparent historical importance. The first (IGI 379) is devoted to *Parsifal* and promises live-performance excerpts conducted by the legendary Karl Muck (1931), Richard Strauss (1933), and Wilhelm Furtwängler (1937), with singers including Max Lorenz, Herbert Janssen, and Alexander Kipnis; the second (RR 540) proffers "representative excerpts" from two *Götterdämmerung* performances at the 1937 festival, with Frida Leider, Lorenz, Jaro Prohaska, and Ludwig Hofmann, Furtwängler conducting. Given the steady rate at which materials from German radio archives continue to surface, the recovery of such potential treasures is not particularly improbable; they should be valuable additions to our knowledge of prewar Wagnerian performance.

Unfortunately, these recordings are nothing less than fakes. A program note with the *Parsifal* disc does allow as how the opening sequence (dialogue between Parsifal and Gurnemanz, leading to the Transformation Music) is actually from a commercial recording by Gotthelf Pistor and Ivar Andrésen; it covers up for the patently erroneous dating of Muck in Bayreuth in 1931 (he had left long before, when Toscanini was engaged for the 1930 festival) by ascribing the remainder of the Grail Scene instead to a Berlin Radio performance with the announced soloists, Herbert Janssen (Amfortas) and Deszö Ernster (Titurel).

Well, the Amfortas certainly is Janssen. In fact, this section turns out to be identical with a widely circulated pirate recording from a 1937 Covent Garden performance conducted by Fritz Reiner, in which Robert Easton sang Titurel. And the choral

sequence that precedes it matches an excerpt from the 1938 Bayreuth festival, conducted by Franz von Hösslin (published in BASF HB 22863). I haven't traced the source of the brief choral epilogue, which is added from elsewhere because the Covent Garden recording ends in midphrase.

On Side 2, we find (in wrong order) the Good Friday Scene and the finale. The first of these, supposedly conducted by Strauss, does feature the advertised voices of Kipnis and Lorenz—the bass, indeed, sings with the identical inflections long familiar from his 1927 Bayreuth studio version of the scene (Seraphim 60124, deleted), which was conducted not by Strauss, but by Siegfried Wagner. I count at least nine splices in this scene, as Lorenz' rather hysterical Parsifal (from a source unknown to me) is slotted in to replace Fritz Wolff, Kipnis' original partner; at one point some measures are omitted, presumably because no Lorenz material was available to cover them. From the final scene, we have Amfortas' monologue, again from Janssen at Covent Garden; for Lorenz' peroration and the coda we return to Bayreuth—but not Furtwängler in 1937; this is really a 1933 recording led by Richard Strauss, from the above-mentioned BASF set!

After that, the *Götterdämmerung* stuff isn't hard to unravel. A big chunk of Act II comes primarily from a 1938 Covent Garden performance that featured Leider, the unmistakable Janssen (Gunter), and Wilhelm Schirp (Hagen), Furtwängler conducting. The 1938 Siegfried was Melchior, so all his lines have here been replaced by Lorenz' singing from the 1950 *Scala Ring*, also conducted by Furtwängler. From Act III, Lorenz' death scene ("*Brünnhilde, heilige Braut!*") is identical to a 1944 Berlin broadcast led by Robert Heger (on BASF 22-22120), and the preceding Narra-

tion doubtless comes from the same broadcast. And Leider's Immolation turns out to be nothing more or less than her famous HMV studio recording (made ten years earlier than the Act II performance and finding her in rather better voice). Since that recording omitted the orchestral epilogue—an improbable cut in something billed as a live Bayreuth performance—the passage has been supplied from elsewhere, even including Hagen's single line as he plunges into the waters of the Rhine. A bearded old man wearing an eyepatch has plunged a rusty razor blade into the trunk of a tree near my front door, as a prize for whoever first identifies the source of this epilogue.

The gray area of unauthorized recordings is particularly vulnerable to misrepresentation, whether accidental or intentional. No doubt wartime radio tapes and old acetates are not always clearly labeled, leading to optimistic attributions. But these two discs didn't happen by accident—someone spent a good deal of time at the splicing block to fabricate Bayreuth "performances" that matched the cast lists in the history books. Pretty dumb, really: The principal public for such historical curios consists of precisely those specialists most likely to recognize the sources of the compositions! For nonspecialists, the moral of the story is, clearly, *caveat emptor*. **HF**

We contacted Discocorp and suggested that the recordings in question are not what they purport to be. We were told that the situation is explained fully on inserts packaged inside each sleeve and that copies that do not have such inserts—as ours did not—are either test pressings or "defective." We were subsequently sent a copy of the Parsifal notes and "errata," the same ones D.H. describes, and another copy of Götterdämmerung, apparently also "defective."—Ed.

few years Del Tredici has received more performances by major orchestras of lengthy, complex new works than any other composer currently active in this country. Indeed, no clearer sign of his unique position could be offered than the appearance of his *Final Alice*, one of the longest and most ambitious of the series, in a major-label recording by the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti. (Neither orchestra nor conductor is known for an interest in newer music.)

Moreover, the entire disc is devoted to the piece, so long that one major section—the third—has had to be omitted (an omission allowed by the composer for concert performances as well). Even the shortened

version lasts one hour. The work's length already points up one of its curious anomalies: Although "popular" in tone, it is extremely ambitious. And despite the simplicity of much of the material, the treatment and overall conception are remarkably complex.

The text, derived from the last two chapters of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, deals with the famous "trial" and the heroine's subsequent awakening to "dull reality." Scored for soprano soloist, who functions as both narrator and singer, and an enormous orchestra that includes a concertante "folk group" consisting of two saxophones, mandolin, banjo and accordion, the work is organized as a series of

scenes and arias, with all but the last of the arias presenting the "evidence" for the trial. The melodic material of the arias is reminiscent (clearly intentionally so) of popular music of the Victorian era; but in keeping with the "fantastic" quality of Lewis Carroll's book, the melodies are manipulated in ever shifting rhythmic patterns and placed in extremely elaborate and unpredictable accompanimental settings. Del Tredici frequently orders his melodic ideas in highly repetitive configurations, in certain respects not unlike the simple singsong patterns children use in making up tunes to accompany words. But here the patterns undergo constant transformation through intense variational procedures.

Del Tredici possesses unusual technical facility. A favorite device is the presentation of similar material in a kaleidoscopic sequence featuring variable rates of speed, so that, as in a film, one has a sense of "fast and slow motion" measured against some "normal" rate. Similarly filmic is a technique reminiscent of the "freeze frame": Here the main musical argument is suddenly held in suspension for the momentary insertion of a subsidiary commentary. The orchestra is handled with brilliant virtuosity in a manner the likes of which have not been heard since the turn of the century. The influence of Strauss—above all, of the tone poems—is especially evident, though one recognizes an unmistakable personal voice.

This, then, is a work to command attention. Yet although I greatly admire it (and once again defer to its unparalleled technical polish), there are features that I find problematic. Some of the music that accompanies the narrative sections, for example, offers little more than perfunctory punctuation; and the incessant, obsessive repetitions (the entire conception, in fact, is essentially variational) begin to grate with prolonged listening. Moreover, the third of the recorded arias, in which the melodic line has a less distorted—and less developed—form, is something of a letdown, too unabashedly sentimental and saccharine to carry the weight it must assume. (Del Tredici himself refers to it as the "heart" of the piece.) But despite such reservations, I am ultimately won over by the sheer energy, fine good humor, and wonderful sense of the unexpected and absurd that are felt throughout. Del Tredici is clearly a composer in love with sound in the good, old-fashioned sense: and I can think of no other composer today who deals with basically traditional materials in such an inventive way. Whatever one may think of *Final Alice*, it is not simply another tired effort to resurrect our musical past.

Soprano Barbara Hendricks handles the extremely taxing vocal part with impressive assurance and unflagging drive; and Solti leads the Chicago Symphony, which clearly seems to be enjoying what it is playing here, in a vigorous, stylish reading. A complete text is included (a must, as much of it is impossible to follow), and the composer provides a helpful discussion of the music. R.P.M.

HINDEMITH: Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 25, No. 4—See page 61.

MARTIN CODAX: Cantigas de Amigo—See Alfonso el Sabio.

MARTINŮ: The Greek Passion.

CAST:
Katerina Helen Field (s)

Lenio	Rita Cullis (s)
Despinio	Jana Jonášová (s)
Nikolios/Old Woman	Catherine Savory (ms)
Manolios	John Mitchinson (t)
Yannakos	Arthur Davies (t)
Michelis	John Harris (t)
Panais/Andonis	Jeffrey Lawton (t)
Kostandis	Phillip Joll (b)
Priest Grigoris	John Tomlinson (bs)
Priest Fotis	Geoffrey Moses (bs)
Old Man/Patriarchas	David Gwynne (bs)
Ladas	Michael Geliot (spkr)

Kühn Children's Chorus, Czech Philharmonic Chorus, Brno State Philharmonic Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. [Milan Slavický, prod.] SUPRAPHON 1116 3611/2, \$31.96 (digital recording; two discs, manual sequence). Tape: KSUP 3611/2, \$31.96 (two cassettes).

This last of Martinů's "fourteen completed operas," described in the notes as his "first attempt at setting a sustained dramatic text," occupied the composer's last five years—first trying to get the Kazantzakis novel satisfactorily adapted, then trying to get the thing performed. The second objective, not achieved in his lifetime (the premiere took place in Zurich in 1961, nearly two years after he died), actually complicated the first: In 1957, on the basis of Karajan's expression of interest in the opera for Vienna (he seems to have lost interest later), Martinů had it translated into German and over the next two years, in the course of tinkering with the score, recomposed a

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CLASSICAL Reviews

good deal of it, with the ironic result that the "final" version is in German.

And so for this recording, a collaboration between Supraphon and the Welsh National Opera ("project coordinated and supervised by Bond Street Music Limited"), it was necessary to have Brian Large revise the libretto to get the definitive musical text back into English. Because, yes, the libretto over which the composer agonized so was in English. Indeed, one of the ways in which he made himself crazy in writing the libretto was by insisting on fidelity to the *English translation* of the novel, as if it were a primary text.

All of which might lead one to expect the worst, especially knowing that the composer turned to *The Greek Passion* only after deciding that *Zorba the Greek* couldn't be dramatized. (Huh?) In fact, the opera turns out to be quite winning. The religious faith and basic humanity of the Greek villagers are depicted with a Mediterranean lyricism that puts me in mind of *Cavalleria rusticana*. (That's a compliment, folks.)

Like *Cavalleria*, *The Greek Passion* begins on Easter Sunday. On this particular Easter in the village of Lykovrissi, two plot strands intersect. First, the local priest, Grigoris, assigns parts for the following year's Passion play, enjoining the designees to live the virtues of their roles in the intervening time. This will have odd effects on all of them, but most of all on the shepherd Manolios, the Christ designee.

Second, Lykovrissi is invaded by the (barely) surviving populace of a village sacked by Turks. The refugee priest, Fotis, explains that they seek "land to strike our roots again." In a grand confrontation between the priests, both basses, Grigoris refuses help. The agonized death of a starvation victim provides him an excuse. Cholera! A sign from God!

The refugees settle on the barren slope of Mount Sarakina, where they become a sort of nagging conscience for the village. At the same time, the villagers are being racked by the peculiar effects of the Passion roles. Some of them respond well. The peddler Yannakos, for example, finds himself more worthy of his role, the apostle Peter, than he would have expected: The refugees greet him with such warmth and openness that he can't carry out the merchant Ladas' scam to bleed them even further.

Manolios, meanwhile, is undergoing a painful metamorphosis, centered around his not exactly Christ-like feelings for the widow Katerina, who has (naturally) been cast as Mary Magdalen. Unlike the village elders, though, he grapples with Satan. After all, virtue has no meaning unless you're acquainted with the alternatives.

Of course to the elders, already made nervous by those refugees out on the mountainside (who likes a nagging conscience?), this makes Manolios a subversive element, and his excommunication has been decided on even before he openly champions the

cause of the refugees. ("Their children are starving. They lie dead on the hillside. Can you watch children dying of hunger before your eyes without rising up and demanding an account, even from God?") As the refugees are heard approaching the village, Grigoris orders Manolios killed, and he is, by Panais, the designated Judas.

What makes the opera so powerful is that, at least for three-plus acts, Martinů has gotten the abstract human issues that so interest him into dramatic form. Grigoris isn't presented as a monster, and the believability of his gut-level xenophobia makes it all the more monstrous. Among the villagers, there are half a dozen beautifully drawn character roles.

It's only in the climactic events of Act IV—Manolios' public account of his transformation and the great confrontation—that I feel the characters glazing over in intellectual abstractions, and this may be a function of the performance. Although most of the casting has been shrewdly managed, John Mitchinson is a shadowy Manolios. He's an honest performer, and he's far less extended by this role than by Tristan (to pick a random example), but he hasn't found either vocal or imaginative solutions for this strange, tormented man.

Nor is Charles Mackerras very responsive to the conflicts of the score. Its lyrical elements are nicely realized, but the rest sounds kind of flat. The Czech choristers, apart from being unintelligible in English, tend to a smooth, soft-textured sound that flattens their emotional scale. When the refugees are first seen and heard approaching in Act I, Manolios observes that the sound is like weeping, but in this performance it isn't. And shouldn't there be *some* sort of confrontation audible in the choral face-offs of Acts I and IV?

The confrontation between the two priests does come off. John Tomlinson manages Grigoris' relatively considerate high-bass writing adequately and finds some life in the words, while Geoffrey Moses—who made hardly any impression as the Steersman of the Welsh National *Tristan*—brings some appropriate vocal plangency to Fotis.

Both of the *Tristan* character tenors are here too, and Arthur Davies is so good as Yannakos (he makes the role sound easy, which it isn't, lying persistently on the break) that I wish Goodall had used him as the Sailor rather than the Shepherd. In fact, though, John Harris, who was barely present as the Sailor, has some lovely moments here as Michelis—as does ex-Kurwenal Phillip Joll as the wife-beaten cafe owner Kostandis. Helen Field is an attractive and interesting Katerina. Rita Cullis, although less attentive to verbal intelligibility, also makes a positive impression as Manolios' fiancée, Lenio.

The recorded sound mirrors both the lyrical strengths and the inhibitions of the performance. The booklet, all in English



COURTESY YALE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Modern Masters of the Elusive Viola

Reviewed by Harris Goldsmith

An extraordinary and thorough musician, Paul Hindemith could play every note he wrote.

THE VIOLA REALLY CAME INTO ITS OWN as a solo voice in the twentieth century, and this noteworthy recording pulls together the two composers most influential in bringing about that renaissance. Ernest Bloch's suite for viola and piano won the Berkshire chamber-music competition in 1919 and was expanded to (less effective) orchestral dress the same year; Paul Hindemith's Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 25, No. 4—not to be confused with a better-known (but still not overly familiar) Sonata for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 25, No. 1—dates from 1922.

The Hindemith work, being honored by its first recording ever, merits pride of place in this discussion (even though its brevity relegates it to the role of "filler" for the longer Bloch, which spills over onto the second side of this well-recorded disc). Extraordinary and thorough musician that he was, Hindemith composed sonatas for virtually every instrument in the orchestra and, 'tis said, could play every note he set to paper. But he was first and foremost a violist—one of the outstanding practitioners of that elusive and dusky-toned instrument, which he wielded in the Rebner Quartet and, after 1921, in the now legendary Amar-Hindemith foursome. His performing style is preserved on many phonograph recordings of the Amar-Hindemith Quartet and the short-lived string trio in which he joined violinist Szymon Goldberg and cellist Emanuel Feuermann, as well as on numerous solo discs recorded for Columbia before World War II. As a performer, he eschewed beauty of tone and—if that phonographic legacy is a reliable index—his playing sometimes veered to downright splintery astringency. It would be convenient to attribute the lack of suavity to limited practice time in a career divid-

ed between composition and performance, but I think, rather, that Hindemith was one of those re-creative musicians who regarded surface polish as superfluous, if not actually detrimental. (Others so minded were Szigeti, Adolf Busch, Casals, and Klemperer.) As support, I cite the notation, "tonal beauty is irrelevant," in the third movement of Hindemith's Sonata for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 25, No. 1.

The unfamiliarity of the newly recorded sonata is easily explained: It was published only in 1976. Apparently Hindemith's publisher, Schott, withheld the score (to help sales of the unaccompanied work and the earlier Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 11, No. 4?) and then simply forgot about it until prodded by that tireless Hindemith champion, violist Walter Trampler. Trampler has been successfully performing the work, and it wouldn't surprise me if he, too, records it one of these days.

This is a pithy, concentrated work, less effusively lyrical than Op. 11, No. 4. It has several curious features: For one, its first thirty-five bars are scored for piano alone; for another, none of its three movements has a formal meter—although the outer ones are intensely rhythmic in feeling. The concise slow movement, only thirty-nine bars long, is tenderly expressive, but parts of the energetic finale suggest the slashing energy of Bartók's Third and Fourth String Quartets. The writing for both instruments is unexpectedly spare; the viola displays only a few scattered double- or triple-stops and the piano frequently relies on ostinatos created by reiterated rhythmic figurations or by repeated chords alternating between right and left hand. In short, the piece represents Hindemith at his best, although it proves less euphoric than the (to me) irresistible Op. 11, No. 4, and less

grand in scope than the later 1939 Sonata, in the familiar style of *Nobilissima visione* and *Mathis der Maler*.

As a rule, I have an aversion for works in a rambling cyclic mold, such as the Chausson concerto for violin, piano, and string quartet and the Franck piano quintet. Yet Bloch's 1919 Suite has always been a happy exception. At least in the version for viola and piano, its billowing repetitiveness is transcended by a fierce primitivism and a welcome variety of textural detail. Bloch uses *ponticello* and *col legno* effects to good advantage in his moderately difficult (but, I'm told, not terrifying) viola writing, and the piano technique ranges from Bartókian expressionism (in the *Allegro ironico* second movement) to a compendium of Rachmaninoff and Ravel (in the *Molto vivo* finale). There is also a smattering of Griffes and Respighi, especially in the third and fourth movements. With all the tremolando effects, the work seems to lend itself naturally to orchestration; yet in that later version, glitter and detail are lost, and the viola, pitted against a mere backdrop of nebulous color, finds itself unchallenged.

Both performances here are admirable. The Hindemith is particularly ardent and muscular, with a modicum of lyric intensity as welcome counterbalance. My one reservation in the Bloch is pianist Katherine Collier's reticence and lack of savagery in some of the more motoric, demonic episodes. But for pacing and relationship between sections, this performance is at least as good as—and usually better than—the one by William Primrose and David Stimer, long deleted. Yizhak Schotten is a good technician, with a tenorish rather than alto sound; he suggests the quasi-oriental colors of Bloch and the echt-deutsch neoclassicism of Hindemith, infusing both with the glow of Slavic temperament.

Apart from some distracting pre-echo in the Bloch, CRI's processing is excellent. Every viola fancier will want this disc. **HF**

HINDEMITH: Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 25, No. 4. **E. BLOCH:** Suite for Viola and Piano.

Yizhak Schotten, viola; Katherine Collier, piano. [Carter Harman, prod.] **COMPOSERS RECORDINGS** SD 450, \$8.95.

(printed in England, in fact), includes a moderately helpful assortment of background material. K.F.

MOZART: Operatic Arias (9).

Rotraud Hansmann, soprano: Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Marinus Voorberg, cond. [Wolf Erichson, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4338, \$7.75 (\$4.95 to members) (add \$1.60 for shipping: Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

Ascanio in Alba. K. 111: Padre . . . O, Numi! . . . Sì, ma d'un altro amore; Ferma, aspetta . . . Infelici affetti miei. La Finta giardiniera, K. 196: Geme la tortorella. La Finta semplice, K. 51: Sentì l'eco ove l'aggirò; Amoretti. Il Rè pastore, K. 208: Aer tranquillo e di sereni; L'amerò, sarò costante. Zaide, K. 344: Trostlos schluchzet Philomele. Misera, dove son! . . . Ah! Non son' io che parlo, K. 369.

Rotraud Hansmann, according to the liner notes, has performed widely in Europe for close to two decades. Here, her name will ring a bell, if at all, with owners of recordings by the Vienna Concentus Musicus. For Nikolaus Harnoncourt, she sang six key parts in the operas of Monteverdi (La Musica and Euridice in *Orfeo*, Telefunken 36.35020; Amore and Minerva in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, 46.35024; and Virtù and Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, 56.35247) as well as the first-soprano part in Bach's Mass in B minor (Telefunken 36.35019). Jürgen Jürgens used her, too, as soprano soloist in the Monteverdi *Vespro della beata virgine* (deleted). Those who remember Hansmann in her chaste Monteverdian masks will easily summon to mind a light, airy instrument that seemed to respire the cool, clear breath of the empyrean.

Her limpid tone and poised phrases in the most expansive cantabile and the most florid divisions, staccato or legato, sound as pleasingly now as before. Only antiquarians will claim much prior acquaintance with the repertory she investigates here (excepting "*L'amerò, sarò costante*," from *Il Rè pastore*); it is not Mozart's most distinctive or memorable work. But even where he hews closest to eighteenth-century lingua franca (represented here in heroic, soulful, winsome, and tragic variants), his compositions have an uncommon bloom. So do Hansmann's performances.

There are one or two dim spots: The keyed-up recitative "*Ferma, aspetta, ove vai?*" (preceding the aria "*Infelici affetti miei*," from *Ascanio in Alba*) lacks a certain edge of fire; and in "*Misera, dove son!*" (K. 369), too, the dramatic presence is a shade pallid. All the rest is pure gold. The coquetry in "*Sentì l'eco*" (from *La Finta semplice*) has charm and sparkle that verge—as does the music—most appealingly on sentimentality without ever crossing the line. In "*Aer tranquillo e di sereni*," written for the male soprano Aminta of *Il Rè pastore*, Hansmann finds stirring notes of vigor and youthful manly grace; and her beautiful rhythmic articula-

tion of chromatic cadences artfully underscores the "accents" in the harmony.

Marinus Voorberg, conducting the Vienna Symphony, displays—through lucid lines, transparent textures, and just proportions, both within a phrase and from passage to passage and section to section—the same kind of virtues and accomplishments as his splendid soloist. The interplay between the voice and the instrumentalists is everywhere a joy—nowhere more so than in the familiar "*L'amerò*"; concertmaster Paul Trimmel's dialogue with the soprano is the very model of affectionate musicianship. But this is a recording to savor even more for its discoveries in the obscurer literature. M.G.

MUSSORGSKY: Pictures at an Exhibition. CHOPIN: Andante spianato and Grande polonaise brillante, Op. 22.

Paul Schenly, piano. [Marc J. Aubert and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] DIGITECH DIGI 108, \$14.98 (digital recording). Tape: SCR 008, \$9.98 (cassette). (Distributed by Sine Qua Non Productions, Ltd., One Charles St., Providence, R.I. 02904.)

Though thirty-three-year-old American pianist Paul Schenly has appeared with the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics, and though he won the Avery Fisher Prize fully eight years ago, this commanding performance of *Pictures at an Exhibition* is his debut recording. In an album note, he stresses the gritty nationalism of the piece. His performance is weighty, serious, never impish or cavalier. Beyond the imposing largesse of the ground plan (the timing is 33:31), there is coiled tension enough to insure that no episode is slack or bland. The tonal pileups are heroic, not hard. The "Hut on Fowl's Legs" and "Great Gate of Kiev" combine steadiness with deep-seated energy, so that the latter's tolling bells and plaintive chorale, convincing in themselves, contribute to a remarkably authentic, organic climax to the whole.

Throughout, Schenly impresses as a player directly in touch with feeling. His interpretation is assiduously detailed, but in the interest of sustained characterization rather than momentary illustration or digital display. If I have a cavil with the playing, it is that "Catacombs," the most atmospheric vignette, receives the least atmospheric reading. Here (and here alone, for reasons suggested below) the chording lacks something in depth, and the closely miked tremolos aren't quite soft or easy enough to insinuate a hypnotic tranquillo.

A more serious drawback is Schenly's decision to switch between two instruments, one more velvety, the other with more neutral tonal properties. This is no silly gimmick: as he explains in his note, the two pianos afford a wider range of color and dynamics than either could by itself. The trouble is that the switching sometimes jars

the ear; the two biggest "Promenades," for example, emanate from distinctly different sound mediums.

As one might anticipate from his *Pictures*, Schenly's version of the *Grande polonaise* is more notable for dignified breadth than for surface glitter. The poetry of the *Andante spianato* is never self-conscious. Digitech's digital recording is unusually clean. J.H.

ROSSINI: Sinfonia "al Conventello"; Grand Overture—See Cherubini.

SCHUBERT: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in A, D. 667 (Trout).

Wolfgang Sawallisch, piano; Endres Quartet. [Oskar Waldeck, prod.] EURODISC 25 567, \$9.98 (SQ-encoded). Tape: 57 654, \$9.98 (cassette).

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Borodin Quartet members: Georg Hörtnagel, double bass. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL DS 37846, \$10.98 (digital recording).

Both of these latest *Trout* Quintets take commanding places in a very well-stocked lake.

Wolfgang Sawallisch, of course, is better-known as an internationally respected maestro, though he has appeared on record as a Lieder accompanist. He is fully equal to the demanding piano part, yet his playing is a bit different from what I had expected on the basis of his conducting: somewhat freer in spirit, more casual of rhythm, but with familiar heartiness and blunt honesty. Though tempos tend to be swift, everything is tempered by a good-natured geniality.

The Munich-based Endres Quartet must like to work with pianist-conductors: its previous *Trout* recording (Vox 510890) enlisted the services of Rolf Rheinhardt. The group's warm-toned, affectionate, yet disciplined string playing matches the warm solidity of Sawallisch's piano, and apart from one incongruous touch—a slowing for the third-movement trio (albeit far less obtrusive than that on the well-known Curzon/Vienna Octet recording, London CS 6090)—this is a thoroughly bucolic account, notable more for line than for picky detail. With Eurodisc's superb pressing and fine engineering, this is decidedly a performance to live with.

Yet the Angel performance, if not necessarily superior, makes a more sensational first impression. Here the emphasis is on contrast and ringing accents. Characteristically, the players—Sviatoslav Richter, in particular—lean toward terse, punchy extremes, eschewing crescendos in favor of subito fortes. (The famous downward piano runs in the last movement are done without the implicit dynamic growth, much the way Klemperer handled a similar spot in the *Eroica*'s finale.) The contrasty character also extends to tempos: the outer move-

ments are pretty fast (if a shade more deliberate than Sawallisch/Endres), and the second movement verges on adagio but flows attractively nonetheless. And where the Eurodisc reproduction is all warmth, Angel's digital recording favors a sharper, colder, more crystalline and assertive sonority; Richter's keyboard attack, in particular, recalls the prismatic bite of Peter Serkin's two recordings, especially the older Vanguard edition (VSD 71145).

This is my first hearing of the Borodin Quartet since its reorganization (necessitated by first-violinist Rostislav Dubinsky's departure for America); although the group seems a trifle unpolished by former standards, its partnership is admirable. Georg Hörtnagel, of course, is the absolute champ when it comes to recording this work, leaving even our own Julius Levine (with five versions to his credit) panting in the rear.

Both accounts observe the first-movement repeat. The Richter/Borodin also takes the one in the finale. What a boon this practice would be for a typical New York audience: It could interrupt the last movement *twice* with premature applause! H.G.

TANEYEV: Quartet for Piano and Strings, in E, Op. 20; Suite de concert, Op. 28; Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, in D, Op. 34—See page 50.

TCHEREPNIN, A.: Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, in D, Op. 34—See page 50.

Recitals and Miscellany

THE PLAY OF ST. NICHOLAS.

New York Ensemble for Early Music. Frederick Renz, dir. [Frederick J. Bashour, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 824437, \$15.50 (\$9.90 to members) (two discs, manual sequence). Tape: MHC 226437, \$15.50 (\$9.90 to members) (two cassettes). (Add \$1.60 for shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

The Ensemble for Early Music's presentation of *The Play of St. Nicholas* is clearly an attempt to follow in the tradition established by the New York Pro Musica's pathbreaking and wildly popular *Play of Daniel* and *Play of Herod*. The trouble is, there's nothing else quite like the *Daniel* play in the medieval repertory; *Herod* was stitched together out of two liturgical dramas, and this *Nicholas* presentation is a composite of four plays from the famous Fleury play-book, with added pieces to introduce each side. Still, each play is presented with commendable faithfulness, and the record lis-



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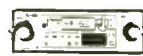
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tener can choose to ration himself to one play at a time.

Argument has raged over the source of these dramas; it now seems clear that their relationship to the liturgy was loose, but that they were perhaps performed before or as an interpolation during services. (They all end with some chant—the *Te Deum* or a Mass Introit, for example—that implies that the liturgy would follow or continue at that point.) This argument is not irrelevant for performers, because it raises the question of how far these plays, preserved in measured notation, should sound like liturgical chant. Richard Hoppin, in his fine survey *Medieval Music* (Norton), contends that those with liturgically based texts should be performed like plainsong; performers have tended to disagree.

Here, Frederick Renz interprets the music metrically. And he has added instruments that mainly act as drones and occasionally provide expressive commentary. About the former use, there can be little argument; but the addition of something like bongos to liven up the third play with syncopated rhythms and a rattle whirring in the fourth is jarring. At the moment of greatest grief in "The Icon of St. Nicholas," the vocal lines are bent and a stringed instrument emits scraped dissonances and then pure noise. (There is also a regrettably wild estampie to introduce this play.)

Fortunately, these excesses are the exception, appearing mainly in those plays that use the same melody almost throughout, presumably in a misguided effort to avoid boredom. Where there is more inherent variety, especially in the first play, "The Son of Getron," the ensemble projects the music with dignity, clarity and restraint; the singers, firm and strong, make much of the Latin texts (provided in the booklet, with full translations). It's a bit much to claim, as Sterne did in his edition of this play, that it is "an early experiment with the Wagnerian leitmotif," but its use of its few melodies is certainly impressive and moving.

Each play is introduced by a procession; the boys of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine sing nicely in "Psallat chorus" before the second (though I like less their organum harmonizations later in that play), and three tenors sing a good, intimate carol, "Diex soit," before the third. All the performances are fine, but special praise should go to the countertenors who sing the three daughters in the second play with deceptive purity, to the treble Jason Wilbourne in the final motet and play, and to Wilbur Pauley, who plays St. Nicholas with dignity throughout. The instrumentalists always seem to know what they should be doing, which is remarkable. Oddly, the *Te Deum* that closes the last play is treated ascetically, in free rhythm; yet here, if anywhere, organ and percussion would have joined the singers to bring the play to a climax.

N.K.

The Tape Deck

Critiques of new cassette and open-reel releases by R. D. Darrell

As It Was . . .

. . . **In czarist Russia.** Not only can the recording medium revive the masterpieces of the past, it can evoke the very locales and times of their birth, to revelatory effect. Compared with the relatively mild interest, for example, of *reading* (in Rimsky-Korsakov's autobiography, say) about Belaiev's fabulous musical Friday evenings in late-nineteenth-century St. Petersburg, how much more vividly real it is to *participate*—however belatedly and vicariously—in the actual music-making that took place then. Eighteen mostly short works for string quartet, published by Belaiev under the rubric *Les Vendredis*, have now been recorded, for the first time as an entire series, by the deftly skilled Reger Quartet (Turnabout CT 7015, two cassettes, \$11.98). And if a few of these works (like Glazunov's *Five Novelettes*) are familiar, others (like a strong Allegro written by Rimsky for a collaborative venture) aren't. How many works have *you* heard by Artsibushev, Blumenfeld, D'Osten-Sachen, Kopylov, or Sokolov?

Then, to move from informal home entertainment to a full-dress evening at the theater, what could better embody the full splendors of the ballet in the same time and city, than Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*? Relatively neglected nowadays—or known only in bits and pieces or in nonauthentic Slavic accents—it is a joy to hear complete in an authoritatively balletic reading, glowingly recorded, by Gennady Rozhdestvensky and the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Eurodisc Prestige Box 500 575, three cassettes, \$29.94).

. . . **In Bachian Cöthen and Leipzig.** Could there ever have been a household more permeated by music than Bach's? Some of the pieces that served for the constant harpsichord, clavichord, and singing practice, dutifully written down in Anna Magdalena Bach's notebooks, are now recorded more extensively than ever, by Igor Kipnis with soprano Judith Blegen and baritone Benjamin Luxon (Nonesuch digital D2 79020, two cassettes, \$23.96; no notes or texts). The clavichord selections are pure joy, the harpsichord pieces perhaps bigger-toned than in Bach's time. The songs I find tiresomely sanctimonious—as indeed may have the younger Bachs.

. . . **In Mozartean Salzburg.** What more can one say about the Hogwood/Schröder series of Mozart symphonies on

original instruments with the Academy of Ancient Music? Only that the latest addition, Vol. 2, features relatively little-known Salzburg symphonies and sinfonias, and the recorded performances are more vibrantly delectable than ever (Oiseau-Lyre Prestige Box K 168K33, three cassettes, fifty-six-page booklet, \$29.94).

Recyclings, continued: deluxe. . . . Mobile Fidelity's limited-edition superchrome (BASF Pro II) musicassettes duplicated in real time from original masters first appeared over a year ago, but I've only now heard an example. Well worth the wait, it brings to the cassette repertory RCA's memorable 1962 (second) recording of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony (MFSL C 522, price at dealer's option), almost ideally processed, with the quietest Dolby-B surfaces yet. And it is still *sui generis*, not only for its spectacular sonics, scarcely faded and now slightly sweeter, but also for its interpretation and execution. (Yet I still long for a comparable reissue of RCA's 1954 pioneering stereo version.)

The reverse combination, ferric tape and digital recording, characterizes a badly needed up-to-date recording of Strauss's glowing Duett-Concertino and Honegger's once popular *Concerto da camera* (Nonesuch D1 79018, \$11.98). The Los Angeles Chamber Symphony brought these works to LP way back in 1950 under Harold Byrns, and here Gerard Schwarz leads the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. CBS Master-sound offers both digitalism and superchrome for a Ravel *Shéhérazade* sumptuously sung by Frederica von Stade and accompanied by Seiji Ozawa and the Bostonians. But in Ravel's Hebraic and Greek song settings, these performers lack the ideal folk earthiness (HMT 36665, price at dealer's option).

The debut musiccassette releases by AAG Music (200 Varick St., New York, N.Y. 10014) feature folk and pop as well as classical music, all in real-time duplications on superchrome tape (and available in Dolby C as well as Dolby B), boxed with notes. But so far I've heard only two Titanic programs recorded analogically: the invaluable 1976 batch of Haydn piano trios (H.XV: 19, 27, 29) in fascinating performances by the Amadé Trio on period instruments (A 001, \$18) and the 1980 Bach *Goldberg* Variations in harpsichordist John Gibbons' realistically clattering, rather impersonal performance, with all repeats ob-

served literally (AX 01, double-play, \$25).

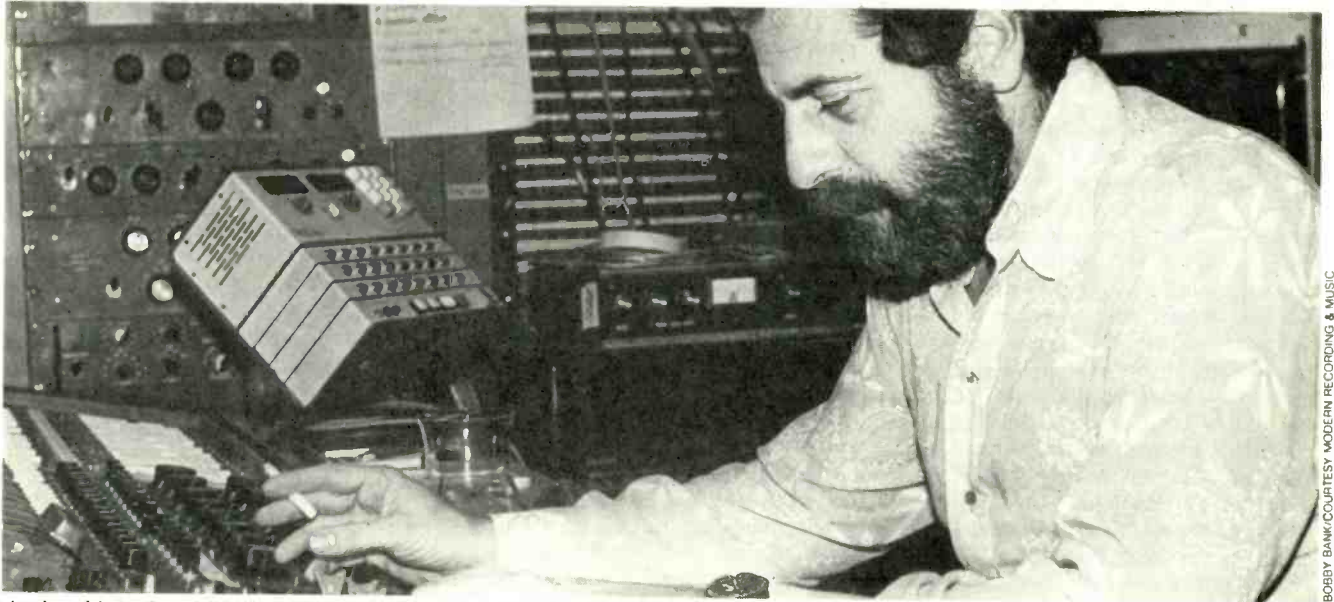
The new Euroclass cassette line also features real-time superchrome duplications (and a choice of Dolby B or C encodings) in its Desmar Sound Research Series limited editions (\$17.98 each, plus \$1.50 for shipping, from Euroclass Record Distributors, Ltd., 155 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10013). The deluxe reissues are the famous 1976 "Stokowski String Sound" program of Dvořák, Purcell, and Vaughan Williams (SRB 5011), and the 1977 recital of works by Debussy, Honegger, Poulenc, and Saint-Saëns that was so instrumental in establishing clarinetist Richard Stoltzman's fame (SRB 5014). There are also some brand-new Schubert recordings by pianist Richard Goode, which will be treated in a separate review next month.

. . . **And budget-priced.** Coming belatedly to the CBS "Great Performances" reissues (price at dealer's option), I'll pass over innumerable Bernstein best-sellers in favor of memorable Szell/Cleveland masterpieces: the piquantly idiomatic 1963 Czech program featuring Smetana's "Moldau" and Dvořák's *Carnival Overture* (MYT 36716) and the resplendently dramatic 1969 Wagner *Ring* showpiece excerpts (MYT 36715—both still mightily impressive sonically as well as musically). But the once immensely popular 1960 Ormandy/Philadelphia recording of Orff's *Carmina burana* (MYT 37217) leaves me as unreconciled as ever to its excessive mannerisms.

I still find inexhaustible delights in three Angel Red Line reissues (\$6.49 each): Sir Thomas Beecham's 1958 performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade, hors de concours* and recorded in true stereo (4RL 32027); the distinctive Alan Civil readings of the Mozart horn concertos, with Otto Klemperer conducting, c. 1962 (4 RL 32028); and the nineteen Chopin waltzes by pianist Agustin Anievas (4RL 42006). Welcome, too, is a belated taping of the 1974 Tortelier/Kemppe performance of Strauss's *Don Quixote* (Seraphim 4XG 60363, \$5.98), even without the *Rosenkavalier* Waltzes that fill out the disc.

Current Philips/B-C reels feature an even more impressive, more convenient double-play edition of Marriner's superb Haydn *Creation*, hailed last December in its three-cassette edition (S 6769 047, \$22.95; Barclay-Crocker, 11 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10004). **HF**

BACKBEAT



BOBBY BANK/COURTESY, MODERN RECORDING & MUSIC

At the old A&R studios in 1977: "We had to be able to do anything and everything—fast!"

The Golden Ears of Phil Ramone

The story behind the music industry's most revered producer, engineer, innovator, and educator.

by Crispin Cioe

A MANTLE LINED WITH GRAMMY awards for producing everything from the original Broadway cast album of *Promises, Promises* to Billy Joel's million-selling "52nd Street." A client roster that ranges from Dionne Warwick to Paul Simon, from Joel to Barbra Streisand and Paul McCartney. There's no question that, as a producer/engineer, Phil Ramone's reputation is as solid as they come in the entertainment business. But among musicians, that reputation is based on far more than a stunning track record. As Joel himself has said, "All these great musicians love Phil. He can pick up the phone and get anybody to come down to the studio. He doesn't come off like, 'I'm the producer and we're going to do it my way.' He's willing to let anything happen in that studio."

The setting for our interview was the control room at New York's Soundmixers studio, where Ramone was mixing the live

recording of last summer's Simon and Garfunkel reunion concert in Central Park. On the other side of the glass sat Joel at the piano. As our talk progressed, Simon showed up and joined Joel in the studio, at first listening and then occasionally singing along. At one point, Paul came into the control room and told Phil, "We might try writing something—it felt great working together just then. . . ." When I had bumped into Joel earlier, he told me he was there "to play some new tunes for Phil." Clearly, these two highly successful singer/songwriters valued Ramone's input a great deal.

"Phil Ramone was a great innovator in the '60s and '70s," says one New York-based engineer, "as well as a total taskmaster in training young kids to become great future engineers. And yet, despite all his overwhelming technical and musical knowledge, he can still just listen and let his

instincts take over." Those instincts no doubt come from a very early start as a musician. Ramone began violin lessons at the age of three and was performing as a soloist by age seven. Though he eventually went on to become a Gershwin scholar at Juilliard, by the time he was in high school he had developed an interest in electronic sounds and, by extension, recordings. When he was a teenager, he landed his first job as a combination gofer, janitor, and assistant at a now defunct demo studio on 53rd Street. Several years later, in 1960, he and partner Jack Arnold opened A&R Recording on 48th Street in Manhattan. They have since moved the studio to a much larger location on Seventh Avenue (formerly CBS Records' Studio A), and A&R is now among the country's largest and busiest recording facilities.

Backbeat: After all those years of intense

formal training, what made you drift away from being a serious musician?

Ramone: I just began to feel that music schools are a little snobbish, and I was interested in experimenting with other kinds of music than just classical. I was especially drawn to jazz and electronic music; I even worked on a way to electrify my violin. Also, school moved too slowly for me. I was impatient—I thought if I didn't have a lot of things together by the time I was twenty-one, I was never going to make it. I had some ridiculous goals, in retrospect.

Backbeat: What was the old A&R Recording like?

Ramone: When we started the studio, that block on 48th Street between Sixth Avenue and Broadway had a very historical aura to it. A&R was above Manny's music store, which is still there, and the nearby bars and restaurants were constant meeting places and hangouts for musicians, famous and otherwise. Because of the union rules at the time, the major record companies rarely used anyone other than their own staff engineers. So we relied on independent labels and artists for most of our work. We had to be able to do anything and everything—fast!

I didn't have the kind of technical background a lot of engineers did, so it was really the players who helped me develop my engineering chops and a good reputation. I remember we used to let Skitch Henderson, Doc Severinson, and the old *Tonight Show* band come in and rehearse their charts for free while I played around with different recording methods.

Backbeat: How did you arrive at the studio's design?

Ramone: We constantly experimented with the room itself, based on what musicians told us. After a while, the guys in the band started to say, "It sounds too dead in here," so we added wood panels in the corners and experimented with splays. After midnight and on weekends we'd do experimental dates where we'd turn the studio room around. A musician might have told us during the day, "Why not try putting the guitar amp over here and this mike sixteen feet away and blow the amp full out? You'll get a great stage sound." So we'd try it that night, and if it worked, we'd be using it on a session the next day. Eventually the room just started to take off, thanks to our experiments and everyone's feedback.

Backbeat: You're credited with having made all sorts of innovations in the '60s that are still in use today.

Ramone: Well, most of them were born out of necessity. Budgets weren't like they are now, and some of the old records we engineered sound good because we *had* to learn how to deal with leakage and to control echo effectively. For instance, the old studio wasn't really a big room—it had twelve-foot ceilings—so I used to do things like leave the string mikes open to get a

The fact is, studio players aren't necessarily right for every project.

delayed sound. I also experimented constantly with electronically produced echo, slowing down and speeding up tape for different phasing effects, or using more than one echo chamber when everybody else was using just one. One effect I used quite a bit—on many of the Bacharach sessions with Dionne Warwick and several Leslie Gore dates—was achieved by creating a delay between the tape machine heads before the sound entered the echo chambers. I had heard something like this on a French comedy album from the '50s, but it hadn't been done here commercially, to my knowledge.

Today I use all kinds of echo freely, but I maintain strict control over it. I've also been working very closely with the people who make the Lexicon transistorized delay units. We have on paper and in the computers the exact sounds we created with the old tube-driven EMT echo chambers at A&R. There was a specific style involved with tuning those old chambers—we used to lock them up after sessions so no one could change the settings.

Backbeat: Many of the engineers who apprenticed under you at A&R have gone on to distinguished careers. What kinds of things did you teach them? I can think of one in particular who says you were quite the taskmaster.

Ramone: I was tough on engineers, but I was tough on me, too. The first rule was that there was never to be an attitude of emergency in the studio; it should never look like there's a problem. People who worked for me had to be well prepared, because the studio experience is like going into an operating room.

I demanded that engineers be able to edit tape excellently. Standards of equipment care were stringent. A Neumann U-47 microphone not only has to be handled safely—foam rubber on the boom stand, etc.—but it has to be covered at night rather than boxed, since the more you untangle and disconnect the mike, the more wear and tear on the parts.

A mistake in level of 1 dB on a tape was not acceptable to me, even though the generally accepted tolerance is within 2 dB. If I didn't hear exactly the high end coming back on the tape that I was putting in, then I was on somebody's case to find out why. Of course, some of them never survived. But I never asked them to do anything that I didn't do. If their job was to do a rhythm-section setup, then they just had to do it

better than anyone else, that's all.

Backbeat: When you were working strictly as an engineer/studio owner, as opposed to a producer, how involved did you get with the music and the musicians?

Ramone: Well, I learned early on that the ability to communicate and get along with players was an absolute essential. Believe me, if a drummer didn't want to be your friend on one of those big-band live dates in the '60s, the session was finished. If he had it in for the engineer, he could just ride on the cymbals and wipe out all the strings; in those days, you couldn't record the rhythm section and then overdub the strings separately—it just wasn't done.

Rapport with musicians was—is—crucial, and we worked hard to establish it. I remember once we did a live album date for Diahann Carroll and her big band on Atlantic. In preparation we built what was really the first good-looking vocal booth that had some real sound in it. I designed it for her and later expanded it to accommodate groups of backup vocalists—they hated getting stuck in a hole where they couldn't see the lead singer. . . . I guess I've just always been sensitive to what players have to go through in order to hear and play comfortably.

In retrospect, I don't think a lot of engineers in those days had the fun I did, because they got too inside themselves. They had the attitude of, "I have isolation and I have control and I can redo this any way I want." What I did was to seek out new experiences in remote recording and unusual musical situations, to broaden my scope. I also rode a motorbike a lot in those days. In a sense, the thrill and danger I encountered gave me the feeling and knowledge that I could eventually be a producer.

In 1964, Ramone became the first independent engineer to win a Grammy award for engineering excellence on the classic "Getz/Gilberto" LP and its single *Girl from Ipanema*. It was also around this time that he served as special consultant to the White House, supervising sound production for various galas and special concerts during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. In addition to originating the sound-recording curriculum at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, he served as sound consultant for several Broadway productions, including *Hair* and *The Magic Show*. But as the engineering credits continued to roll in, bringing such clients to A&R as Bacharach, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, and Paul McCartney (Ramone engineered a single from his first solo LP), his desire to be a producer only increased.

Backbeat: How did your experiences as an engineer prepare you for production work?

Ramone: First of all, throughout my career as an engineer I did everything. I never



The winning team celebrates the completion of "The Stranger" sessions (clockwise from upper left): Phil Ramone, drummer Liberty DeVito, Billy Joel, keyboardist Richie Cannata, and bassist Doug Stegmeyer.

expected to stay behind the board—I got out into the studio all the time, and I tried to be very receptive to producers. I learned a lot from Roy Halee [who produced Simon and Garfunkel] and George Martin [the Beatles], particularly his work on "Sgt. Pepper."

Working with people like Bacharach, I began to learn how songwriters communicate and how to translate their ideas into reality. I found that they talked in a hieroglyphic I could easily understand, so things went smoothly. Leiber and Stoller had what I call "editorial minds" in the studio; they'd think and edit as they recorded, figuring out where to take a song before it was done, knowing which eight bars were great, which to recut, and so on.

Backbeat: Was it a fairly easy transition into production work?

Ramone: Not at all—it was actually quite difficult. Record companies would say, "Well this producer already has a great relationship with that up-and-coming artist, and you're just an engineer . . ." even though I too had good relationships with plenty of up-and-coming artists.

In a way, though, I had some of my own reservations about producing. I was part owner of a studio, and back then I just didn't feel it would have been ethical to produce as well. Business values were different—not better—just different and a little crazy, like everything else in those days. I mean, I had a crewcut and wore a tie every day, so what can I tell you?

But gradually I began to find projects to produce. I went to England to work on the soundtrack of *Midnight Cowboy* with composer John Barry, and he asked me to produce some of the tracks. And I produced some jazz albums, including one with Thad Jones and Mel Lewis.

Backbeat: How did you first hook up with Paul Simon?

Ramone: He asked me to produce one cut on his first solo LP, "There Goes Rhymin' Simon"; Roy Halee was doing the rest of the record. When Halee was unavailable to produce the follow-up, "Still Crazy after All These Years" [1974], Paul asked me to join him as coproducer. He had done some very fine rhythm sessions for "Rhymin' Simon" in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, but he was open to new ideas and to other approaches as well. I brought in a bunch of players I'd originally met through my friend Bob James, musicians who had worked a lot on jazz and funk dates for Creed Taylor's CTI label. At that time, in the early '70s, players like drummer Steve Gadd weren't well-known. Pianist Richard Tee was known in certain r&b circles, from his work with Aretha Franklin. But along with me as a producer, that whole group of musicians was more like the second-line studio scene—we had our own, more elusive sounds.

Paul has a great respect for players, so I began to put him in situations where he could react to their modern r&b and pop playing over a period of time. The musical rapport that resulted between Paul and Richard Tee [who was featured in Simon's film, *One Trick Pony*] isn't really based on any formal musical or studio thing; it was just a chemistry that worked. On the other hand, sometimes I've brought in highly regarded, wonderful-sounding players who were, for one reason or another, totally in awe of Paul, and they couldn't play the way I expected them to.

Backbeat: Studio players who know you say that putting unexpected combinations of musicians together and getting the best out of them is one of your fortes.

Ramone: I guess I've always had a deep appreciation of talent and I've always found it interesting to crisscross a lot of good musicians on sessions. That's just become my approach. At a certain level, the mutual respect is so high that it's not an all-star kind of thing—it's more like a good mix of people at a party. That's why, for instance, I used alto-sax jazz great Phil Woods for the solo on Billy's *Just the Way You Are*, even though it was basically a rock and roll record. I was called in to help with Phoebe Snow's first album, a project that had already been started in California. What I did was to bring in people like percussionist Ralph MacDonald to play with musicians Phoebe knew and had worked with. Again, I wanted to create a mixture, so I called Zoot Sims—whom I'd first met years before through Quincy Jones and Neal Hefti—for the tenor sax solo on *Poetry Man*.

Backbeat: You've been credited with turning Joel's career around. He had released four albums before you produced "The Stranger" and none of them, save "Piano Man," went anywhere. He says it's largely because you let him use his own band, as opposed to the studio players that other producers had insisted he use.

Ramone: I first met and heard Billy and the band in 1976, and what was there live was what caught me immediately. The band was spunky, they didn't have any fears about speaking up with their ideas and just playing hard; but they also knew what the focus was. I'd heard Billy's other records and didn't see or hear any relationship to what was really happening. The fact is, studio players aren't necessarily right for every project: a drummer who can't read music may have a better instinct for the music at hand. If a soloist takes three hours to get what I want musically, so what? It's okay by me. In these days of tight budgets, it just means that technically I've got to be more efficient to give myself more room in the right areas.

Backbeat: Had you worked with self-contained groups before?

Ramone: Yes—rather unsuccessfully, because I didn't have the ultimate control. I'd also made the mistake of working with all-star bands that would break up over artistic differences or money before the record had ever been released. I had paid my dues with superstar groups, too: I engineered for Chicago with Jim Guercio, and then years later I produced the group. In all those experiences, I learned that to some extent you have to be a dictator—not a role I enjoy, by the way—so you don't have eight people running around with eight different ideas about what to do. There just has to be someone to turn to for a focus.

Backbeat: How would you describe your basic production approach?

Ramone: Well, in terms of ensemble rhythm-section playing, one of my big functions is to keep the ball rolling, to spot the studio-born "accidents" that sound

Reviews



Chubby Checker: somebody found the fountain of youth

Chubby Checker:
The Change Has Come
 Evan Pace, producer. MCA 5291

Chubby Checker must have stumbled across the same fountain of youth that fellow Sixties rockers Gary U.S. Bonds and Del Shannon have been sipping from of late. Like his hit-happy colleagues of yesteryear, Checker has made a "comeback" album charged with more fire and fervor than most contemporary outfits could ever come up with. Twenty-two years after *The Twist* set a nation of teenagers to gyrating and shimmying as if there was no tomorrow, Checker's voice booms with easy authority. "The Change Has Come" shines like the polished chrome on a brand new automobile.

He kicks things off with Joe Russo's *Running*, a glorious Springsteen ripoff if ever there was one. At one point, after a wailing Clarence Clemons-like sax solo,

Chubby sings: "I'm running, twisting, and turning on backstreets/Haunting the bars where we would meet/The songs keep calling her name." If *Running* isn't a hit, then truly there is no justice in this world. Producer Evan Pace proves he's no slouch either, particularly when it comes to songwriting: His surging *Harder Than Diamond, I've Got Love (That's Hard to Find)*, and the reggae-shaded ballad *Your Love* are anything but filler, especially in Checker's vigorous, roiling clutches.

Taking another cue from Bonds and Shannon, Chubby harks back to the British invasion and grabs the Rolling Stones' *Under My Thumb*, spitting out Jagger and Richards' nasty lyrics over some spry, guitar-infused rhythms. He closes this auspicious ten-track collection with *T-82*, a late-model revamp of his classic 1960 smash. Almost a quarter of a century later, *The Twist* doesn't sound stale in the slightest, nor does its singer. —STEVEN X. REA

Jessi Colter: Ridin' Shotgun

Randy Scruggs & Waylon Jennings, producers. Capitol ST 12185

Sultry yet homey, rebellious yet conservative, Jessi Colter gives off such ambivalent signals that it's no wonder she hasn't been able to gain a firm foothold in country music. She's an "outlaw" only by association, her music is pleasant but uncommanding, and in six albums, no strong personality or point of view has emerged to set her apart from the pack. Newcomers like Rosanne Cash and Lacy J. Dalton have outflanked her on country's left, the right is sewn up by the established country queens, and Colter keeps rolling down the middle, every once in a while writing a perceptive song such as *What's Happened to Blue Eyes*.

Last year's duet album with husband Waylon Jennings, "Leather and Lace," contained a handful of good Colter originals and some performances that found her in appealingly toughened-up territory. So the expectations for her new solo LP, "Ridin' Shotgun," were higher than usual. But it's a wobbly affair. There's some warmth on the record, and sincerity, but nothing to grab you by the belt loops. Producers Jennings and Randy Scruggs show good intentions in sticking to basic tracks and doing without much instrumental embellishment. In practice, however, Colter's is one of those voices that needs cushioning. It falters at odd moments, and she really can't punch out on the songs that require vocal assertiveness.

The more straightforward the sentiments and the tunes, the more believable she sounds. Scruggs's *Nobody Else like You* and her own *Ain't Makin' No Headlines (Here Without You)* are attractive ballads; on the single *Holdin' On*, she projects a catch-in-the-throat sexiness reminiscent of Maria Muldaur. But most of "Ridin' Shotgun" is either a strain on her range (both versions of the title song and Jennings' *Shine*) or a strain on the listener's tolerance for treacle. Colter's daughter Jennifer (whose father is twangy guitarist Duane Eddy) sings colead on a song named after her; she tells mommy and daddy, as she enters the big, bad world, that she's gonna be fine. *Wings of My Victory* and *A Fallen Star*, two outside compositions, are filled with inspirational and romantic banalities, respectively, and all you need to know about *Hard Times* and *Sno-Cone* is that *Hard Times* and *Sno-Cone* are the names of the song's characters. Notions that dopey are rare these days, even in country music. Thank goodness. —MITCHELL COHEN



BILLY MITCHELL

Colter: rolling down the middle

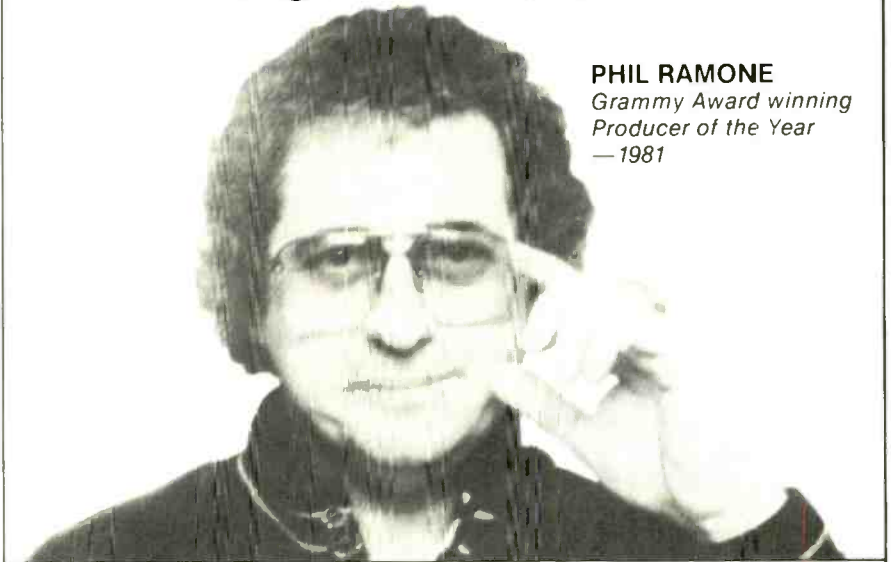
Ry Cooder: The Border
(Music from the Original
Motion Picture Soundtrack)
Ry Cooder, producer
MCA/Backstreet BSR 6105

The storyline of Tony Richardson's first major film in years is built around the clash between American and Mexican cultures along the southwestern border. As such, it provides Ry Cooder with a scoring challenge even more suited to his eclectic array of styles than "The Long Riders." The stunning soundtrack he and his associates produced last year. Root styles both American (Texas swing, blues-drenched rock, and down-home country) and Latin (Norteño conjunto stylings and Spanish guitar fantasies) are represented independently and as subtle hybrids that underline the interaction of the two cultures.

Cooder functions here principally as arranger, producer, writer, and instrumentalist. He minimizes his own singing to focus on a provocative cast of vocalists that includes Freddy Fender, Sam ("The Sham!") Samudio, John Hiatt, Jim Dickinson, and Brenda Patterson. Among them, they cover a rich spectrum of moods and genres. Fender's melancholy vocal on the evocative *Across the Borderline* sums up the film's themes with heartbreaking economy, while Hiatt's two rock performances, *Too Late* and *Skin Game*, take full advantage of the singer's vivid, menacing style. *Skin Game* is particularly riveting, a meeting ground between Cooder's spicy instrumental portrait of the modern American barrio and Hiatt's sneering lyrics. Cooder's stinging electric bottleneck guitar solos give the track a sense of barely controlled tension that points up the threat of violence explicit in the lyrics.

Samudio shelves his '60s rasp to turn in a surprisingly traditional Spanish rendition of *No Quiero*, a lambent ballad; Dick-

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BACKBEAT *Reviews*

inson adds a raucous country swing vocal to *Texas Bop*; and Patterson provides a sobering, country-as-cornbread essay on infidelity in *Building Fires*, an older ballad by Dickinson, Dan Penn, and John Christopher. Tying these vocal performances together are some atmospheric instrumentals that reach their luminous peak on *Maria* and *Nino*, both dominated by Cooder's delicate acoustic guitar work.

Overall, "The Border" is a textbook example of how contemporary musical techniques can mate with cinematic ones for more than just merchandising purposes. The album also further consolidates Cooder's rising star as a major force in film scoring.

—SAM SUTHERLAND

Michael Franks: Objects of Desire
Michael Colina & Ray Bardani, producers. Warner Bros. BSK 3648

Michael Franks is a classic pop songwriter in jazz mufti, his love of hip argot and sneaky harmonic turns only embellishing his dedication to the verse-chorus-bridge framework, not masking it. His alternately wry and wistful point of view and preference for affable if harried characterizations sound more and more like Cole Porter updated for the '80s: Underneath the slick playing and the coy references to trends of the day, Franks is still an unreconstructed romantic.

It's that romantic slant that both enlivens and restricts Franks's range as writer. At his best, he can etch dryly funny portraits of humankind's oldest conflict as it undergoes cultural reappraisal. Sexual role reversal (*Ladies' Night*, which both celebrates and critiques liberated singles life), fear of commitment (*No-Deposit Love*), and the scary bottom line of a single sexual standard (*Jealousy*) yield deftly drawn vignettes.

There's still a traditionalist at work, though, which explains his confident use of vintage pop and swing. Yet sometimes his reverence for the older influences creaks suspiciously. On *Laughing Gas*, his use of '50s-style phrasing and melody is undone by a self-conscious lyric that smacks of affectation: "How square that our age is atomic/It's kind of tragicomic too." Square indeed.

Luckily, producers Michael Colina and Ray Bardani apply the same shrewd editorial sense they brought to David Sanborn's "Voyeur" last year. For that alto sax stylist, they sidestepped the no-win dichotomy of jazz vs. fusion by rightly framing Sanborn as an r&b instrumentalist, the role that provides a common denominator for all his work as both sideman and leader.

Likewise, Franks's producers mingle a number of strong jazz players with singers and instrumentalists more immediately identified with pop and pare arrangements to a lean but lush rhythmic interplay. Solos

are studied rather than free-blown, which fits Franks's careful couplets well. The net effect is rich but spacious, allowing the singer's breathy vocal style and laconic diction to float unimpeded over the charts.

—SAM SUTHERLAND

Bonnie Raitt: Green Light
Rob Fraboni, producer
Warner Bros. BSK 3630

On "Green Light," Bonnie Raitt breaks from her usual stylistic variety to focus on one of its components, flat-out rock & roll. Her decision proves exhilarating, for Raitt is a potent guitarist and consistently powerful singer: The brash, rough-edged punch she has sometimes offset, even eclipsed, through her ballads can cut steel in the right circumstances.

These circumstances are quite right. In lieu of studio heavies or her earlier bands' slightly lighter-handed confederates, Raitt's partners on "Green Light"—dubbed the Bump band—strike like a SWAT team. With the singer herself dominating on slide guitar, and guitarist Johnny Lee Schell matching her fire every step of the way, she is complemented by a spare but powerful keyboard specialist (Ian McLagan, no less—the harmonic cornerstone of the old Faces) and a guerrilla rhythm section. Drummer Ricky Fataar (Flame, Beach Boys) and bassist Ray Ohara provide a classic bottom that couples with the guitarists' penchant for dirty rhythm chords and snaky slide work, inviting direct comparison with the Stones.

The program sidesteps ballads almost entirely, with the exception of the smoky, sinewy *Let's Keep It Between Us*, a recent Bob Dylan song. The performance is clipped and caustic yet closer to Raitt's earlier recordings than this album's more immediately arresting tracks.

The peaks come when Bonnie and the Bump band move into higher gears. Side 2 is bracketed by a pair of songs from NRBQ—a first-rate East Coast band as seasoned as it is underrated—that offer Raitt a chance to stretch her vocal style. Squeezing out the sultry vibrato she usually applies, the singer shifts to a smooth, sidelong attack at once classic in its blues feel and downright New Wave in its reserve. Elsewhere she tackles the rowdy rock/reggae of Eddy Grant's *Baby Come Back*, rewires the horn/guitar exchanges on a sassy r&b workout (Jerry Williams' *Talk to Me*), and confidently crisscrosses the rock/blues frontier on several originals written with or by her band members.

The high point, though, is the set's opener and first single, Fred Marrone's *Keep This Heart in Mind*. Buoyed by a majestic midtempo rhythm arrangement, Raitt is at her sweet but salty best reminding a departing lover that if his freedom proves more bitter than anticipated, she'll still be (Continued on page 75)

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SpinOffs

In-brief reviews of newly released debut recordings by Steven X. Rea

New Acts

Altered Images: Happy Birthday
Steve Severin & Martin Rushent, producers. Portrait FR 37738

Altered Images sounds like a bunch of loopy seven-year-olds on a psychedelic binge. With chirpy singer Clare at the helm (the band uses first names only), this Scottish quintet combines a wispy prettiness with a kind of surly charm. The sing-songy *Love and Kisses* and *Real Toys* (an ode to kinky sex) feature Clare's little-girl voice bobbing up and down over a crisp, pliant rock beat. The standout number is the title track, a Top-10 hit in the U.K. and the sole selection (repeated three times) produced by Martin Rushent.

The Embarrassment EP
Michael McGee & the Embarrassment, producers
Cynyky Records (P.O. Box 293, Wichita, Kan. 67201)

Here's some quirky, bent music courtesy of a quirky, bent quartet from Wichita, Kansas. The Embarrassment's five-song, homemade twelve-inch 45 has a simpleton's allure: shoe-box drums, screechy sax runs, John Nichols' off-key, deadpan vocals. Tracks such as *Celebrity Art Party* and *Elizabeth Montgomery's Face* rock with smart—and smart-alecky—charm.

The Human League: Dare
Martin Rushent & the Human League, producers
A&M SP 6-4892

If Abba hailed from English art-school circles, it would be dishing out stuff like the Human League's. All the big, bold Abbaesque elements are here: swirling female backup vocals, electronic flute and recorder-like riffs, snappy, hand-clapping percussion. But thanks to Philip Oakey's austere, hiccuppy crooning, the overall effect is more somber than cheery, despite such uplifting titles as *Open Your Heart* and *Things That Dreams Are Made Of*.

Johnny and the Distractions: Let It Rock
David Kerstenbaum, producer
A&M SP 6-4884

This Portland, Oregon, bar band delivers the kind of blues-based, basic rock one



The Waitresses: witty, liberated pop

would expect from a Portland, Oregon, bar band, except in this case there's also some skill and integrity involved. As frontman and songwriter Johnny Koonce belts out rockers like *In the Street* and *Shoulder of the Road*, the Distractions thrash away, somehow managing to avoid the macho ranting and raving that usually characterizes the genre.

Maxus
Michael Omartian, producer
Warner Bros. BSK 3634

Three Dog Night's Jay Gruska, the captain of this ship, navigates Maxus through lumbering, predictable Doobie Bros.-meet-Exile waters. From the opening track, *The Higher You Rise* (sporting one of many sprightly Mike McDonald piano ripoffs), to the turgid closing notes of *Where Were You*, there's not a glimmer of originality on any of the cowbell-laden tracks.

Aldo Nova
Aldo Nova, producer
Portrait ARR 37498

Canadian heavy-metal man Aldo Nova is all wrapped up in romance, singing tunes like *Hot Love*, *Heart to Heart*, and *Fantasy*. Credited here as songwriter, singer, guitarist, keyboardist, producer, and engineer, Nova's debut is pretty much a one-man show. It's also pretty standard powerhouse fare, though the big voice gets "sensitive" on *Can't Stop Lovin' You*, as he pours his heart out to some mythical rock princess.

Soft Cell: Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret
Mike Thorne, producer
Sire SRK 3647

As the album title suggests, this two-man combo's debut is imbued with the glittery, neon ambiance of some dark, trendy European nightclub. Like most things coming from England nowadays, it's techno-pop with a New Romantic twist. With the exception of the bleating, bicycle-horn rhythms of *Tainted Love*, "Non-Stop" is all the same: mildly effete, gloomily doomy, and rife with weird allusions to freak-show sexuality.

The Waitresses: Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful?
Kurt Munkacsy & Chris Butler, producers. Ze/Polydor PD 1-6346

Chris Butler, late of Akron's Tin Huey, is the brains behind the Waitresses' brand of witty, liberated modern pop. *I Know What Boys Like*, with its insistent, cackling melody is already something of a left-field hit. On the LP's real gem, *No Guilt*, lead singer Patty Donahue strikes an independent pose in the face of a thoroughly neurotic, soured love affair. Butler's female point-of-view lyrics ring true, as do the catchy rhythms of this fun six-piece band.

Wrabit
Paul Gross, producer. MCA 5268

Big rock sextet Wrabit makes a lot of noise: Four of its members sing as two guitars grind away and keyboards, bass, and drums churn up a fitful frenzy of full-blast rock & roll. Lead vocalist Lou Nadeau is the principal composer, covering such unusual themes as the mysteries of love (*Tell Me What to Do*), the inevitability of change (*Pushin' On*), and you guessed it, rock music (*Don't Say Goodnite to Rock & Roll*).

Yates Brothers and Sisters: Electricity
Benjamin F. Wright, Jr., producer
MCA 5265

Vibrant r&b from a northern California group of siblings, "Electricity" is chock-full of the kind of ebullient dance music that goes straight to the airwaves. Sisters Regina and Tammy Combs take their singing chores to heart as a busy horde of sessioners flesh out the three brothers' plucky, lightweight Jacksons-style tunes.

(Continued from page 72)

there. What sounds humble and clichéd on paper proves contemporary in its lyric sense and nearly jubilant in its musical bravura.

Producer Rob Fraboni merits added credit for his apparent role as catalyst to this band's formation and its bull's-eye representation on vinyl. A link to both Fataar and McLagen, Fraboni is also the probable culprit behind Richard Manuel's soulful presence as vocal foil on *River of Tears*, the set's most striking resemblance to vintage Stones.

One warning to Raitt fans who align her more with singing and songwriting contemporaries than the blues models audible in her earliest LPs: Fraboni treats her as a band member, not the star of the day, and her vocals thus meet the firepower of the band head-on. That shift in perspective may be unsettling, but it ultimately and easily justifies itself. —SAM SUTHERLAND

Jazz

Johnny Hodges All-Stars: Caravan
Ed Michel, producer
Prestige P 24103

Though he gets top billing on this two-disc set, alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges appears on only one album, leading various small groups of Ellington sidemen (with the exception of trombonist Wilbur de Paris). All of his sides were cut in 1947, and four of them were originally released on the obscure Sunrise label. The remainder of the collection came out on the slightly less obscure Mercer label.

The second disc features Ellington groups led by Billy Strayhorn, with three of the cuts carrying the Duke's name as leader. It was recorded in 1950-51, when Hodges had left the Ellington band for a short-lived fling with a group of his own.

This is the first time these relatively unknown recordings have been brought together in a widely distributed package. On the first disc, Hodges' romantic style is particularly provocative on *Frisky*, *Far Away Blues*, *Longhorn Blues*, *A Little Taste*, and such better known tunes as *A Flower Is a Lovesome Thing* and *Lotus Blossom*. Though Hodges is the primary focus, there are also some crisp, neatly placed trumpet passages by Taft Jordan and a few smoothly soaring appearances by Lawrence Brown on trombone. The second disc features a whole new school of Ellingtonians. Willie Smith replaces Hodges on alto with a style that falls between the latter's rich, ripe sound and Benny Carter's lean purity of tone; Louis Bellson gives the band firm, supple guidance on drums; Paul Gonsalves builds long, squirming saxophone lines; Juan Tizol, having returned from a period with Harry James, lends his

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distinctively haunting, distant sound on valve trombone; Cat Anderson plays tightly muted, growling trumpet passages rather than his customary screaming notes. Some of the best moments revolve around Tizol, who provides a calm core over which the others cry, wail, and stomp. This is particularly true on a little known Ellington piece called *She*. "Caravan" is quality Ellingtonia, marred only by a tubby recording of a 1951 septet that features trombonists Tizol, Quentin Jackson, and Britt Woodman.

—JOHN S. WILSON

Chaka Khan, Freddie Hubbard, Joe Henderson, Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke, Lenny White: *Echoes of an Era*
Lenny White, producer
Elektra E 1-60021

While it's hard to imagine any versions of *Them There Eyes* and *All of Me* matching those recorded more than forty years ago by Billie Holiday, the interpretations of Chaka Khan and this quintet fall so short that the whole project seems more a folly than a tribute. From time to time "Echoes of an Era" comes closer to its aspirations, but the few moments of improvisatory inspiration don't add up to very much. On past solo efforts apart from Rufus, especially those under Arif Mardin's direction, Khan has displayed an ability to stretch beyond r&b basics. Here, she sounds rudderless, incapable of navigating the theatrics of Gershwin's *I Love You Porgy*, the fractured musical grammar of Thelonius Monk's *I Mean You*, or the arabesques of Billy Strayhorn's *Take the A Train*.

Given the proven adaptability of these musicians, and the hollow contexts they've been heard in lately, it should have been a pleasure to find them soloing on solid tunes without synthesizers or funk-fusion trappings. This is a fine acoustic jazz group: The muted tones of Freddie Hubbard's trumpet bring to mind the Miles Davis of the early '60s. Stanley Clarke is an unfailingly resourceful bassist, and Chick Corea is a fluid, thoughtful pianist. But it just doesn't click, and it's not only because Khan is running in fast company; whoever chose the material also badly misjudged the strengths of the players. There are any number of harder-edged, less feathery songs from the same period that would have been better suited to Khan and company than Loesser and Lane's *I Hear Music*. Producer/drummer Lenny White understands the technical, solo-to-solo-to-solo elements of jazz vocal accompaniment, yet he can't recapture the feeling.

Typical of the album's mistakes is *Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most*, a long duet for voice and piano. Khan and Corea don't even start off with a firm grip on the melody and the emotional theme; they roam all over the map, never connecting with the song or with each other. More



Marsalis: simply incredible

often than not, "Echoes of an Era" resembles a parody of smoky, small-combo-with-singer jazz sessions, with Khan going melismatic like a not-too-sophisticated vocalist and the band just noodling around. It aims for the intimacy and spontaneity of such records as Nat "King" Cole's "After Midnight" and Johnny Hartman's collaboration with John Coltrane, but at best these echoes are faint. Although preferable to a return to Return to Forever, these are sorely misguided musings on the forms of the past.

—MITCHELL COHEN

Wynton Marsalis
Herbie Hancock, producer
Columbia FC 37574

Wynton Marsalis is so good at the age of nineteen, so rich with the raw talent to become a major jazz trumpeter, that the worst that could happen to him would be to receive too much praise, too early. Shooting stars are not uncommon to jazz, nor is getting burned out too soon from high living and overnight success. And at any stage, signing with a major record company can yield potentially dangerous commercial pressures.

Fortunately, Marsalis seems to be very much in control of his own destiny. The son of Ellis Marsalis—a fine, but not very well-known New Orleans pianist—he is one of the growing number of young, classically trained black musicians who are turning back to jazz. Like those contemporaries, Marsalis' approach to jazz has been tempered by the relative comforts of a middle-class background, rather than by the more visceral energies of country blues and the sanctified church. He is a direct descendant of the sophisticated line that stretches through Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, and Miles Davis, as opposed to the more rural-based legacy of Louis Arm-

strong and Count Basie.

And it shows in his music. Control, precision, and a general sense of careful calculation dominate Marsalis' improvisations. On the Bricusse-Newley standard, *Who Can I Turn To?*, for example, his lean solo delicately limns the melody, extending a phrase here, delaying a line there, and stretching the tension to the point where a sudden burst of sixteenth notes is as welcome as a spring rain. I haven't heard this kind of improvisational control in a young player since the very early recordings of Thad Jones.

Marsalis' best solo is on the moody *Twilight*. Abandoning his conservatism, he takes more chances and displays an incipient ability to make very interesting harmonic choices. Worth noting, too, on this and several other pieces, is the work of saxophonist Branford Marsalis. A year older than Wynton, Branford is both a hotter and a more traditional player; I suspect he may have as much longterm stardom potential as his trumpet-playing brother. Of the remaining material, only Ron Carter's original *RJ* triggers much positive response. An unusually boppish line springs Marsalis' wonderfully open-throated, Harmon-muted solo, followed by an exuberantly jaunty soprano solo from Branford. What really makes the track work, however, is the crisp ensemble playing of Carter, Herbie Hancock, and drummer Tony Williams—an in-the-flesh revival of the great Miles Davis rhythm team of the mid-Sixties.

Less interesting are *Sister Cheryl*, a long-lined melody strung out over a vaguely Latin-sounding rhythm, and Herbie Hancock's *I'll Be There*. It could very well be that, at this stage, Marsalis will have difficulty sustaining his creative level for entire LPs. In this case, he frequently tends to fall back on his exceptional mechanical skills. Clearly his biggest problem—a problem most young players would be happy to have—is going to be avoiding the easy paths available to him because of his prodigious technique. When he develops a sensitivity to content that matches his technical prowess, he will begin to mature as an artist. It's something the jazz audience can anticipate with pleasure. —DON HECKMAN

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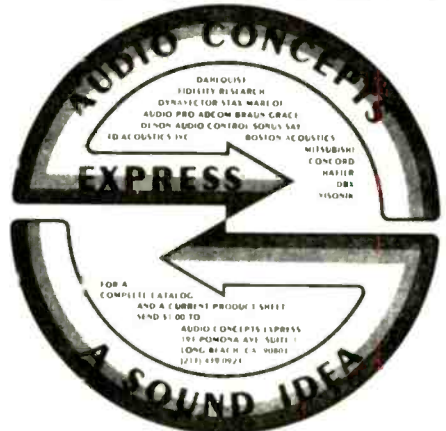
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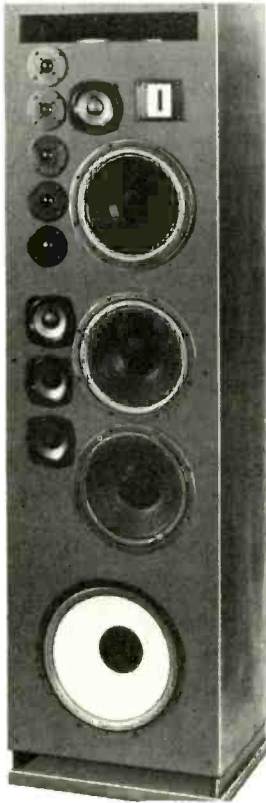
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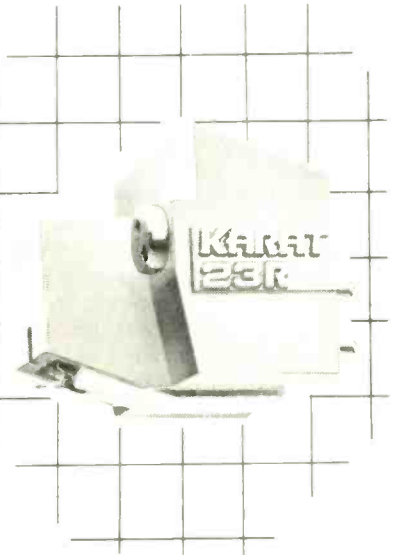
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MUSCOVITE PHOENIX

(Continued from page 51)

with the infinitely more satisfying substantiality of Taneyev.

Now, it would be overreaching to claim that any three new releases—even coming on top of the earlier three in SCHWANN—can constitute a true Taneyev revival, or perhaps even the foundation of a significant Taneyevian vogue. Much more is needed: reissues or adequate replacements of the prematurely withdrawn Angel choral program and ABC/MCA cantata/symphony coupling; American releases of the now nearly complete Melodiya series of string quartets and string trios; recordings (probably mostly firsts) of the quintets. First and Third Symphonies, and the great late cantata, *At the Reading of a Psalm*. A modern biography in English would be helpful; even more so would be an English translation of the voluminous (and surely inculcably fascinating) Taneyev/Tchaikovsky correspondence.

The present shameful neglect of Taneyev's music in American concert performances cries out for correction; yet even more widely influential would be more Taneyev broadcast festivals like the remarkable one recently heard up in my neck of the woods (the mid-Hudson-Valley/edge-of-the-Catskills region) via the relatively new but remarkably enterprising FM station, WDST, in Woodstock, New York. There, for a whole month, Leslie Gerber's

Concert Hall programs (three hours every weekday), included a Taneyev work selected from imported and out-of-print as well as current recordings and annotated by the foremost American Taneyev proponent, John D. Wiser.

That broadcast series and the present Pro Arte additions to the Taneyev discography are at the very least encouraging signs that Herrmann's nearly half-century-old prophecy, that "in time this most classic Russian master will receive his recognition," may at long, long last be coming true—and that the fabulous Muscovite Phoenix will indeed "rise from the ashes and come forth with new life." **HF**

TANEYEV: Quartet for Piano and Strings, in E, Op. 20.

Cantilena Chamber Players. [Judith Sherman, prod.] PRO ARTE PAD 107. \$12.98 (digital recording). Tape: PCD 107. \$12.98 (cassette).

TANEYEV: Suite de concert, Op. 28.

Christian Altenburger, violin; Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Yuri Ahronovitch, cond. [Wolf Erichson, prod.] PRO ARTE PAD 110. \$12.98 (digital recording). Tape: PCD 110. \$12.98 (cassette).

TANEYEV: Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, in D, Op. 22. A. TCHE-REPNIN: Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, in D, Op. 34.

Odeon Trio. PRO ARTE PAL 1052, \$9.98. Tape: PAC 1052. \$9.98 (cassette).

BACKBEAT REVIEWS

(Continued from page 76)

and jazz on his electronically amplified violin and naming his first American group Fusion.

Now, Urbaniak has chosen to go back to his acoustic origins—to get back, as he says, to playing jazz. This all-acoustic album, recorded at Sandy's Jazz Revival in Beverly, Massachusetts, is the debut of the new "old" Michal Urbaniak. Backed by Gene Bertoncini on guitar and Michael Moore on bass, Urbaniak concentrates on four standard ballads—*Just Friends*, *Body and Soul*, *Autumn Leaves*, and the bossa nova *Quiet Nights*. He colors *Just Friends* with some of Stephane Grappelli's gracefully melodic qualities. On *Body and Soul* he takes a more personal tack, sliding through long lines into what almost amounts to an Art Tatum piano effect with running, note-filled passages flowing and tumbling over themselves.

On the other two tunes he shifts to lyricism, a blown keyboard instrument. The sound he produces with it on *Autumn Leaves* is very close to that of his acoustic violin, but it also takes on a dark, warm tone that falls somewhere between alto and soprano saxophones. He uses its singing, melodic qualities to best advantage on *Quiet Nights*, as the guitar and bass provide a supple bossa-nova rhythm on which he can ride. (Bertoncini and Moore also have solos on all four selections.) The lyricism may not be worth devoting half a program to, but it does lend variety to the context.

—JOHN S. WILSON

Dick Wellstood: Live at Hanratty's
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North Hampton, N.H. 03862)

Over the last three decades, pianist Dick Wellstood has developed an approach that is a mixture of traditional jazz styles (specifically stride) and his own exploratory, whimsical, and witty personality. This two-disc solo collection was recorded at Hanratty's, the restaurant that has been his New York base for several years. It is the definitive 1981 Wellstood statement, a showcase for a stride piano technique that can currently be matched only by Ralph Sutton (another Hanratty's pianist).

Wellstood constantly finds fresh approaches to things that have long been taken for granted, and with his wry sense of humor teases the listener with sleight-of-hand phrases and passages. For instance, on what may be the first approach to Kurt Weill's memorable *Barbara Song* (from *Threepenny Opera*), he initially seems to skirt jazz interpretations but moves more and more strongly into the idiom. He develops a rocking piano solo from Louis Armstrong's classic cornet piece *Cornet Chop Suey*; *Jingle Bells* is a panorama of gentle lyricism, punched-up swing, and eventual-

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ly, stride; his version of Cole Porter's *So in Love* is a classic stride creation of his very own.

The ghost of Fats Waller bubbles and rollicks throughout: *I Wish I Were Twins*, *How Could I Be Blue*, *Runnin' Wild*, *My Shining Hour*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. He turns *A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody* into a slinky, boogie-based blues. In one of several medleys, he couples Cole Porter's *Looking at You* with Bessie Smith's *You've Been a Good Old Wagon* and makes it seem logical.

This is a joyful, jumping album. It is perhaps a little too "live" in that it includes a couple of pieces that drift aimlessly and a "warm-up medley" of little interest. The liner notes and credits are unusually sloppy: Two songs by Sidney Bechet are credited to "Brecht" and the mix-up in Dan Morgenstern's notes is bad enough to suggest that the type was dropped on the floor and reassembled at random. —JOHN S. WILSON

POWER AND PANACHE

(Continued from page 30)

S/N ratio is 76 dB in stereo FM. Onkyo's T-9060 (\$490) is also digitally tuned, with seven FM presets. There is also a choice of IF bandwidth and switchable high blend.

Yamaha's T-1060 AM/FM tuner (\$350) has a servo-lock tuning system to minimize distortion and noise and ten station presets for both AM and FM. Matching the distinctive black cosmetics of Yamaha's other flagship separates is the T-70 AM/FM tuner (\$370), which also has ten presets. Its ultimate S/N ratio is rated as 83 dB in stereo. Among the most impressive specs for SAE's very impressive T-101 AM/FM tuner is an adjacent-channel selectivity of 25 dB. (The best we've ever measured is only about half that number.) Other features of the \$650 unit are separate signal-strength and multipath indicators.

Sumo's \$460 Charlie (the Tuner?) is an FM-only unit offering six presets and a choice of IF bandwidth. Garrard's new electronics include two FM/AM tuners. And Amber's AM/FM stereo tuner, projected for May delivery with a price of \$400, is a quartz-lock digital frequency-synthesis design with seven presets on each band and a multipath indication option.

Receivers

With the exception of new top-of-the-line designs from Pioneer and Kenwood, most of the receivers premiered at the WCES are in the midpower class. Among the most powerful receivers now available, the Radio Shack Realistic STA-2300 pumps out 120 watts (20 3/4 dBW) per channel. Its tuner incorporates an automatic fine-tuning circuit for minimum noise and distortion. Pioneer's SX-8 (\$800) carries a rating of 100 watts (20 dBW) per channel and has a digital frequency-synthesis AM/FM tuner with eight presets for each band

plus scan, search and manual tuning. All of the SX-8's controls are electronic, mediated by a microprocessor that, among other things, enables you to store and retrieve two settings each for volume, tone control, loudness compensation, and muting.

Kenwood has extensively revamped its receiver line. At the top is the KR-1000 (\$1,250), a computerized receiver rated at 120 watts (20 3/4 dBW) per channel. With the exception of balance, mixing level, and volume preset, all operations are controlled by pushbuttons and pushpads. The KR-1000's Program Mode Commander retains four different "signal flows" in its memory for instant recall. In addition, the preamp section includes a seven-band graphic equalizer and high and low filters. The four other new receivers range from the KR-850 (\$600), rated at 75 watts (18 3/4 dBW) per channel, to the KR-90 (\$380), at 30 watts (14 3/4 dBW) per channel. All five receivers have Hi-Speed power amplifiers, facilities for two-deck tape dubbing and monitoring, and digital frequency-synthesis tuner sections with twelve station presets.

Garrard has four receivers, beginning with the Model 1060, rated at 15 watts (11 3/4 dBW) per channel, and topping off with the 60-watt (17 3/4 dBW) Model 1660. Scott's 385R (\$600) is rated at 85 watts (19 3/4 dBW) per channel.

Hitachi has filled out the low end of its receiver line with the \$250 HTA-3000, rated at 30 watts (14 3/4 dBW) per channel. Its digital frequency-synthesis tuner has six AM and six FM presets. Denon has a new 40-watt (16-dBW) receiver, the DRA-400 (\$400), with a DC Class A power amp and provisions for both moving- and fixed-coil cartridges. Nikko's NR-320 is rated at 25 watts (14 dBW) per channel and sells for \$250, while KLH's conventionally tuned R-301 AM/FM receiver (\$300) is rated at 30 watts (14 3/4 dBW) per channel. Two modestly powered receivers from BSR, the RX-100 (\$220) and RX-300 (\$280) are rated at 20 watts (13 dBW) and 30 watts (14 3/4 dBW) per channel, respectively. Cybernet's new receivers—the R-451 (\$570), -651 (\$740), and -851 (\$870)—are in the Kyocera series and carry power ratings ranging as high as 85 watts (19 3/4 dBW) per channel. The fourth, the CR-80S (\$350) is a slim-line unit rated at 45 watts (16 1/2 dBW) per channel. All four have digital station-frequency readouts, but only the Kyoceras have frequency-synthesizes tuning and seven station presets. The latter also use high-speed MOS FET output devices with variable-bias circuitry in the two top models.

Finally, though Proton may call its new entry The Radio, the specs are more like those of a receiver: a S/N ratio of 77 dB in stereo, a capture ratio of 1 dB, and so on. The Radio comes equipped with tape connections, tone controls, and one bi-amplified two-way loudspeaker for \$280. A bi-amplified speaker for the other channel sells for \$150. HF

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STOKOWSKI AT 100
(Continued from page 48)



cepting Stokie's own evanescent City Symphony), and Stokowski would gain a highly visible power base. Starting with six Sunday afternoon concerts a year, he slowly built up to twenty pairs, of which he led ten. In 1965 came the first performance of Charles Ives's Fourth Symphony, Stokowski's last spectacular world premiere, which he had been planning since Houston days. In 1972, at ninety—which he perhaps should never have publicly admitted—he brushed off attempts to replace him, was given a smashing birthday party at the Hotel Pierre in April, and one month later quit the orchestra cold.

Stokowski moved back to England. Only now did he reestablish contact with his brother Jim, by this time a successful real estate broker. (Their sister Lydia had died tragically early, in 1911.) In his old age he yearned for a last chance to recapture the faint remaining flavor of his long-buried youth. That fall he survived a nearly fatal bout of pneumonia to relish another birthday party, in February 1973, on the very stage of the Royal Albert Hall, hosted by British Prime Minister Edward Heath. Local boy makes good!

Stokie had been thinking of the move for a long time. In 1966 he had asked his friend Barry Tuckwell, the brilliant French-horn virtuoso, to look into the possibility of his holding a dual British/American passport (secretly toying with the prospect of knighthood) but dropped the idea when he found out what it would mean to him in taxes. He settled at Place Farm House in the charmingly named village of Nether Wallop, forty-five minutes south of London and in 1974 built himself another home in Vence, in the South of France.

The American adventure was over, and Stokowski knew that he was solidly established as one of the half-dozen greatest conductors of this century.

He left behind the American Symphony Orchestra, still alive and well and ready to take part in the celebrations of his centenary at Carnegie Hall on April 18. It is astonishing to realize that so many young American musicians who received their first orchestral training under the old master will still be teaching in the twenty-first century. Only a handful in the orchestra today played under Stokie. The others have scattered to the American orchestral winds, carrying his legacy with them as players from

Philadelphia did in the old days, not to mention the hundreds who trained at the Curtis Institute in the '20s, '30s, and '40s under the watchful eyes of his famed first-desk men. Equally amazing, a hundred years from now children may still be asking their mothers at the movies—or whatever replaces them: "Mommy, who's that up there shaking hands with Mickey Mouse?" Stokie would have corrected them: "No, Mickey shook hands with me."

We must remember, after all, that Stokowski was born while Wagner was in the throes of preparing *Parsifal* for Bayreuth. Brahms was at Lake Thun working on his Third Symphony, and Massenet was in Paris finishing up *Manon*. Richard Strauss was eighteen, Sibelius seventeen, Bartók one, and Stravinsky not yet born. But Stokie never looked back. For decades he had been methodically destroying his past, burning letters, photographs, and other memorabilia. The past was his enemy, the future his friend. It was always, "Try harder, do better." In 1976, at age ninety-four, he signed a contract with CBS Records valid for six years, with a renewal clause for ten more.

Early on the morning of September 12, 1977, on what was to have been the first day of his recording session for the Rachmaninoff Second Symphony, a work he had not led since the Philadelphia days, Stokowski took a nasty fall in his room. He had been failing badly for months, even years, but he simply wouldn't give up. Now, unable to rise, he regained his bed unaided, using his arms and shoulders. His legs, grown frailer ever since the hip break, would no longer hold him upright. Later that morning, alone except for his housekeeper, he gave a sudden short gasp and died. His heart simply stopped. He was ninety-five. His lawyer and executor, Herman Muller, said to me, "I don't think that was a noise of pain. I think it was a noise of surprise. Of all the men I have ever known, he was the last one who ever thought it could happen to him!"

After his death Stokie's belongings were returned to the United States in two shipments. First came all the carefully annotated scores and the huge collection of exotic instruments gathered from around the world, which he willed to the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where they now safely reside. Next came his furniture, papers, pictures, and the many honors, the medal of the Legion of Honor and the Polonia Restituta medal—the tangible plaudits of a lifetime. These left England aboard a container ship late in January 1978. The ship hit a bad storm. Some chains broke. Twenty-seven of the dozens of containers lashed together aboveboard went into the Atlantic—one of them Stokowski's.

Said José Serebrier, former associate conductor of the American Symphony and a longtime admirer, "You know, I think he planned it!"

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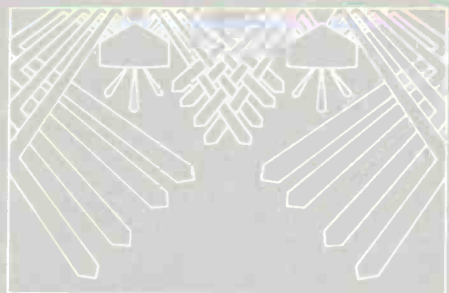
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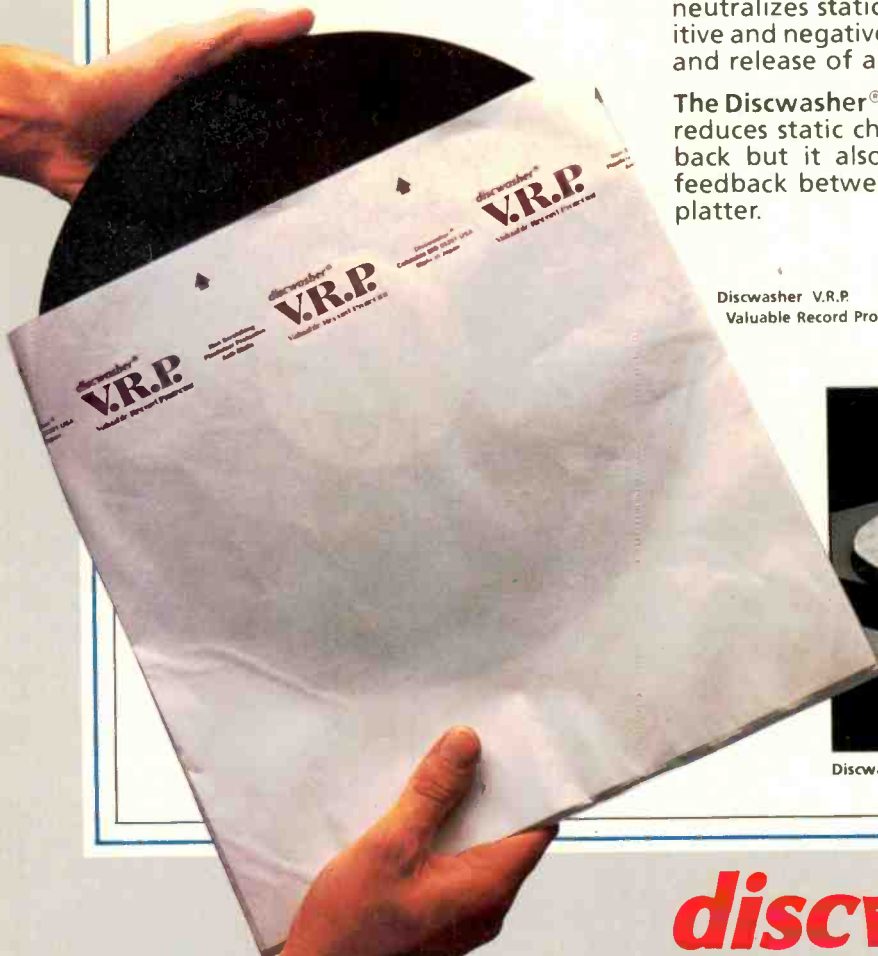
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