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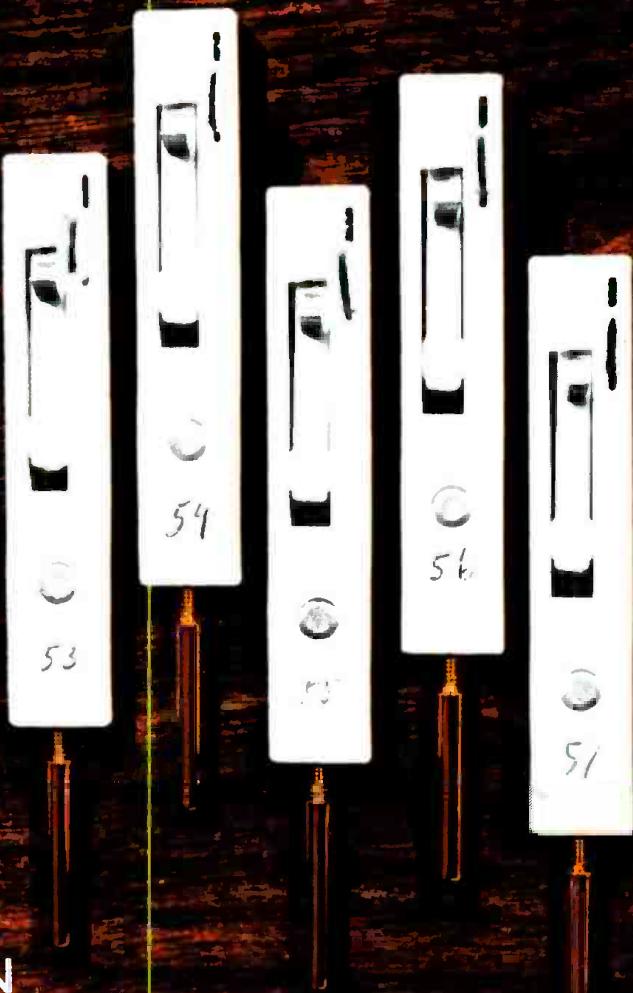
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THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS



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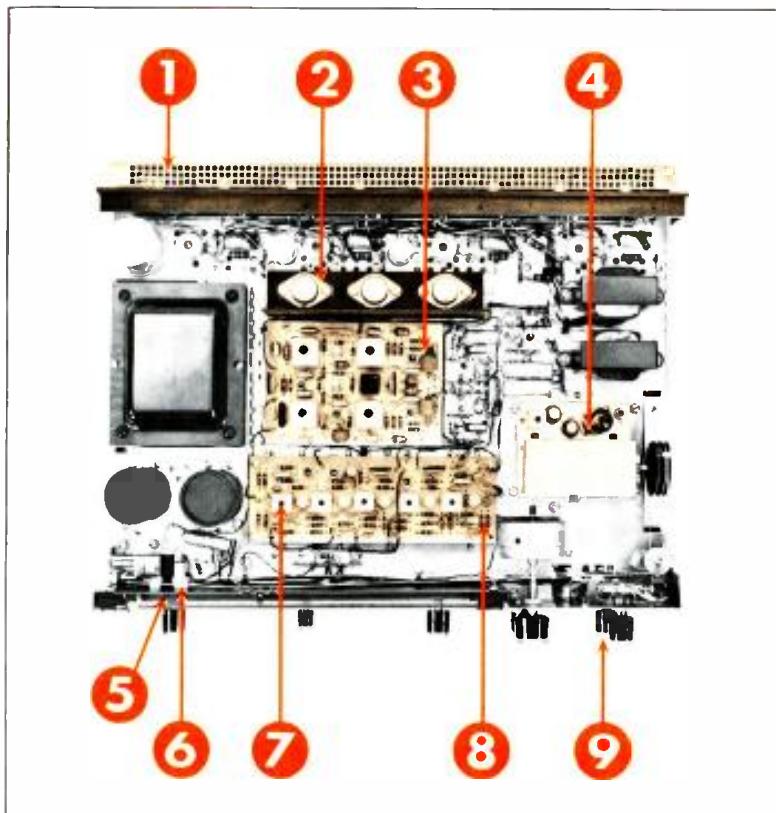
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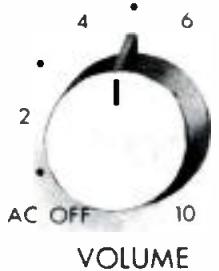
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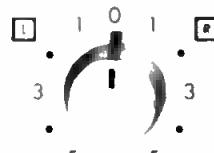
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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high fidelity

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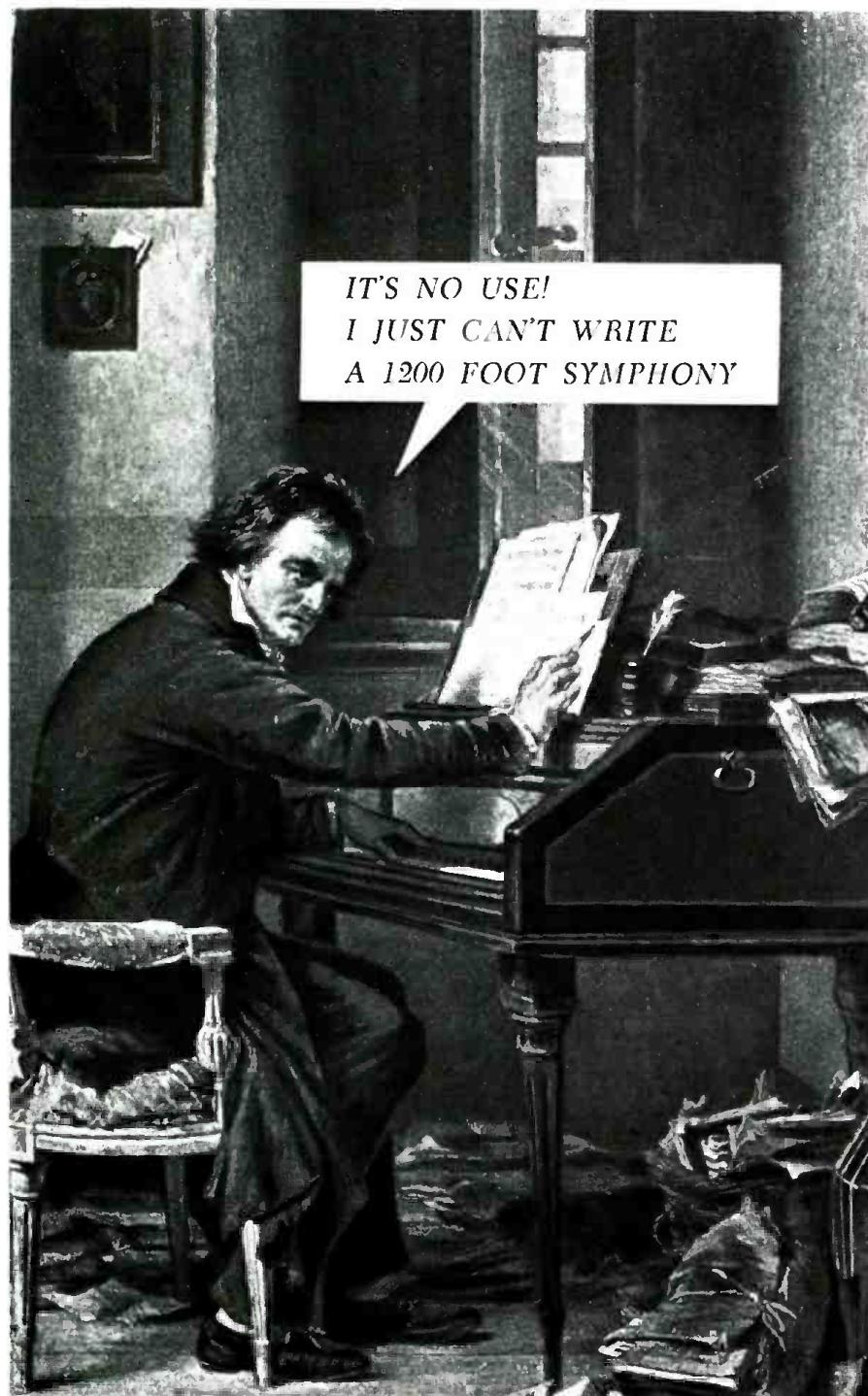
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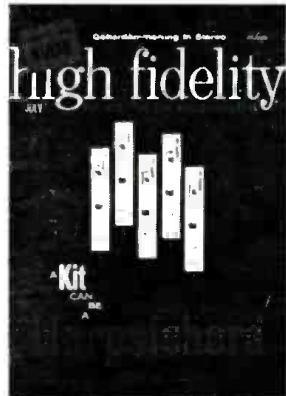


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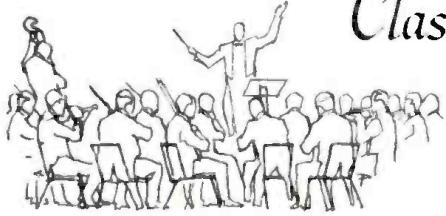
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LETTERS

Tchaikovsky—Footnotes

SIR:

I was greatly interested in your account under "Notes from Our Correspondents" [May 1965] of Gary Graffman's recording of the Tchaikovsky Second and Third Piano Concertos. These works are quite underrated and too seldom performed.

Perhaps I may add a few facts to complete your story. Several years ago a pianist named Mewton-Wood recorded the Third Piano Concerto with the Winterthur Symphony under the direction of Walter Goehr for Concert Hall Society (CHS 1126). That record also included a performance of a "Concert Fantasy," listed as "Opus 56," which the writer of the jacket notes insisted was to serve as the rest of the Concerto, since the master had finished only one movement. More recently the Third Concerto was recorded by Kapp, with Simon Sadoff and the New York City Ballet pit orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. It was listed as *Allegro Brillante*, that being the title of the ballet Balanchine set to this delightful music.

Balanchine also used the Second Concerto as the foundation for a ballet. When the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo performed this *Ballet Imperial* some years ago in St. Louis, the pianist in the pit orchestra got a special round of applause for a rousing performance. It has been suggested that pianists don't like the Second Concerto because it is too difficult. At one time there was available through Decca (9916) a recording by Shura Cherkassky with Richard Kraus conducting the Berlin Philharmonic for Deutsche Grammophon.

Tchaikovsky relates to his nephew that after completing the Sixth Symphony he is quite happy, for he is beginning a new concerto (the third), I am not sure, but I feel certain that the notes sketched for the Concerto would have taken prominence over notes for a Seventh Symphony. The music itself seems to fit more naturally into the piano-orchestra framework than into the symphonic framework so oversumptuously recorded by the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Richard A. Nagel
Louisville, Ill.

SIR:

It is good news to read that Gary Graffman has recorded the Second and Third Piano Concertos of Tchaikovsky. It is

Continued on page 10

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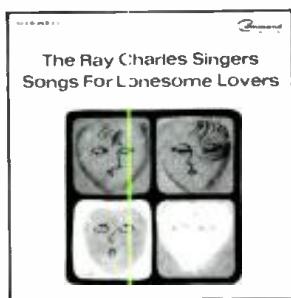
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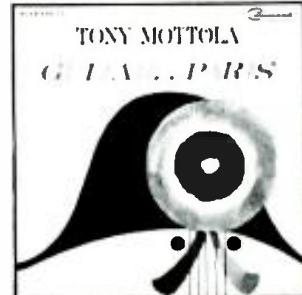
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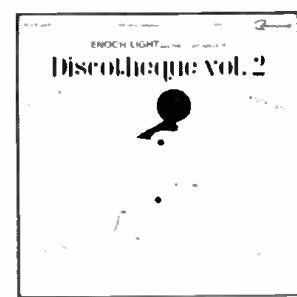


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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

unfortunate, however, that Columbia has chosen to record the cut version of the Second. Although Tchaikovsky allowed the revised edition, he felt, quite rightly, that the heart of the work was in the second movement. Unhappily, it is this movement that Siloti chose to edit. Being a pianist, his primary concern was for the soloist and he did not hesitate to "chop" music not written for the piano. Incidentally, Emil Gilels played the Concerto with the Moscow Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall approximately six years ago. There have also been a number of recordings of both this and the Third Concerto, including [as well as the sets also mentioned by Mr. Nagel, above] complete versions of No. 2 by Margot Pinter (Urania) and Tatiana Nikolayeva (Classic Editions).

In regard to the Andante and Finale of the Third Concerto, the score is available in the complete Tchaikovsky volumes which have been imported from Russia.

Charles Marootian
Paterson, N. J.

The Myriapodan M. Rampal

SIR:

Thank you for an especially fine May issue of HIGH FIDELITY, and in particular for Roy McMullen's highly informative article on "The Ubiquitous Flutist," Jean-Pierre Rampal. There is one point in the article, however, that has caused me a certain amount of puzzlement. We are told that the French master is the possessor of such prodigious technique that he is able to execute "a hundred finger movements per second, according to a French critic's calculation."

To one who is a long-time (though admittedly clumsy) American flutist, this seems utterly beyond the realm of comprehension. Are we to assume that the Gallic estimate is accurate? Or, as is more likely, did Author McMullen simply neglect to tell his readers that M. Rampal is really a centipede in disguise?

Richard W. Carey
Chula Vista, Calif.

Mr. McMullen replies: I have relayed Mr. Carey's query to M. Rampal, who says no, he is not a centipede—and adds that he has never timed his movements. He points out, however, that more than one finger may be in action simultaneously and that if you calculate on this basis, the speed mentioned might possibly be briefly attained by an experienced flutist. I grant this is not quite what I implied in my article.

And now Mr. Carey has me wondering if there is any music that goes that fast.



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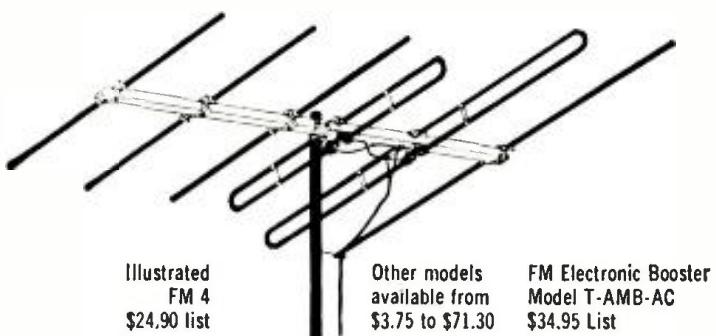
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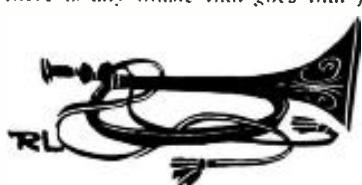
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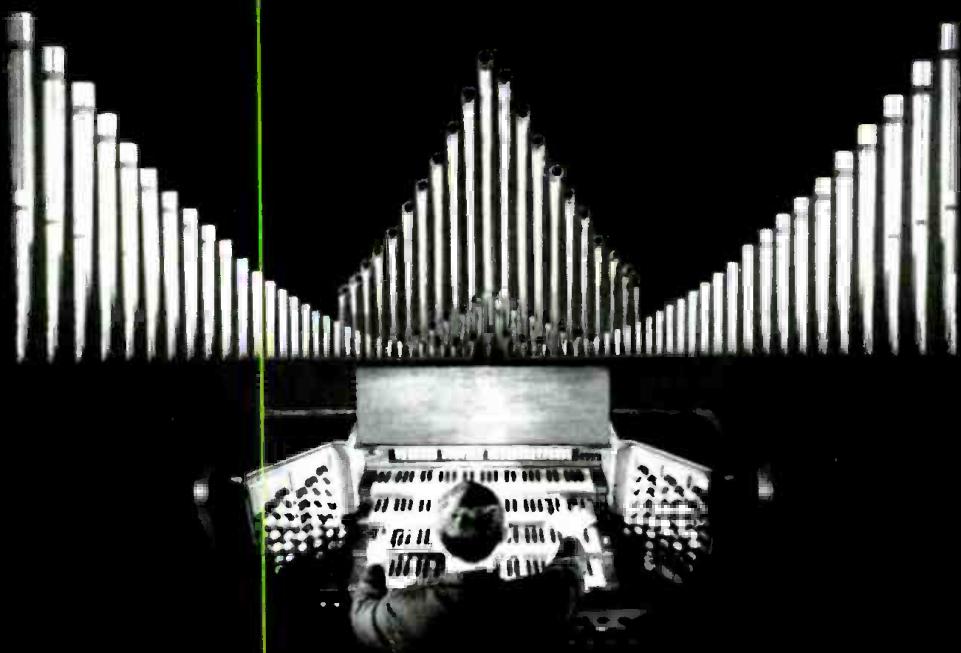


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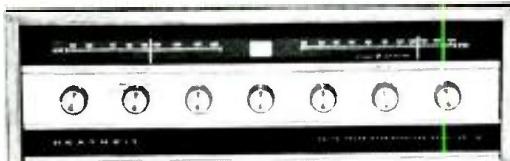
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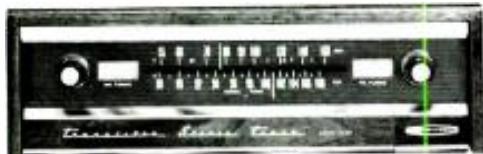
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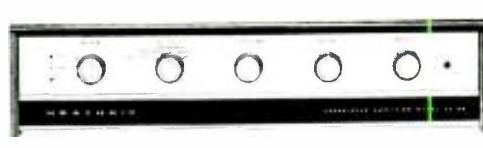


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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

ROME

It seems that Artur Rubinstein has developed a fondness for the RCA Italiana recording studios on the Via Tiburtina, just outside the city. Last year he taped a batch of Chopin here, and this spring he was back—with his beloved Steinway, gift of the Israeli Philharmonic—to make a recording of the Schubert B flat posthumous sonata. Oddly enough, this great work became a part of the pianist's repertory only fairly recently: his first public performance of it was here in Rome, less than a year ago, at the reopening of Santa Cecilia's Sala Accademica chamber music hall. Since then he has included it often in his recital programs, and—as his recording engineer Max Wilcox says—"he's fallen in love with it."

Benedetti Michelangeli—An Event. Another noteworthy pianistic happening in Italy recently was the appearance (at last!) of Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli's first new recording in many years, taped privately in Bologna and distributed in Italy by Decca Italiana (London Records in the U.S.A.). The album's title is "*L'arte pianistica di Benedetti Michelangeli*," to which Decca has hopefully affixed "Volume One." Volume Two has not yet been taped, but will probably be made in London and with orchestra; according to rumor—always active around this mercurial and legendary artist—it will include the Grieg Concerto and the Liszt Totentanz. Volume One is on quite a different plane: three sonatas by Scarlatti, Galuppi's Sonata in C major, and crowning the whole, the Beethoven Op. 111, which Benedetti Michelangeli often plays in recital. The record is a real event, and admirers of the pianist will be as hopeful as Decca that subsequent volumes will appear before too long.

Verismo Excerpted. Italy's quasi-national record firm, Cetra, is very active in the field of pop music and of "literary" records (i.e., poems read by well-known Italian actors and actresses), but its classic production is always scanty and erratic. Recently, however, the company produced a four-disc "Antologia del melodramma verista," an interesting potpourri arranged chronologically to begin with excerpts from *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890) and to conclude with *Turandot* (1926). In between there are a number of less familiar works represented: ex-

cerpts from Mascagni's *Isabeau*, *Piccolo Marat*, and *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (the first opera he composed but the fourth in order of performance), from the Leoncavallo *Bohème*, Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* and *Fedora*, Cilea's *L'Arlesiana* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, as well as the most popular Puccini operas.

Verismo in opera is hard to define, since the term must not only include the stark *Cavalleria* but also the saccharine *Amico Fritz* and the exotic *Iris*. Cetra's anthology, then, depicts a rich and in some ways still unfamiliar generation of composers rather than a strictly unified "school" of composition. For the most part, the selections are well made (though it's too bad that the Leoncavallo *Bohème* excerpts included neither of the lovely tenor arias "*Io non ho che una povera stanzetta*" and "*Testa adorata*") and well sung. Many of them are taken from Cetra complete-opera recordings, and some are sonically substandard, but there are exciting performances by the young Giulietta Simionato (in *Cavalleria*), by Ferruccio Tagliavini (*Amico Fritz*, Puccini *Bohème*, *L'Arlesiana*), and a rousing "*La mamma morta*" from Renata Tebaldi, plus a number of arias recorded by Magda Olivero some years ago in her youthful prime.

Tributes to Mascagni. Cetra has a strong partiality for Mascagni, and in the past it has issued complete recordings of a number of his operas, including *Il piccolo Marat* and a generous disc of selections from *Isabeau*. For Mascagni admirers, his old publisher, Sonzogno, brought out a short time ago two large and handsome volumes (entitled simply *Pietro Mascagni*) dedicated to the composer: included are critical articles, letters, selections from the composer's writings and of writings about him, a vast discography (by Raffaele Vegeto), lists of first performances, etc. These volumes, carefully and intelligently edited by the leading verismo specialist in Italy, Mario Morini, make, for the most part, absorbing reading. One may have doubts about the final importance of Mascagni, but his long and stormy career touched that of other, more important composers (his relations with Verdi and Puccini are described in the book) and through the story of his life and works we can follow almost half a century of Italian music and literature.

The Sonzogno volumes were originally planned for Mascagni's centenary, in

Continued on page 16

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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 14

1963, but the task of preparing such an exhaustive work took longer than the publishers had foreseen. Mascagni's native city of Leghorn has also issued, after some delay, a centennial volume, called *Pietro Mascagni, Livorno 1863-1963*, which covers much of the same ground as Sonzogno's but includes other hitherto unpublished letters, many of them concerning the composer's career outside of Italy. This publication, also handsomely put together, is a worthy product of civic pride; it could profitably be imitated by other cities with native sons whose lives have not yet been fully documented.

WILLIAM WEAVER

BERLIN

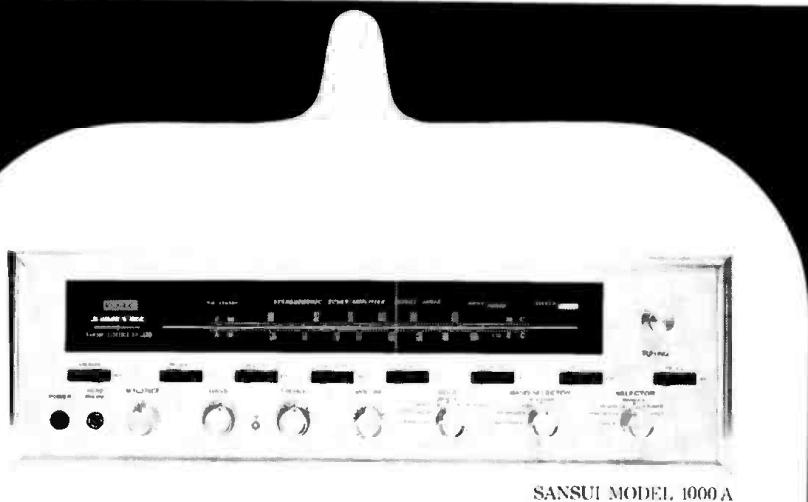
During the twenty years since the dust of World War II settled, some of the finest German recordings have been made in this city's Jesus Christus Kirche, where the famed anti-Nazi Pastor Niemöller used to preach. Not only does the church have wonderful resonance, but in the years just after 1945 it had the signal advantage of being still standing and intact. The Jesus Christus Kirche suffers one disadvantage, however, in its relatively small size, which has made certain recording projects—the Beethoven Ninth, for instance, or operas requiring big choruses—almost a bit too cozy for comfort. To get around this, DGG has now completely done over a sound stage on the famed old UFA film lot in Berlin's Tempelhof section.

Recently, I dropped in on the first big recording to take place in the new quarters: a complete *Wozzeck* under Karl Böhm, with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Evelyn Lear in the leading roles. The new studio could easily accommodate the Mahler Eighth, or perhaps even the chariot race from *Ben Hur*. Push buttons raise and lower padded panels and what-not so that resonance can be adjusted to an unusually fine degree—and apparently the acoustics are fine for widely differing types of music. Evelyn Lear had shortly before recorded an album of Hugo Wolf in the same studio, and when I asked her somewhat skeptically what it was like to record one voice and one piano in that huge space, she said, "Marvelous, simply marvelous. It's a real joy to sing here."

Wozzeck Under Böhm. In the control room, Karl Böhm could be heard over the loudspeakers, giving the orchestra detailed instructions. "His matutinal exercise," murmured someone with a sardonic Berlin accent. "Under other conductors this same orchestra has played *Wozzeck* at least thirty times here at the Opera, but Dr. Böhm finds things he wants done differently."

Both Fischer-Dieskau and Lear seemed

Continued on page 18



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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 16

to have their parts down note-perfect, but one of the other singers, during a passage with Fischer-Dieskau, had a little too approximate an approach to pitch to suit Böhm. The conductor would correct the erring singer, but before the situation could become strained, Fischer-Dieskau would interrupt with some innocuous question. "Watch Dieter," someone whispered. "He knows the other fellow's getting on edge, so he's deliberately drawing attention away from him."

Though the session had begun at 10 a.m., so much rehearsing and polishing had gone on that it was 11:25 by the time the first take was played back. With Böhm at the central console seat and his singers on either side, everyone prepared to listen. Fischer-Dieskau had lighted a cigarette, but promptly ditched it when DGG's photographer started to take advantage of having so many principals in such a small knot. Miss Lear nonchalantly lit up a Lord (a German brand) and announced: "I guess Tom [Thomas Stewart, Miss Lear's baritone husband] and I are about the only Americans alive who take cigarettes from Europe to America instead of the other way round."

DGG talks of following *Wozzeck*, in due time, with *Lulu*, in which Miss Lear has had a truly phenomenal success in several European productions; Fischer-Dieskau would sing Dr. Schoen, and Böhm would conduct. These productions might take care of Berg's operas for some time to come. PAUL MOOR

LONDON

EMI's plans for London sessions this year include as their high spot a *Missa Solemnis* with Otto Klemperer conducting the New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, due to be recorded in September and October. (Since the earlier Klemperer version was for Vox, it's surprising that EMI has delayed this project so long.) Other sessions to be held here include a Barbirolli version of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (one had not previously thought of Sir John as a Purcellian) in which Victoria de los Angeles will sing the role of Dido. Fischer-Dieskau will be Aeneas and Heather Harper will take the part of Belinda. The other major London album coming from EMI is Orff's *Carmina Burana* under Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos (again a conductor one would not immediately have connected with the work) with Lucia Popp and Hermann Prey as soloists. The Orff work is being recorded early this summer, again with the New Philharmonia.

And while these activities are taking place at home, plans for the Continent include Callas' *Traviata* with Georges Prêtre (now scheduled for recording in September or after) and Berlioz's *L'En-*

Continued on page 20



This picture

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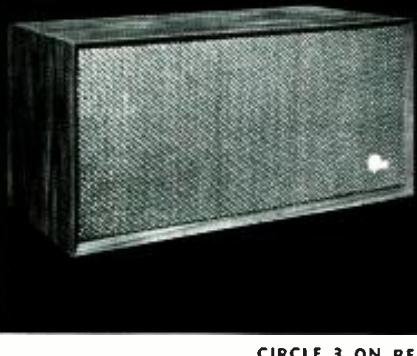
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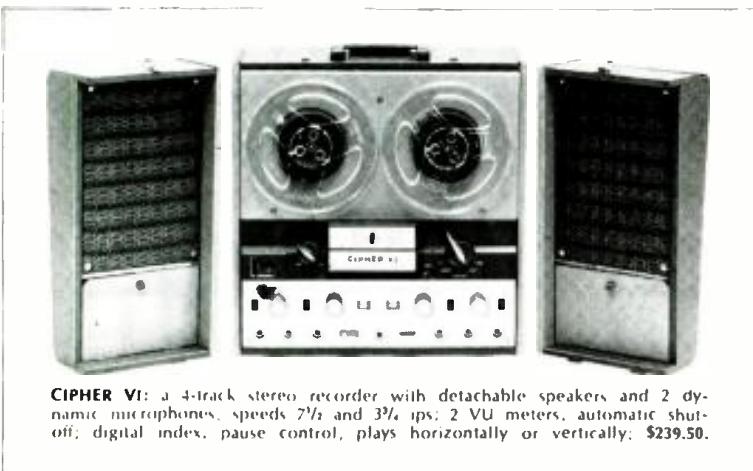
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The Verde brings you into the bass age without sacrificing mid-range. Verde uses a unique extreme-low-resonance bass speaker mounted in a heavily damped air spring-modified reflex enclosure. The result: efficient reproduction of frequencies down to 45 cps. Highs up to 18,000 cps are achieved with an Altec 2000B speaker with unique gap-suspended radiator.

Other specs: impedance, 8 ohm; power rating, 20W; built-in crossover network, 2000 cps; 11½" x 23" x 11½" (use horizontally or vertically); hand-rubbed walnut cabinet. Hear the Verde now at your audio dealer's. You won't believe the sound you get for only \$96!

**NOTES FROM
OUR CORRESPONDENTS**

Continued from page 18

fance du Christ under André Cluytens with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as soloist. Sessions for both these sets will be held in Paris. Mozart's Requiem—Schwarzkopf will be heard in this too—is to be recorded in Vienna in late fall.

Menuhin Indefatigable. So much for projects. Recent achievements have included Yehudi Menuhin's accounts for EMI of the two Bartók Violin Concertos. Originally, they were to have been coupled on a single disc, but in performance the Second Concerto took a longer playing time than had been estimated. As a consequence, new couplings will have to be found for both pieces, and the actual release may be delayed.

I went to the sessions for the Second Concerto and found Menuhin in splendid form. At the end of one very long and arduous day, he was still so eager to re-record the cadenza that the technicians (more tired than he was) gave in, and made several extra takes after the orchestra (New Philharmonia, Antal Dorati conducting) had gone home. It remains to be seen whether this final version of the cadenza, recorded without the orchestra in the hall, will marry in with the rest. The number of human beings physically present tends to change the acoustic of an auditorium as sensitive as Kingsway Hall; and for all the skill of the EMI engineers, who have recently done some interesting work in combining tapes made in different places, one can never quite be sure of the result.

More and More Prey. On the Decca/London front Hermann Prey has been recording an interesting collection of Lieder by Wolf and Hans Pfitzner. It was on Prey's insistence that the Pfitzner songs were included, and certainly he proves a most persuasive advocate. I attended a session when he was recording *Auf einer Wanderung*, one of Wolf's longer songs from the Mörike set. The initial run-through was highly successful, but was subtly modified for the actual takes, with accompanist Gerald Moore contributing many suggestions. Even after a take that delighted everyone, Prey himself, however, remained doubtful, hating the idea of tape splicing even in a long song. "If you don't mind, I'd like to do it from the beginning," he would insist.

Working with Prey presents an extra difficulty for the accompanist and technicians, because this singer cannot bear to stop for meals. He likes to begin between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and then go straight on until mid-afternoon. Any break disturbs Prey's concentration, and he then has to take time getting back into his stride again. Fortunately, Decca/London's West Hampstead studio has food shops nearby, though the emissary for food was not able to satisfy Gerald Moore's modest request for "a dozen oysters and a half bottle of Chablis."

Continued on page 22



This is the *only* tube you need for Scott's new 80-Watt solid state amplifier kit!

An ordinary light bulb? For a transistor amplifier kit? It's part of a new system Scott engineers have developed so that even a novice can successfully build a professional solid state amplifier.

The electric light bulb is an ingenious part of Scott's exclusive "fail-safe" circuit. You connect it to the back of your completed amplifier just before you first turn it on. A dim glow means you're A.O.K. A bright glow means the light bulb has absorbed excess power *before* it can burn out valuable silicon transistors, and that you must recheck your wiring.

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allow even a novice to build a solid state amplifier that is in every way equal to a Scott factory-wired unit.

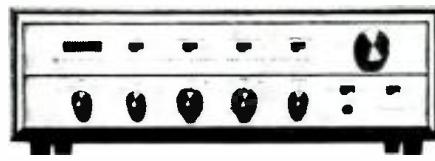
When you're ready for final adjustments, there is a precision test instrument, the Scott Circuit Monitor, that allows you to actually set the balance and bias of the output stage for absolutely minimum distortion without external test equipment.

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type heat sinks to assure long operating life, Power Level Indicator, and the complete professional Scott control panel.

The LK-60 is kit-brother to the superb factory-wired Scott 260 solid state amplifier. Hi Fi/Stereo Review tested the 260 in April, and stated that it has ". . . no sound of its own. The listener hears the music . . . not the amplifier. (It) will reproduce anything that is fed into it with well-nigh perfect exactness, and without adding any sound coloration of its own . . ." Now that the LK-60 kit is at your dealer's, you can share with Scott the satisfaction of building a perfect solid state amplifier.

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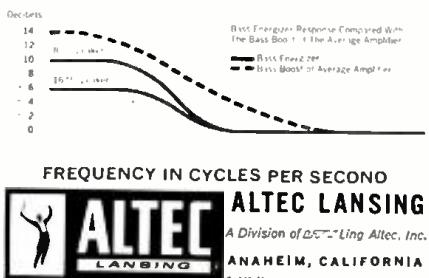
A bookshelf speaker system just can't produce the extreme lows of full-size speakers, but it can be improved. Considerably. Often startlingly. You'll probably think someone changed your speakers when you install Altec's new Bass Energizer!

The Bass Energizer compensates for low-frequency deficiencies inherent in small speakers by providing an increase in very-low bass level relative to the rest of the spectrum. Can't you just boost the typical amplifier bass control, or use the contour control, and get the same result? No, not without also affecting midrange frequencies from 200 cycles up to around 1000. It is this effect that gives unnatural boominess to voices. The Altec Bass Energizer becomes effective only below 150 cycles and builds to full efficiency from 60 cycles down to the speaker's cutoff. This reinstates those often lost low, low notes without adding boominess to voices. The result is added low-frequency richness.

The Energizer is passive, requiring no additional electrical power, and connects

simply between amplifier output and speaker. It is designed to operate with efficient speakers—however, it can be used with inefficient speakers if the amplifier power is adequate.

So if you have no choice but to use small speakers (due to your space limitation) try the new Altec Bass Energizer to add the bass richness you have been missing. A demonstration at your audio dealer will convince you. (Caution: be sure the program source has bass in it before making this test.) Priced at \$30.



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LEADER IN SOLID-STATE STEREO COMPONENTS
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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 20

Moore had to make do with sandwiches, but it's all in the game of helping to present an artist who is now amounting to Decca/London's answer in Lieder to Fischer-Dieskau. EDWARD GREENFIELD

NEW YORK

For even the most seasoned musician, recording sessions can be a nerve-racking experience. Not, however, for 23-year-old Daniel Barenboim.

"Daniel has always refused to be intimidated by microphones—even at the age of nine."

So spoke James Grayson, Westminster Records' president and chief recording director, and godfather to the Barenboim career for the past fourteen years. Following up his new recording of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata (reviewed in HIGH FIDELITY this May), the young pianist was engaged in taping for Westminster the same composer's *Diabelli Variations*. And he was going about this not inconsiderable task with the aplomb and self-assurance that led him to record his first *Hammerklavier*, seven years ago, at the age of sixteen. ("What impudence," Grayson recollects. "At that age," Barenboim retorted, "you should be impudent.")

Taking advantage of his artist's equanimity, Grayson had decided to tape the *Diabelli Variations* twice through, each time in two unbroken half-hour sessions. "And this will be a real performance," he emphasized, "not the usual string of notes patched together from many different takes. There are precious few other artists with whom I would even risk recording in such a fashion. Maureen Forrester is one . . . also the Allegri String Quartet." Only during the tedious and exacting job of positioning microphones and setting recording levels was the atmosphere less than relaxed. After about a half hour of hard work, Grayson was heard to mutter: "Getting a good balance on a 120-piece Mahler orchestra is easier than this." The level was fine now, but Barenboim still had doubts about the piano tone, which struck him as too brittle and overly brilliant. By this time everyone was thoroughly tired of Diabelli's inane little waltz which had been played over and over for the preliminary tests. A general sigh of relief went up when pianist, producer, and technicians all reached agreement.

Barenboim's Boogie Bass. After this ordeal the actual recording was simple. When Barenboim sat down for take one, he did not arise again until thirty minutes had elapsed and Variation Twenty had been completed. (This point will also mark the end of Side 1 of the finished product.) "And please," he ex-

Continued on page 24

SOMEDAY, THERE MAY BE OTHER FULLY AUTOMATIC TAPE RECORDERS LIKE THE NEW CONCORD 994



The 994 gives you automatic reversing Plays or records automatically three different ways Stops by itself where you want it to Threads itself automatically And, the 994 is available now!

With the transistorized 994, Concord introduces a new dimension to tape recording. Some might call it modernization, some might call it automation. We think of it as *convenience*—in playing, in recording, in starting and stopping, in threading, in hours of uninterrupted listening. You can't compare it to anything because the 994 is as different from the conventional stereo recorder as the old crank-type Gramophone is from the modern record changer.

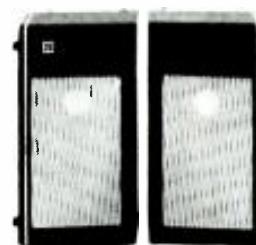


AUTOMATIC PROGRAMMING. You can program the 994 to play or record one side of a tape from beginning to end and stop automatically. Or, to play/record first one side of the tape, reverse, play the other side, then stop automatically. Or, to play/record forward and back, forward and back, continuously, as long as you like—an hour, six hours, or all day. You may change direction of tape any time you like by merely pressing the direction change buttons. These same lighted buttons automatically show you direction of tape travel.



PUSH-BUTTON KEYBOARD. The operating controls are literally at your fingertips. This is the one recorder you can operate without arm waving, and with one hand! As far as threading, that's even simpler—the 994 threads itself automatically.

After all this, we didn't just stop in designing the 994. We kept going. As a result, the 994 offers superb performance and every conceivable feature required for your listening and recording pleasure. Here's a brief sample: three speeds with automatic equalization, four professional heads, two VU meters, digital tape counter, cue control, sound-on-sound, exclusive Concord Trans-A-Track recording, 15-watt stereo amplifier, professional record/monitoring system. The 994 may also be used as a portable PA system, with or without simultaneous taping.



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The 994 is priced under \$450.* An identical recorder, Model 990 comes without speakers or microphones and is priced under \$400.* Both are at your dealer's now. So why wait? Drop in for a demonstration and find out for yourself what *fully automatic tape recording by Concord* is all about! Or, for complete information, write Dept. HF-7.

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CIRCLE 13 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM
OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 22

horted the engineers, "keep the lengths of the pauses between the Variations exactly as I made them"—a true Schnabelian touch. During the playback, the pianist strolled between the recording booth and the studio sunk in critical contemplation. "The first example of the boogie bass," he commented when he heard his own performance of Variation Sixteen with its playful octave leaps in the bass. Satisfied with the results of Part One, Barenboim sat down for Part Two, and in another twenty-five minutes the sessions were over.

For the second taping on the following day, Mr. Grayson went to even further lengths to insure a performance atmosphere. He invited a small audience to sit in, and this, he reported later, had a thoroughly efficacious influence upon the artist. The same recording procedure was followed, and Westminster guarantees that the resultant disc will be a genuinely continuous piece of work, right down to Mr. Barenboim's measured pauses between Variations. P.G.D.

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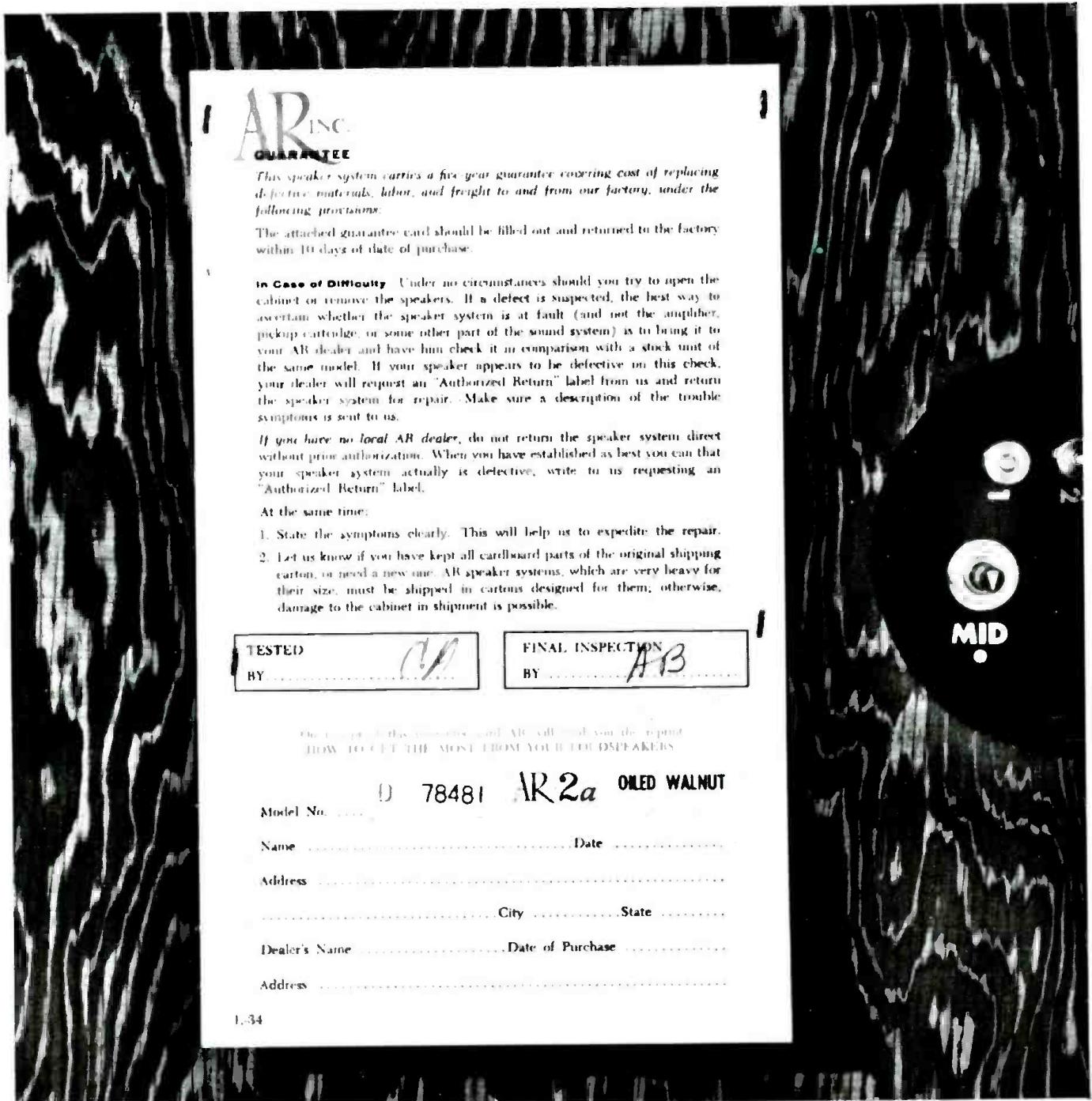
Tenor Phenomenon. If so, Tony Poncet is your man. No one, to my knowledge, has ever called Poncet a great and subtle actor. He is a very short, very barrel-chested tenor who stands (I am generalizing from attending two performances at the Opéra-Comique) rooted on the stage, one foot a yard in advance of the other, arms in a weight lifter's preliminary position. Sometimes he puts a hand on his heart, or waves a clenched fist. His taste and musicianship could not even remotely be called impeccable. But he has authority and vitality to spare, he usually sings all the notes, and he gets louder and louder as he goes higher and higher. He has the sort of voice that people who do not normally listen to opera think tenors ought to have.

I am sure M. Poncet will not mind my writing this, for he has good reason to think that all critics are harmless drudges. The few mentions his performances receive in the Parisian press are apt to be unfavorable, and sometimes ferociously so. Yet in recent years he has become, I would guess, the most popular male opera star in France. In any event, he has become a surprising phenomenon in the local recording industry. His discography now fills more than a page of the French Philips catalogue, and new

Continued on page 26

AR's five-year speaker guarantee

One of these guarantee cards has been on the back of every AR speaker since 1961, when AR extended its one-year speaker guarantee retroactively to five years.



This speaker system carries a five year guarantee covering cost of replacing defective materials, labor, and freight to and from our factory, under the following provisions:

The attached guarantee card should be filled out and returned to the factory within 10 days of date of purchase.

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1. State the symptoms clearly. This will help us to expedite the repair.
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All AR speakers, including the new low-cost AR-4 (\$51 to \$57), carry this five-year guarantee. AR turntables are guaranteed for one year under the same conditions.

*In addition, 38 speakers were returned with no defects, and freight charges were not reimbursed; 53 returned speakers were judged to have been subjected to gross abuse (such as dropping or plugging in to the 110V outlet), and the owners were charged for both repair and freight.

We expect the return rate of the AR-2ax (new version of the AR-2a with improved mid-range speaker) to be even lower.

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dust, (dust), n. grime, smut, soot (UNCLEANNESS); soil, earth, ground (LAND); powder, sand, grit (POWDERINESS).

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CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 24

items are appearing regularly. Philips, with whom he has an exclusive contract, has taken to billing him as "the tenor of the century."

One of the open secrets of the Ponet formula has been to sing things which were once depressingly famous and familiar, and which have therefore been neglected recently on records. Hence, for American collectors (who will soon have an opportunity to hear him on some Philips imports), his most interesting successes are perhaps his selections from *William Tell*, *La Juive*, *L'Africaine*, *Les Huguenots*, and *The Land of Smiles*. In addition he has done the expected from Donizetti, Mascagni, Leoneavallo, Verdi, Puccini, Offenbach, Bizet, and Gounod—plus a lot in the *Santa Lucia* category. He sings everything in French.

"Collections" for a Crisis. Back of the Ponet operation, and of several other shrewd estimates of current French musical taste, there is a remarkable business executive. He is Georges Meyerstein, who has been running the French branch of Philips ever since it was created, almost fifteen years ago, and has made it just about the most successful disc firm in the country. (I write "Philips" for convenience, but actually the company owns or distributes ten labels, the other nine being Fontana, Critère, Audio Fidelity, Mercury, Riverside, Pergola, Cyenus, Salvador, and Oiseau-Lyre.)

Meyerstein, who looks a bit like Orson Welles without the ego, has been active in the local industry for nearly forty years, and has acquired two deep convictions. One is that if the economic side of music doesn't work, the artistic side will suffer. The other, more recent, is that, as he put it in a recent conversation, "we have a crisis in our program." He believes that the record business, not only in France but everywhere, must face the fact that it is running out of great composers whose music has not been recorded. Already, he points out, we are exploiting the second rank of baroque masters: "Telemann is not a Vivaldi."

He sees two possible remedies. One is more aggressive merchandising. Philips in France, for example, has developed a large number of "collections"—a "collection" being a series of records aimed at a specific public in terms of price, or of content, or of quality. A recent Ponet anthology, for instance, is part of a new collection called "*Plaisir du Lyrique*," advertised as being "for all true lovers of opera." Another collection is called "*Trésors Classiques*," another "*Classiques pour Tous*," another "*Stereo pour Tous*," another "*Folk Blues U.S.A.*," and another "*Rire*." In the last-named series a recent disc is advertised as "not to be left, really, within reach of children."

The other remedy is to find new interpreters of familiar music. But Meyerstein grants that this way of stimulating the public into buying records is a matter of chance: "A Richter is rather rare."

ROY McMULLIN

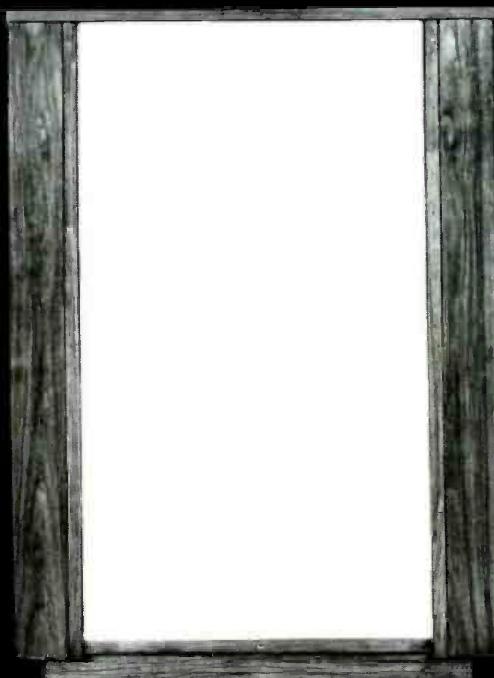
This Bozak Speaker Costs \$97.50*



Is It The Best?

Yes. Where limitations either in budget or in space will not permit the broader sound source of a more complete Bozak system, Sonata No. 2 provides the best value obtainable for realistic re-creation of music.

This Bozak Speaker Costs \$778*



Is It The Best?

Yes. Where there is no limitation imposed by space or budget, a Bozak Concert Grand provides the most realistic re-creation of music possible.

ARE ALL BOZAK SPEAKERS "BEST"?

Yes.

All Bozak speaker systems are built from the same basic components. And all Bozak components are built to the same electrical, acoustical and tonal standards — the highest.

To achieve the broader, more realistic sound sources of its larger systems, Bozak simply combines the same component speakers used in more modest systems.

Because Bozak maintains but one quality standard, your speaker system can grow with you — without obsolescence or loss of original investment. You simply add components as your musical taste, space or income grow.

Start today to enjoy Bozak for the best of your life. Our free catalog will show you how.



*Prices shown are subject to change. All prices slightly higher in the Far West and Deep South.

Export: Elpa Marketing Industries
New Hyde Park, New York



Mr. Saul Marantz discusses his revolutionary new model 10-B FM Stereo Tuner

Q. Mr. Marantz, your new 10-B tuner is quite revolutionary. Do you feel it will obsolete all other tuners?

Mr. Marantz: In one sense, yes. The performance of this tuner is so dramatically superior to conventional tuners that anyone who wants or needs perfect FM reception today has no choice but to use the model 10-B. Its superiority, however, does not necessarily *obsolete* conventional tuners. Rolls Royce, of course, makes superior cars, but they haven't *obsoleted* Chevrolets.

Q. Is this superior performance discernible to the average listener?

Mr. Marantz: Very much so. The difference is quite dramatic. As you know, conventional tuners have never been able to pick up and reproduce broadcasts which could match the quality of a fine disc or tape playback system. This has often been blamed on *broadcasting* quality. But the new 10-B disproves this theory. It reproduces the *broadcast* of a disc or a tape with the same clarity and separation as if played through a playback system — proving that broadcast quality is generally excellent.

Q. Is this true with weak broadcast signals also?

Mr. Marantz: Yes. In fact the model 10-B will reach 55 db quieting at only 3 microvolts! This is better than most conventional tuners will reach at 1000 microvolts. With a 25 microvolt station the Model 10-B reaches a phenomenal 70 db quieting which is about 20 db better than most conventional tuners can achieve at *any* signal strength. This means that with the Model 10-B there will be excellent reception even in fringe areas, particularly so because of the tuner's high sensitivity, its extremely sharp selectivity and reduced susceptibility to multipath effects, which on other tuners cause distortion.

Q. How are such improvements accomplished?

Mr. Marantz: The answer to that question is very complex, because the 10-B is far more than an improved tuning system; it is a completely new *design concept* with *many* technical innovations developed by Marantz engineers.

Q. Can you give us some examples?

Mr. Marantz: Yes. The RF section, for example, contains a balanced-bridge di-

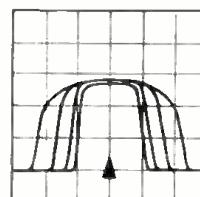
ode mixer — a technique used in modern sensitive radar designs to eliminate a major source of noise, harmonic distortion and other spurious interference. The whole RF circuit is balanced-tuned, using a precision tuning capacitor with four double sections, for further reduction of spurious images.

For the critical IF strip, we've developed the first commercial application of the "Butterworth," or phase-linear filter. This new concept provides a number of distinct characteristics essential for good results. The passband, for example, is phase-linear for extremely low distortion — especially at high frequencies — and it remains essentially phase-linear at all signal levels.

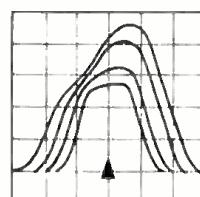
Cutoff slopes beyond the passband are extremely steep, allowing unprecedented selectivity; it is much less subject to the effects of multipath, and it doesn't require realignment with tube changes or aging. The old standby coupled IF circuits currently in use do not have any of these characteristics.

Q. Are there any innovations designed specifically for multiplex?

Mr. Marantz: Yes. For multiplex reception we've developed our own unique



IF Passband retains phase linearity and sharp slopes at any signal strength for low distortion, sharp selectivity.



Conventional mutually-coupled IF circuits change characteristics drastically depending on signal strength.

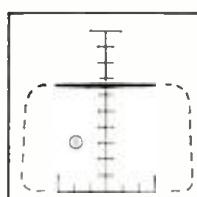
variation of stereo demodulator, which permits phase correction to maintain a very advanced order of stereo separation throughout the whole audio band.

Q. What is the purpose of the tuning and multipath indicator?

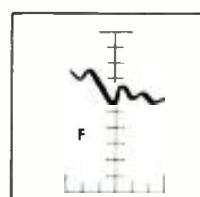
Mr. Marantz: This oscilloscope device is so versatile its single trace tells many easily understood stories. It shows when a station is tuned exactly to the center of the passband. The height of the pattern shows the signal strength. The indicator shows how much multipath is present, making it easy to adjust the antenna for best reception. It shows if the station is creating distortion by over-modulating. Also, technically informed users can check stereo separation of transmissions, discs and other sources.

Q. And how soon will the model 10-B be available in quantities?

Mr. Marantz: The Model 10-B is a laboratory instrument of extremely high quality which will never be *mass produced* in the usual sense. However, production has been stepped up fourfold and all back-orders are now being filled by Marantz franchised dealers.



MARANTZ MULTIPATH TUNING INDICATOR
Station tuning is simply and accurately adjusted by centering the trace.



Multipath (Ghosts) shows up as 'wiggles' on the tuning trace. Antenna is simply rotated until trace is smooth.



marantz

MARANTZ, INC., SUBSIDIARY OF **SUPERSCOPE** INC., SUN VALLEY, CALIF.

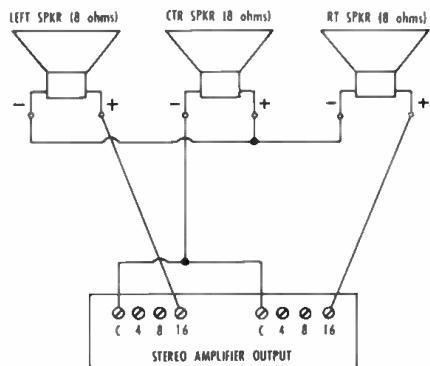
CIRCLE 35 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BY NORMAN EISENBERG

HIGH FIDELITY NEWSFRONTS

Something For Nothing? A neat piece of electronic handicraft came to our attention recently when David Hafler, president of Dynaco, explained a new hook-up he has devised for obtaining a center channel on stereo, without using a monophonic amplifier in addition to the stereo amplifier. Previous hookups of this sort produced a so-called "L - R" signal in the center speaker, that is to say, the "difference signal" between the left and right speakers. Hafler's system, shown in the accompanying diagram, is the first, so far as we know, to yield an "L + R" signal without using an additional amplifier or even a "mixing" transformer for that center speaker.

The diagram is deceptively simple, inasmuch as it cannot possibly show the circuit analysis and mathematical thinking behind it; this material, in fact, is included in a 17-page patent application



A new center-channel hookup.

that Hafler has filed on his invention. Some hints for those who care to try the hookup: the three speaker systems used should be of the same efficiency; the two "side" speakers (regular left and right) must be of the same impedance; the center speaker should be the same, if possible; if it is not, some loss of channel separation may occur. If 8-ohm speakers (the most popular value) are used, connections are made to the 16-ohm taps on the amplifier; if 4-ohm speakers are used, connect to the 8-ohm taps. Speakers of 16-ohm rating may be connected to the 16-ohm taps; the resultant mismatch will be insignificant. The hookup may be used with tube or transistor amplifiers unless the amplifier's instructions specifically forbid linking the "common" or ground terminals of both channels.

How does it sound? On stereo material, we found that channel separation remained as good as before but there was a sense of a "firmer" center. And to a great extent, the added speaker frees the listener from that imaginary center spot; one can move across the

room and still be aware of the location of performers. On monophonic material, the signal became more definitely centered than before—and without the need to change the amplifier control from stereo to mono operation. Actually, the whole thing has a servo-system-like aspect about it in the sense that the center speaker responds automatically to the degree of separation in the program material. For those who want to go a step farther, and introduce deliberate control of the center signal, Hafler has devised some new circuitry—also part of his patent write-up—which he plans eventually to include in Dynaco preamps and integrated amplifiers and which the company will mail, on written request, to present Dynaco owners.

Summer Listening. The latest portable radio from a high fidelity source is the Tandberg, which provides FM, AM, short- and long-wave reception and which also can serve, to a degree, as a "double-duty" set in or out of a car. In mobile use, the radio's built-in mast antenna may be bypassed and the set connected to the vehicle's external antenna. In either application, the set is powered by its own battery pack of five flashlight cells. A good-looking and good-sounding set, the new Tandberg is built around nine transistors and four diodes, and comes in a lightweight teakwood cabinet. For a portable, it boasts some unusual features, such as its fairly large (5 by 9 inches) oval-shaped speaker; separate treble and bass tone controls, and jacks for accommodating an external record player or tape recorder. What impressed us most was the "auto" switch that feeds radio signals into the set from an external antenna. This hookup really improves the set's reception while you drive and, because it is so easy to do or undo, means that you can listen to this radio while you are on the road and later in your home.

New Audiences for New Equipment. You expect to see audio equipment at audio shows, but it is a pleasant surprise to see increasing evidence of it at other public shows. For instance, at the recent International Automobile Show in New York City, the newest car tape systems were shown to thousands of visitors. The Metra exhibit featured a complete mock-up of a car dash, with the tape deck installed, flanked by two front doors which housed stereo speakers.

At another exhibit Autostereo showed three new models, a low-powered and a higher-powered deck having been added to the original set announced a few months ago. The high-powered version

comes in a chrome-plated case and has separate treble and bass tone controls. Curiosity over these new tape machines seemed to equal or surpass interest in the new cars themselves. Who knows? It may not be long before we select a new car for its suitability for stereo; can the doors supply good speaker baffling? is the distance between them all right for separation? how about the rear area acoustics? and how much sound absorption will seat covers provide?

Again, at the annual Home Show in Springfield, Mass., where you can see everything new in domestic gear from power tools to swimming pools, the largest single exhibit was a panoply of stereo components, consoles, electronic organs, and pianos that stretched across some 180 feet of floor space. Sponsored by Del Padre Music Shops this "show within a show" drew enormous crowds who looked at equipment, listened to it, and asked endless questions of a battery of Del Padre's men. According to Louis L. Del Padre, who operates three retail shops that bear his name as well as a supply organization and a wholesale electronic distributorship, most of the visitors to his exhibit were definitely new audiences for stereo rather than those who are already partly familiar with it from having attended the high fidelity shows. And among this new audience, Del Padre sees interest in components rising. "We've participated in this show for three years now," he commented, "and each year both our exhibit, and attendance at it, get larger." Among the equipment we saw on display here were the new LPV antennas of JFD; an antenna rotator by Alliance; tape recorders by Concord and Sony/Superscope and the new tapes from the latter; the new components and consoles from both Fisher and Scott; consoles by Sylvania and Magnavox; headphones from David Clark; a spinet by Grand Piano Company; and several electronic organs from Lowrey, Conn., Wurlitzer, and Rodgers—the last-named represented by a 32-pedal all-transistor model priced at \$6,570. "Of course," Del Padre explained, "these are only a handful of the lines we carry, but the selection here is—we hope—representative." Actually, you couldn't get away from audio at this "home show"—a few steps from Del Padre's array we ran into a bevy of Roberts tape recorders, displayed by a local furniture outlet; further along Hammond organs were being shown by the manufacturer; and to cap it all there was a studio setup by WMAS-FM (94.7 me; Springfield) which used, among other items, the Empire turntable. It was, for us, old home week at the new home show.

WHAT SCIENTIST IN HIS RIGHT MIND

would turn his back on Fame and Fortune . . .
move to Hope, Arkansas . . . and devote his life to
building the world's most perfect speaker systems?

PAUL W. KLIPSCH, SCIENTIST, ENGINEER, FANATIC. A man holding patents on everything from electronic instruments to the world famous KLIPSCHORN and Klipsch speaker systems.

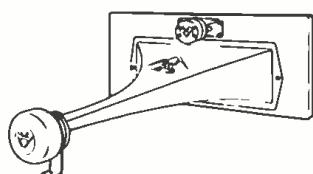
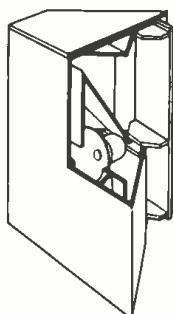
Klipsch built his first loudspeaker back in 1920 from earphones and a long cardboard tube. For the next 19 years he immersed himself in the study of basic speaker design principles.

By 1939 Klipsch had finally synthesized the basic laws of physics into the most theoretically correct loudspeaker ever designed.

Now the job was to make the prototype. In Klipsch's own words, "I built her with a borrowed handsaw, hundreds of screws and plenty of elbow grease. I filled my mistakes with glue and sawdust. I don't know how I did it, but the baby was air tight . . . and damned efficient!"

But Klipsch was not completely satisfied.

For 8 years he labored at perfecting the bass response (30 to 400 cps). Finally he got what he wanted . . . smooth, undistorted sound and magnificent bass fundamentals so low and powerful that they could reproduce even the Tibia pedal tones of a huge pipe organ.



Accurate reproduction of the important mid-range (400-5000 cps) underwent even more research and design analysis. Klipsch spent 15 years developing this mid-range horn and the tweeter (5000 to 20,000 cps) to their present state of perfection.

CHOICE OF EXPERTS—Result of this 23 year labor of love is the KLIPSCHORN. Acclaimed by audio experts as the finest speaker system in the world, because of its unique high efficiency exponential corner-horn design. Continually chosen by leading professional musicians as the only system which can truly recreate the

total sound of a great symphony orchestra at concert hall listening levels.

The KLIPSCHORN has the lowest distortion and widest full power frequency response of any speaker system in the world . . . 1/10 or 1% FM distortion* from 30 to 20,000 cycles per second at over 115 decibels of sound output. It would take a loudspeaker 8 times larger than the KLIPSCHORN to accomplish anywhere near the same sound quality.

KLIPSCHORN is neither a shoe-box nor a clothes closet. It is not too small or too large. It is the optimum size for the reproduction of music.

KLIPSCHORN is not a bargain basement system. It retails from \$514 to over \$800. But if you are a music lover with a truly discriminating ear . . . or if you seek to cultivate one . . . the KLIPSCHORN is made for you. Ultimately you'll be satisfied with nothing less, price be hanged.

WIDE STAGE STEREO AND THE HERESY—When Paul Klipsch heard ordinary two-speaker stereo, he realized it was painfully inadequate. He knew that to reproduce a live performance, the whole wall of the living room must come alive with sound.

In his laboratory he developed Wide Stage Stereo. To achieve this kind of stereo experts have long recognized the need for three full range speakers . . . two located diagonally in the corners and one in the center. For a center speaker, Klipsch developed his first non-corner speaker, the Heresy.

Naturally, the Heresy is a Klipsch quality low distortion high output speaker. It is a 3-way system with 1/10 or 1% distortion* throughout its 50 to 20,000 cps range.

Klipsch enthusiasts with space problems soon began to use the Heresy (Model H)

independently of its larger brother. As one apartment dweller said, "When I realized I couldn't use a KLIPSCHORN, I knew the only other speaker to own was the Heresy."

The Heresy is 11" x 15" x 21". Its retail price is \$221.

QUELLING A CONTROVERSY—For years a controversy had raged among speaker designers as to which was the best, a horn or an enclosure type speaker. Klipsch

had proved the answer to that one with the KLIPSCHORN. But now he was challenged to create an enclosure type speaker.

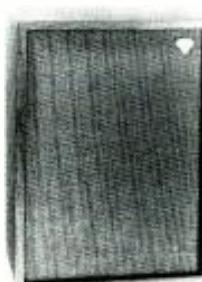
He set as his goal "maximum performance per cubic foot." The result was the beautiful Cornwall. Easily the finest enclosure speaker ever produced.

This loudspeaker is a 3-way system with extremely smooth response from 30 to 20,000 cps. The Cornwall is only 6 dbi less efficient than the mighty KLIPSCHORN. It has the lowest distortion* of any enclosure system available. The Cornwall may be purchased for \$416.

We sincerely hope you will listen to our systems and compare them with others. You will then know why Klipsch is acknowledged as creator of the speakers by which all others must be judged.



KLIPSCH
& ASSOCIATES
Box 96 HF-7
Hope, Arkansas



Please send me complete information on the KLIPSCHORN, Heresy and Cornwall speaker systems. Also include the name of my nearest Klipsch Authorized Audio Expert.

KLIPSCH & ASSOCIATES
Box 96 HF-7
Hope, Arkansas

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

OCCUPATION _____ AGE _____

*In Klipsch speakers all forms of distortion are minimized especially FM and AM distortion which are many times as objectionable as simple harmonic distortion. Technical papers available on this subject.

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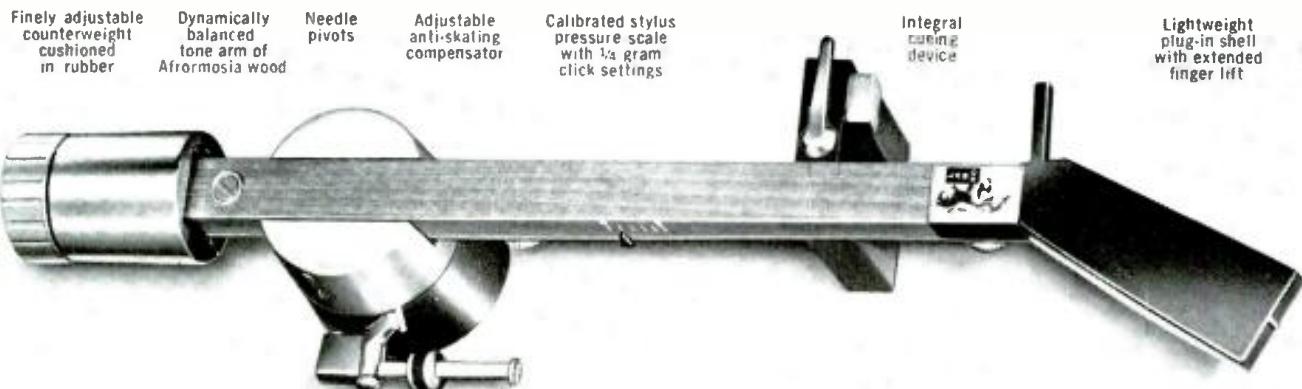
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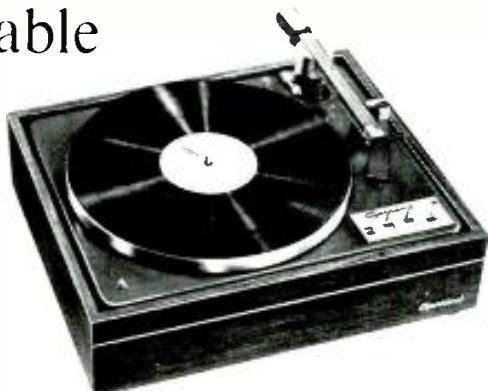
CIRCLE 36 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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McIntosh



The tone arm system of Garrard's new Lab 80 Automatic Transcription Turntable is a masterful combination of developments...all of them needed to achieve full benefit from the most advanced ultra-sensitive cartridges



**"Which cartridge
do you recommend?"**

**"Can I use the—
model?"**

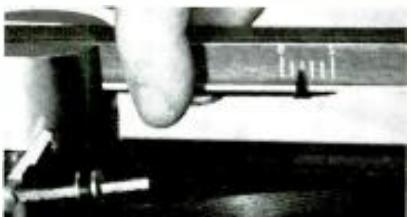
**"How lightly and
precisely will it
track?"**

**"Will it get the
best performance
from the pick up I
select?"**



These are certainly the most commonly asked (and misunderstood) questions concerning record playing equipment. Now they have been resolved with the development of the Lab 80 tone arm system. Distinguished in appearance...as well as performance...this unique tone arm is the ideal transport for cartridges of professional calibre, including those originally designed for use with separate arms. It is built of Afrormosia, the least resonant of all woods, held in precision alignment by an aluminum stabilizer along its entire length. The knurled counterweight can be finely adjusted to put the arm in perfect dynamic balance.

The built-in calibrated stylus pressure gauge has click adjustments, each click representing one-quarter of a gram.



It provides a precise method of setting the tracking force specified by the cartridge manufacturer, no matter how light



...to the correct fraction of a gram. Because of today's featherweight tracking, the slightest interference with free arm movement may affect the cartridge's performance. To avoid this, the Lab 80 arm moves on needle pivots, set into tiny ballbearings. Flat arm geometry cancels warp-wow; low center of gravity eliminates sensitivity to external jarring.

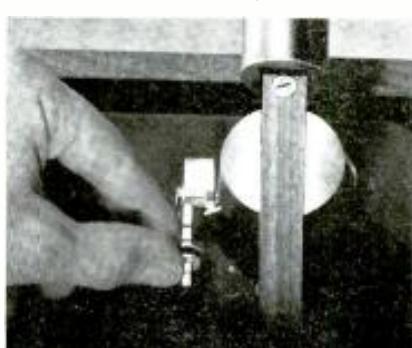
The lightweight removable shell is compatible with all cartridges...most particularly the low mass professional types. The shell slides into the arm on



channels...locks into position...cannot resonate or become misaligned.

Because of the offset angle used to minimize tracking error...all tone arms

have an inherent tendency to move inward (skate) toward the center of the record. This tiny side pressure must be cancelled out accurately, to permit the arm to track sensitive cartridges without distortion. The Lab 80 accomplishes this with a patented adjustable anti-skating compensator, making it possible to use cartridges with the highest compliance and most delicate stylus assemblies.



This total performance tone arm system, plus an ingenious cueing control (built into an automatic unit for the first time) and the other advanced features which distinguish the Lab 80, are detailed, illustrated and explained in the Garrard 32-page Comparator Guide covering the entire line. For your complimentary copy, write: Garrard, Dept. GA-25, Port Washington, N.Y.

Garrard
WORLD'S FINEST



Mr. Britten and the Loudspeaker

ONE YEAR AGO THIS MONTH, the first Aspen Award was presented to Benjamin Britten by the Aspen (Colorado) Institute for Humanistic Studies. Britten's acceptance speech, delivered on July 31, 1964, is a remarkable one, worthy in every way of a man who is not only one of our age's most gifted composers but a thoughtful champion of the humanities as well. We have found ourselves re-reading this document more than once over the past year. All of it is absorbing, but perhaps we can be forgiven a disproportionate interest in those passages that touch upon the subject of recorded music.

Mr. Britten is not what we would call a high fidelity buff. For example: "It is one of the unhappiest results of the march of science and commerce that this unique work [Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*], at the turn of a switch, is at the mercy of any loud roomful of cocktail drinkers—to be listened to or switched off at will, without ceremony or occasion." Or: "If I say the loudspeaker is the principal enemy of music, I don't mean that I am not grateful to it as a means of education or study, or as an evoker of memories. But it is not part of true musical experience. Regarded as such, it is simply a substitute, and dangerous because deluding. Music demands . . . some preparation, some effort—a journey to a special place, saving up for a ticket, some homework on the program perhaps, some clarification of the ears and sharpening of the instincts."

We hope it is not simple defensiveness that prompts us to offer a few comments of our own, not so much in disagreement as in elaboration on Mr. Britten's views. Let us start by conceding a point or two. There is too much music in the air; we are awash in a sea of slattery submelody, most of it bad, nearly all of it indifferently aimed and indifferently received. It desensitizes us and debases art. And we hasten to agree that recorded music is no substitute for the live experience; it complements, it does not replace.

But misuse of a principle does not invalidate that principle. Every shiny symbol of "progress" we can think of has its stained underside—the Wrights

flap about for a few seconds at Kitty Hawk, and within a very short time men are plopping high explosives on one another. We suppose there are people who will drink martinis over the *St. Matthew Passion*, in which case both Bach and the cocktail party will suffer. But that, we submit, is one of the tougher essentials of *la vie artistique*. Mr. Britten is all in favor of people making use of music—he sticks up for the occasional piece, for the specific composition for the specific occasion. Yet to ask that music be made use of, and then to seek to limit and control and ration its use, is futile.

We are sure that hearing *Noye's Fludde* in the little church at Aldeburgh is an excellent experience of that work—the one it was designed for, after all. But we aren't sure that listening to *Noye's Fludde* in a small opera house, or even in our living room, is such a poor idea. It is of the nature of dramatic art that it creates time and place and mood for us. Indeed, the *œuvre* of Mr. Britten offers wonderful fodder for a more positive attitude towards the loudspeaker; we hate to think how much narrower our experience of his work would be, and how much shallower our understanding of those pieces we have been able to hear in live performance, without this "principal enemy of music." It is possible that, somewhere, someone is switching the *Canticles* on and off at a cocktail party. The people who are gibbering through it are precisely those who gibber or doze through it in the concert hall. Place their heads right here, on the block.

As for us, we consider music at home quite a special thing. We set aside time for it, and for it alone. We take out our libretto or score if we need it. We ready our ears to be clarified and our instincts to be sharpened. We make our preparation and effort, and do our homework—and then as concertgoers we find ourselves more appreciative, not less, of the very human and imperfect art of live performance. We trust that when and if Mr. Britten and Mr. Pears offer us a live performance of the *Canticles*, we will be on hand, taught by our phonographs to listen with keener and more perceptive ears.





by Roy Lindstrom

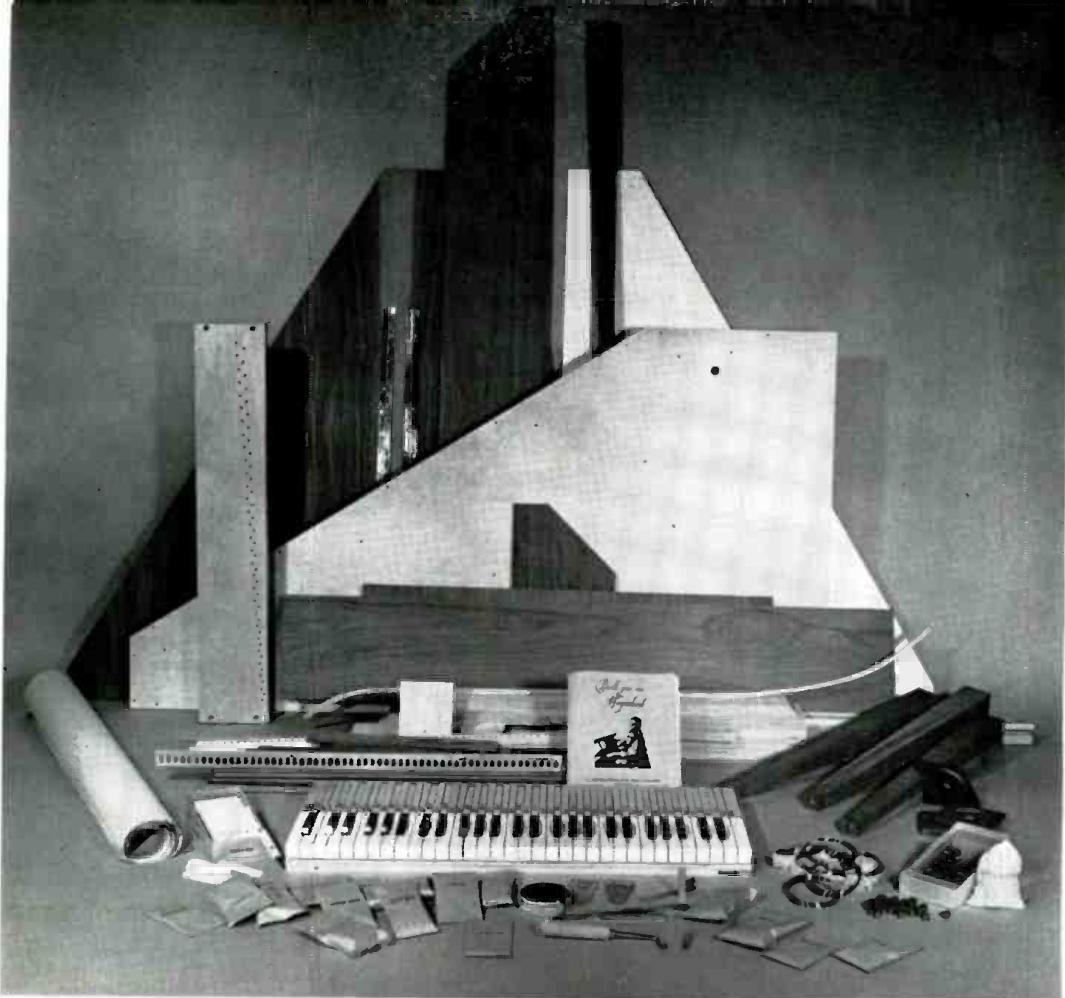
A KIT CAN BE A Harpsichord

FOR THE KIT BUILDER who has worked his way through the elements of a high fidelity rig and feels that there are no worlds left to conquer, the availability in kit form of a complementary instrument to his home music system should be welcome news. When that instrument is a harpsichord, his pleasure should be compounded; not only does such a kit afford all the familiar satisfactions associated with do-it-yourself activity but the harpsichord itself is a perfect instrument to grace the living room.

Intimate and delicate in sound, evoking the charm of a courtly past, the "modern" harpsichord has a history so ancient that its beginnings are shrouded in obscurity. It is known, however, that rudimentary versions existed as early as the fourteenth century, and a miniature in the *Belles Heures* of the Due de Berry (1409) portrays a wing-shaped keyboard instrument recognizable as an early progenitor. By 1500 a second register was being added, and in 1579 the octave string. The latter development is frequently attributed to the Ruckers family of Antwerp, who, over a period of ninety years or more, built instruments of such superb design that they established a tradition enduring to the present day. With the Flemish models as exemplars, English makers in the eighteenth century introduced the use of pedals and German builders produced instruments of very considerable size and complexity.

The Zuckerman harpsichord shown on these pages is a simple 8-foot single-manual instrument, which in kit form costs \$308. The 57-note keyboard is ideal for use as a continuo instrument in the performance of baroque chamber works and is a delightful solo instrument. It is adequate for the music of such composers as Couperin, Scarlatti, and Bach, although a larger two-manual instrument would be preferred by most professional performers. Given the acoustics of the average home, the harpsichord produces a beautiful balance; as an amateur chamber player, I find particularly grateful its capacity to blend with, rather than overpower, the strings or winds.

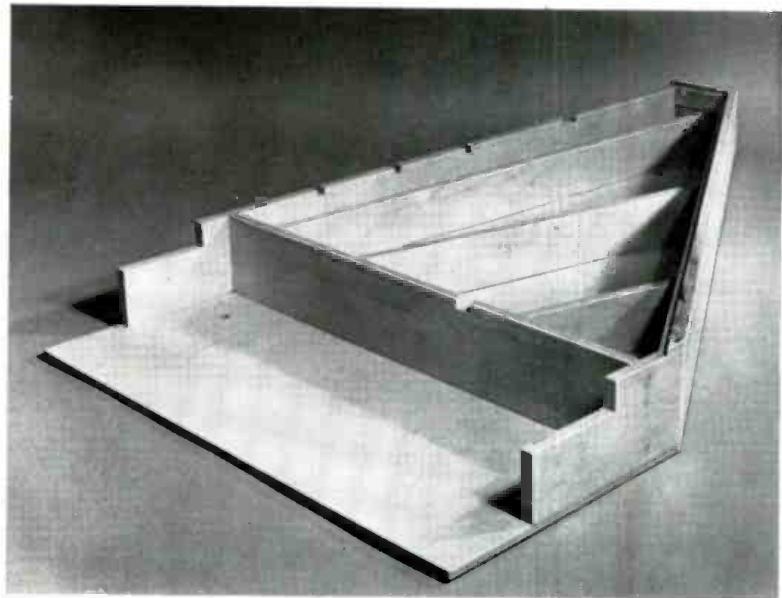
The competent handy man, with a moderate knowledge of woodworking, should encounter no insuperable obstacles in construction (my kit went together in approximately 150 hours). Both the inner and outer cases are precut, thus eliminating the problem of ill-fitting joints. A full-size scale drawing is included, and the instruction and maintenance manual is well written. The audio kit builder will, however, have to adjust to a new technical vocabulary, and I recommend that he follow Mr. Zuckerman's advice to read the entire manual through before beginning work. Such a procedure provides a concept of the project as a whole, and forewarns of areas that can give trouble. String alignment, for instance,



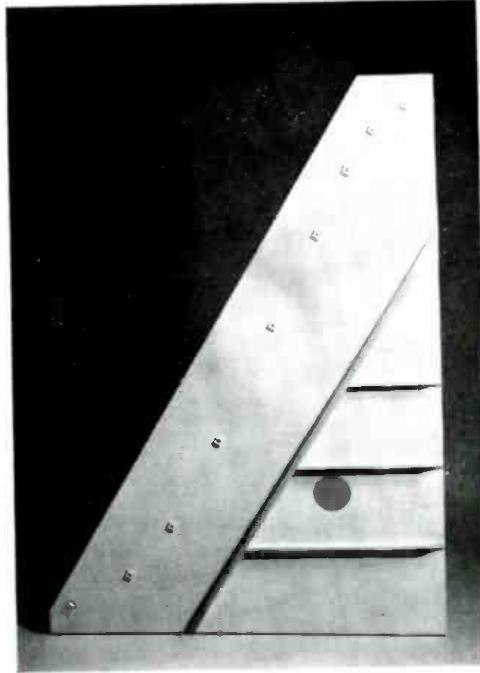
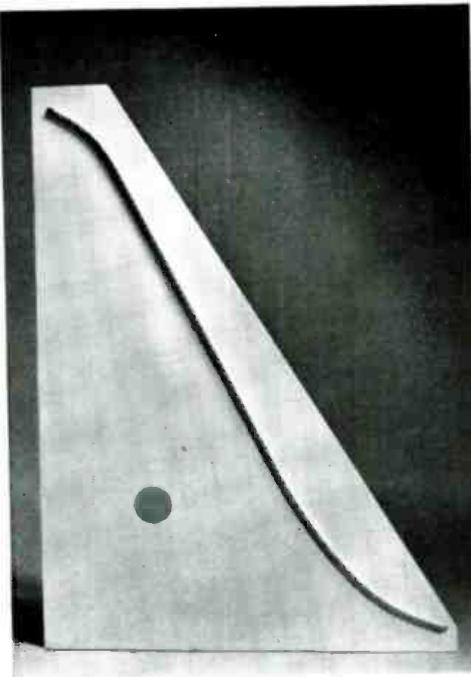
This photo display shows all parts of the Zuckerman harpsichord kit, unpacked and ready for construction to begin. The dark wood is walnut outer case; both inner and outer cases are precut. The envelopes in the foreground contain hardware accessories, felts, and leather plectra. To right of keyboard can be seen coils of stringing wire.

Harpsichord

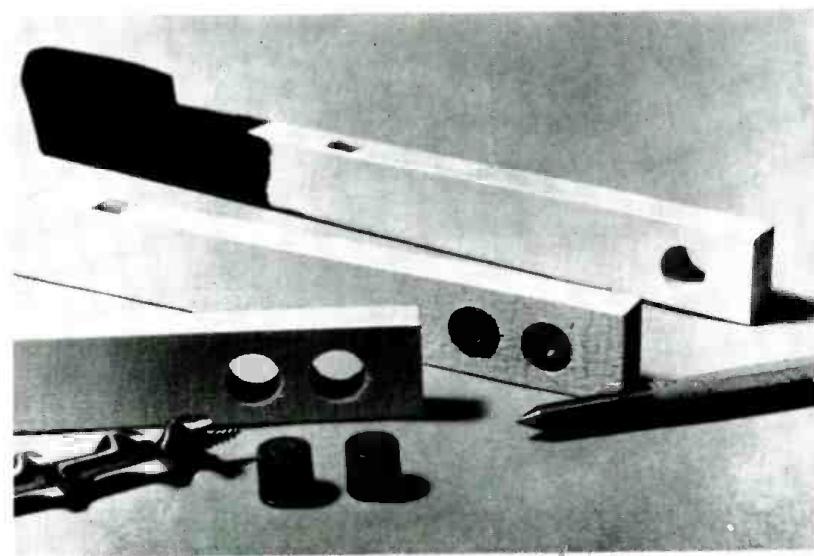
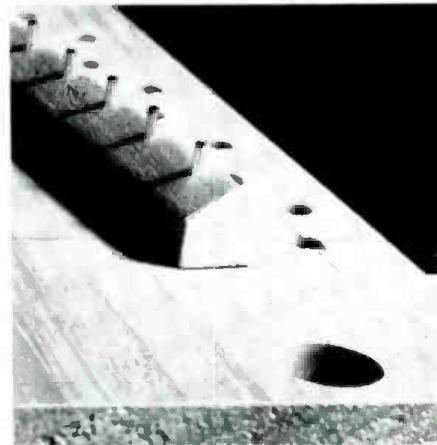
is of critical concern, and it is here that one should proceed with caution. Voicing, the cutting of the leather plectra, is perhaps the most exciting moment (and the most crucial) as it is then that one hears the first sounds out of the harpsichord. And as one works down the keyboard the fun becomes greater, with more playable notes being added. Finishing the outer case is a matter of individual taste. The wood is veneered walnut, and you need do no more than apply successive coats of linseed oil. I used a quick-drying highly refined linseed oil called "GB" Lin-speed gun stock oil (sold in most sporting goods stores) which made a beautiful finish. A molding is suggested around the edges of the outer case; I myself prefer the very simple and attractive lines unadorned. The early harpsichord makers ornamented their instruments with ornate and intricate inlays as well as with elaborately detailed paintings. But the sound's the thing: hearing Bach and Couperin come to life on an instrument of one's own making is a satisfaction rare indeed.



The inner case, made from $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood, is the first stage of construction. It's a good idea to place all side pieces and three braces loosely on top of the plywood bottom in position they are to occupy. This gives one a chance to check for errors in measurements. Be sure the two mitered corners fit accurately. Next step is to glue and screw boards in place. For all gluing operations a white glue is used. Allow half an hour for drying.

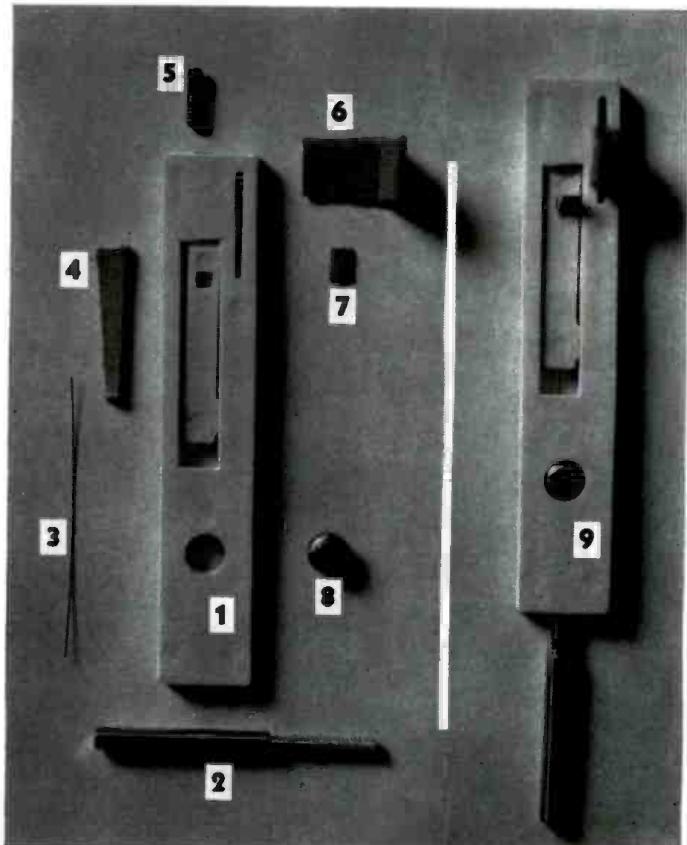


The soundboard, made from Italian poplar, is laminated in three layers. The bridge, shown in position in the photo at left, is glued to top of soundboard and secured by screws and wooden washers from the underside of the soundboard, shown in illustration at the right. One main rib and three auxiliary ribs are glued to the underside of the soundboard. The rose is a tradition in harpsichords and is purely decorative. Cutout for rose shows in both photographs.



Keys need lead weights inserted to fall back after having been depressed. Holes are drilled from side to side, and then plugged with lead weights. All the white keys require two pellets, while black keys need only one slug. A prick punch was used to tamp leads enough to gain a sufficient spread to hold lead in keys.

The fifty-seven harpsichord jacks are assembled individually from the various components shown in photo on the right. 1) Plastic Jack Body: this includes a hinged tongue, plus cutouts for lead plug and damper felt. 2) End Pin: the end pin is the bottom adjustment that determines the distance of the plectrum to the string, which in turn determines the point in the downward travel of the key at which the pluck occurs. 3) Spring: the spring serves to throw the tongue forward after the plectrum passes string on the way down. 4) Leather Plectrum: it must be stiff enough to stand constant wear but pliable enough to pluck the string with "give"; tapered end is pulled through square hole on jack tongue and cemented in position with Duco cement. 5) Adjustment Screw: this screw moves the tongue containing the plectrum backwards or forwards, thus making the tone louder or softer. 6) Damper: a piece of red felt inserted in the slot at the top of the jack, the damper functions as a means of stopping the string from vibrating after the key is released and the jack has returned to its original position. 7) Tongue Felt: this prevents the tongue from clacking against adjustment screw. 8) Lead Plug: plug returns jack to its original rest position. 9) Completed Jack: Leather plectrum has been trimmed, and jack is ready for insertion in the jack slide.



Completed inner case and musical parts of the harpsichord. All jacks have been inserted in the jack slide. The loud and soft stop works by moving jack slide slightly from side to side by means of the long brass bar on right side of instrument. Lute stop is worked by short brass arm on bass side of keyboard. Pin block is just above keyboard. This block contains tuning pins (front row). Just behind these are the front bridge and lute bar, which have lute felts glued into position. Last stage is to construct the walnut outer case.

Antidotes For NOISE

... being an account of some combative
measures certified to banish hiss, hum, howls, and
other hideous sounds from your stereo rig

by Edward F. McIntyre

WITHOUT being fanciful, one may liken the art of sound reproduction to the science of metallurgy: the aim of both is to extract something of value from a baser context—pure metal from ore, clean sound from noise.

While many noises are accidental—someone sneezes during the recording of a live program—or purely extraneous—a steam pipe suddenly whistles as you are listening to "Vissi d'arte"—noise is also inherent in the very processes and equipment used in recording and playback. The chain of events, "from the violinist's bow to the listener's ear," is actually a very complex communications system full of noise-inducing barriers which must be avoided, or their effects minimized, if an accurate replica of the original signal is to emerge. Engineers express the problem involved as a "signal-to-noise" ratio. In a music-reproducing system or one of its elements, such as an amplifier, the s/n ratio indicates how strong the loudest music is (at low distortion) in comparison with the noise inherent in the system or component. The relationship between signal and noise is expressed in decibels (db), a measurement of the ratio between two electrical values. When the loudest undistorted musical signal is at least 50 db louder than its inherent noise, that noise will be unobtrusive—even in soft musical passages—under average home listening conditions.

The most easily identifiable noise in disc reproduction is, of course, surface noise ("record scratch"), resulting from microscopic irregularities in the record material. The shellac of the older 78-rpm records often held a certain amount of an abrasive intended to grind the steel needle down to fit the groove. Naturally surface noise was fairly high on such records, and would have sounded worse than it did if the pickups, amplifiers, and loudspeakers used twenty years ago had reproduced high frequencies

as well as does today's equipment. Vinylite, the substance used for LPs, has no added abrasive and is intrinsically smoother than shellac. For this reason (as well as because of improvements in cutting techniques) the better records made today have an s/n ratio of about 55 db—which means that surface noise is generally unobtrusive, or even undetectable.

Most record noise can be traced to the playback equipment. If all your records suddenly begin to suffer from hiss, you may have a chipped or worn stylus or there may be a mechanical breakage in the vibrating system of the cartridge. If you suspect the latter, have the cartridge inspected by an expert. Again, although a pickup may not actually be defective, it may have too strong a resonance, producing a "ringing" in the highs—often associated with a rough, loud, "errry" scratch of a definite pitch. A resonance-free or at least well-damped pickup produces a soft hiss of indeterminate pitch (turn the volume control way up to hear this) that indicates very smooth highs. Smooth, extended high-frequency response will not emphasize record noise as much as peaked or limited-band response.

Even when both disc and pickup are fairly noise-free, the high end can sound "noisy" if frequency response is unbalanced so that the highs are being unduly "favored." This can happen if the pickup feeds into the wrong load—some ceramics, for instance, need 2 megohms or more for good bass response and some older amplifiers provide no more than 100,000 to 250,000 ohms at the ceramic input. Newer amplifiers do provide a correct match. On the other hand, a magnetic pickup connected to the ceramic input will sound, because of the resultant incorrect equalization, very sharp in the highs and very low in volume. Another cause of high-end imbalance—which would be heard on all program material (tapes, broadcasts, and discs)—is a defective

woofer that stops functioning, letting you hear only the midrange and tweeter. This failure also will be apparent as a reduction in volume and very thin sound generally. Finally, the tweeter level control—in an otherwise perfect system—may be set too high.

At the bass end of response, the most common noise from disc playback is turntable rumble. Rumble that is heard suddenly is rare and suggests a breakdown in turntable or changer. More often it becomes evident with the installation of a new pickup, amplifier, or speaker—any or all of which have stronger bass response—or with the repositioning of speakers. If rumble is bothersome, the best cure is a more refined turntable or changer; if one is willing to put up with some loss of the very lowest bass, however, a well-designed rumble filter (found on most current amplifiers) can reduce the noise considerably.

A particularly unsettling and dangerous noise is the sustained howl or roar of pronounced "acoustic feedback." A loud note from the speakers physically shakes the turntable and with it the pickup and stylus, sending a strong noise signal through the system, which emerges from the speakers—only to shake the turntable again, and so on, to set up a self-perpetuating, continuous, sonic explosion which may damage the speakers or other parts of the system. If such a loud howl suddenly issues from your speakers, turn the volume control down at once. Then try to determine what has made your turntable vulnerable to being vibrated by sound from the speakers. Some possibilities: turntable and speakers are too close together; the springy turntable mounting, intended to filter out vibration, is out of order (rubber has hardened, for instance); volume and bass controls have been turned higher than has ever been done previously; the turntable has been installed in a new cabinet, which has a panel that vibrates strongly in response to speaker sound; a speaker has been relocated to a spot that feeds strong vibration into the floor.

Sustained acoustic feedback is fairly rare in systems in which the speakers are located at some distance from the turntable, and the turntable itself is installed on a fairly soft mounting. Momentary feedback, however, can occur even in such systems; triggered by a strong bass note, it sounds like a "muddy," choking, or burbling effect as the stylus jumps around in the groove. The cure, again, is more effective isolation between speaker and turntable. A softer turntable mounting—thick strips or even a full pad of rubber foam often helps. The speaker cabinets themselves ought to be placed on a similar cushion to reduce feedback effects further.

ANOTHER GROUP of noises is associated with tape. Tape hiss, the most common, is caused by the "grain" of the tape, microscopic irregularities in its magnetic coating. Whatever hiss is present on an original tape can, of course, be compounded in duplicating another tape from it. Thanks to recent improvements in commercial dubbing, the tape hiss characteristic of early prerecorded tapes is hardly a real problem with the latest releases.

In general, however, the progress under way to get longer playing time from tape, and the use of multi-tracks, does accentuate the hiss problem. All other things being equal, as the width of the magnetic track on a tape is made smaller, the effective hiss level goes up. Fortunately, tapes with lower inherent noise are steadily being developed for commercial and for home recording use.

A tape inherently quiet can be made hissy by many of the same malfunctions that raise disc noise: anything that strongly upsets the frequency balance in amplifier or speaker, in favor of the highs. There is also a potent hiss-multiplier peculiar to tape machines: magnetization of the heads. On every machine the heads gradually acquire a permanent magnetization, usually from strong current surges that occur when the controls are operated. A magnetized head not only makes a tape sound hissy but will record the hiss permanently onto the tape! Thus, if you put on a recorded tape and it sounds more hissy than you remember, stop the machine, remove the tape to a safe distance, and demagnetize the heads with a head degausser. If you use your machine often, it is good practice to degauss the heads regularly.

Also peculiar to tape is "modulation noise," actually a form of flutter. As the tape rubs over the heads and guides, it tends to stick a little, then jump ahead, producing a very fast vibration that can add some "mushy" distortion to the sound. It seems to be "behind" the music, rising or falling with its volume. If this noise becomes excessive on your machine, examine the tension on the tape: too high a tension, pulling the tape hard against the heads and guides, can increase the noise. Cleaning the heads and guides regularly, using a cloth moistened in alcohol, helps reduce the noise. In truth, modulation noise is mainly a problem of wide-range, top-grade equipment; on poorer machines it tends to be masked by other more obvious noises and distortions.

Every user of an FM tuner knows the roaring hiss that comes in between stations. If a tuner is operating properly and if it gets a strong enough signal, this noise is blocked out when the station comes in. Tuners vary as to the strength of the signal needed to block the noise; the sensitivity specification expresses this strength as the microvolts of signal that will reduce the noise by, say, 30 db, an acceptable figure. In favorable reception locales, almost any sensitivity will do, up to scores or hundreds of microvolts. For more difficult, or remote, locales, higher sensitivity (lower number of microvolts) is needed.

As important as tuner sensitivity in getting a strong enough signal is the antenna system. An indoor antenna—even when used with a very high-sensitivity tuner—can prove inadequate in many installations. The only way then to get more signal and less noise is to use an outdoor or attic-installed antenna. This applies even more forcibly for FM stereo, which in effect is a weaker signal than monophonic FM.

An FM set may reproduce ignition noise—a fast popping or buzzy grinding sound—that coincides with the passing of a car or with a neighbor's lawn mower. Many FM tuners are resistant to this "im-

HUM IN RECORD PLAYERS

Turntable-pickup combination is best checked out for hum with no other signal sources connected to amplifier. Speakers should always be connected to amplifier. As a safety precaution, it is recommended that before any unit is connected or disconnected, you turn down the amplifier volume control; shut off all power switches; remove power plugs from wall sockets.

Cause of Hum	Where It Develops	Comments
Inductive hum	Between pairs of signal cables from same stereo program source.	Keep these pairs as close together as possible. Twisting them loosely and lacing them helps.
	Between AC lines and signal cables.	Keep these apart and preferably running so that they are not parallel with each other.
	Between turntable motor and pickup.	Hum increases when motor is on and pickup is moved across platter. Remedy is better-shielded motor, or pickup, or both.
	Between amplifier and pickup.	Hum lessens as record player is moved away from, or at different angle to amplifier, especially from that portion of chassis containing power supply. Try to keep at least ten inches distance between pickup and amplifier.
"Rumble hum"	From turntable motor through tone arm rest and into signal cables.	Hum lessens when motor is on and pickup is lifted from rest. Relocating the arm rest may help, but actually the noise is rumble from the motor, rather than hum. Only cure may be a better turntable.
Cartridge/shell ground-strap	Plastic shell.	If cartridge was supplied with grounding strap, it may have come loose. Metal strip should connect cartridge body to one of cartridge's negative pins.
	Metal shell.	Just the opposite may help. If metal shell makes contact with metal arm, a grounding strap here may create a ground loop in the shell; try disconnecting the strap.
Inadequate ground	Between record player and chassis of amplifier or preamplifier.	Main symptom is hum, with motor off or on, that increases when you touch pickup shell. Neither the arm nor the motor should be grounded through the shield of a pickup signal cable. Instead, the arm or motor or both should be connected, via its own insulated wire, to the preamp chassis. One wire, from ground lug of motor to holding screw of tone arm and thence to chassis of amplifier, may do.
Faulty shielding	At connector or internally within length of cable.	Main symptom is hum that changes when signal cable is grasped tightly. Check for broken or poorly soldered connection between shield and phono plug, or for break in shield at some point along the cable itself.
Ground loop	Between any two points in system that are themselves grounded.	Although two or more points—in a system or sometimes on the same chassis—are nominally grounded, a difference in electrical potential between them may exist. A prime symptom of a ground loop is hum that decreases in one channel when the connector for the other channel is removed from the preamp. To check for ground loop, look for bare shields touching each other, or two signal grounds connected at pickup end, or two external grounds from same system (it should use only one external ground). Note: the "floating shield" technique (see below) often can eliminate a ground loop.
Inadequate shielding	In normal phono cable hookups (single inner conductor surrounded by shield).	See item above, on grounding turntable and arm via separate wire. As a last resort, try using a floating shield: use cable with two inner conductors surrounded by shield for each channel. Inner wires carry "hot" and "return" sides of signal and connect to phono plugs. Shield is not connected to anything at turntable end but is connected to preamp chassis near or at phono input receptacles.

HUM IN COMPONENTS

AMPLIFIERS

Persistent hum in an amplifier or preamp generally requires professional servicing. A few hints before calling for help: hum that does not change when you vary the volume control could be caused by a bad output tube or transistor; by a defective filter capacitor; by a "leaky" power transformer; sometimes by incorrect dressing of wires or a faulty ground connection inside the chassis. Some of these items can be checked by the owner, especially if the unit was built from a kit and construction notes facilitate going over areas previously wired. With the power off, check for cold solder joints, loose or missing ground lug connections, wires incorrectly routed, and so on.

Hum that responds to the volume control (and that has definitely been ruled out as originating in a program source) could be caused by a defective part or tube in the preamp, or by a tube shield that has been left off or is not making good contact with the chassis, or by a faulty ground connection (cold solder joint or loose lug).

TAPE RECORDERS

In addition to checking for ground loops between the tape machine and the system amplifier, and the possibility of using the floating shield technique (see chart), check also for obvious defects in the tape recorder's electronic section (as for amplifiers), and for a possible fault in the shielding of the playback head. Persistent hum requires professional servicing.

TUNERS

Repeat checks of cables, plugs, ground loops. If cabling faults are eliminated, then hum may be caused by a faulty tube or capacitor. Strong hum on all stations suggests a breakdown in the oscillator section, or even a basic design flaw in the set. Professional help is required. Hum on only one station probably is coming in with the signal—blame that station.

OVER-ALL "SYSTEM HUM"

With all program sources connected, a relatively faint hum may be heard that was not audible when only one program source was connected. In addition to checking again for ground loops as before, try reversing the power plugs of each unit in the system, one at a time. Finally, connect the entire system—from one point only, preferably the amplifier or preamp chassis—via an insulated wire to a good external ground: a water or heating pipe, the holding screw on a wall outlet, or conceivably a metal rod driven right into the earth.

pulse noise," but if it becomes prevalent, you may have to use 75-ohm coaxial cable instead of the more familiar and cheaper twin-lead to connect the set to the antenna. The cable generally requires additional

parts, such as matching transformers—better consult your local service man or the set manufacturer.

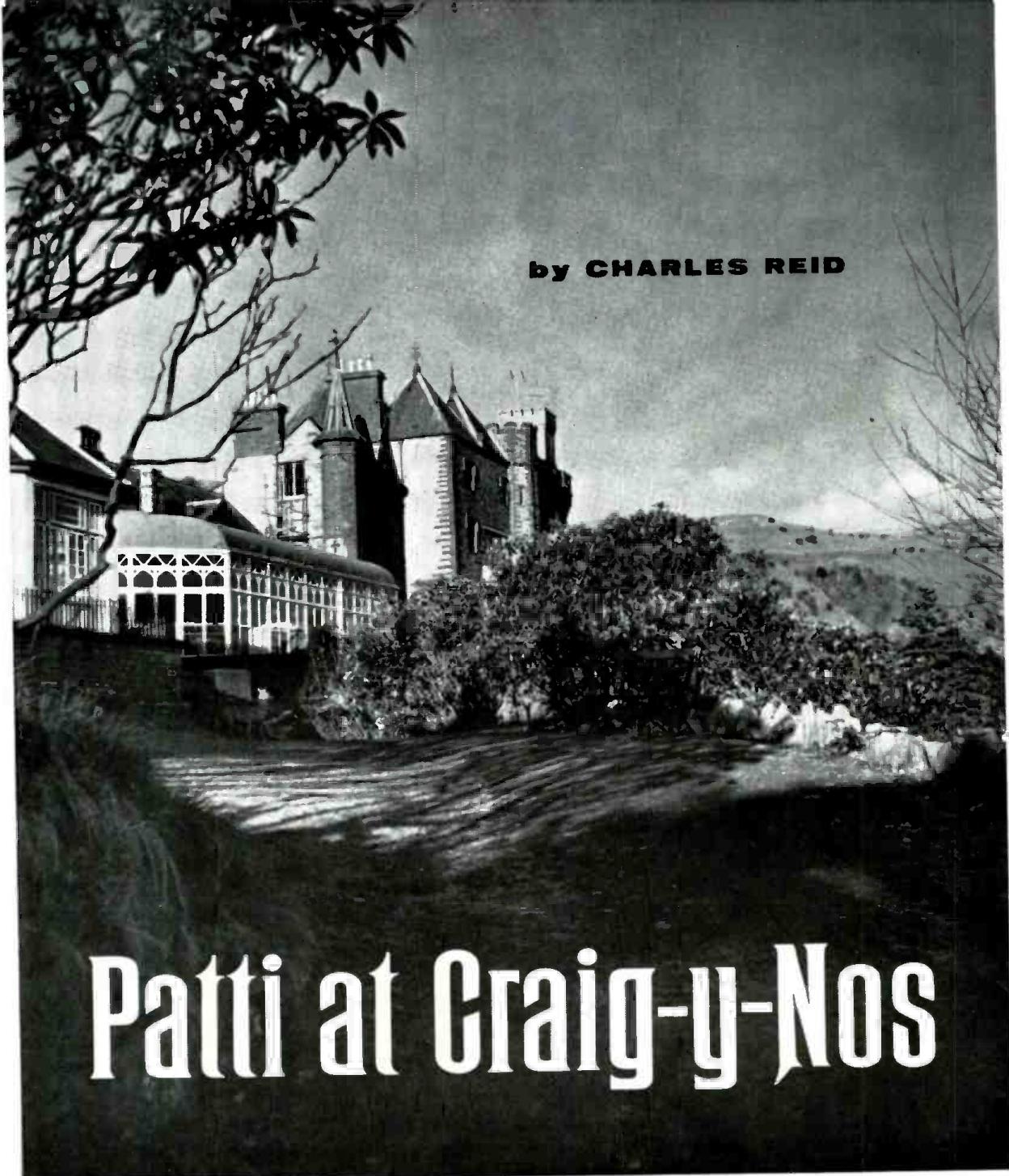
ASIDE FROM noises peculiar to program sources, many unwanted sounds originate in an amplifier. Analysis and cure often take professional skill in trouble-shooting, in isolating the noise to one stage of the circuit, and in replacing defective parts. Some of the more common noises can be described briefly. A "frying" sound generally denotes a defective resistor in a grid or plate circuit. A "popping" sound usually is caused by a coupling capacitor that is leaking current intermittently. "Motorboating" is a symptom of oscillation or instability, often caused by a defect in the power-supply filter section that has triggered unwanted feedback in the circuit. Often the cause of motorboating may be quite elusive; expert help is recommended.

"Microphonics"—a ringing or bonging sound which may tend to build up and sustain itself—occurs when a tube vulnerable to this effect (usually the first tube in the preamplifier) is jarred or vibrated mechanically. You can test for a microphonic tube by tapping each one very lightly with a pencil—the offender will produce a loud bong with each tap. The remedy is to substitute another tube, of a type interchangeable with the first. There are a number of tubes on the market built especially to resist the effect. If you can't change the tube, it may be necessary to put it on vibration-resistant mountings installed over the tube socket.

Transistors, of course, are immune to microphonics, but a transistor, like other electronic devices, has a noise level of its own. In germanium transistors particularly, a high leakage current may produce an obtrusive roaring or hissing noise: leakage comes from overload, or from faulty manufacture. Excessive heat can also raise the noise level of a transistor. In general, a transistor amplifier can be as quiet, or as noisy, as a tube amplifier—depending, of course, on how each has been designed.

Only a few noises originate in loudspeakers, and the occur but rarely in speakers of decent design. A badly torn cone produces buzzy or sandpaper noises. A rasping on loud notes may be caused by the rubbing of the voice-coil against the magnet structure, or against some foreign material such as small bits of metal that have been attracted into the gap between voice-coil and magnet. A rubbing voice-coil can also mean that the voice-coil "former" is misshapen or that the inner cone suspension ("spider") is damaged. If any of these defects seems indicated, better get professional help.

First, though, you may want to make sure that a speaker buzz or rasp is in fact a defect in the speaker itself. A very similar sound can be caused by "multipath distortion" on FM broadcasts, the effect of receiving reflections of an FM signal along with the signal; if the same noise occurs when you play records or tapes, you will know that it is actually in the speaker. Another possible *Continued on page 87*



by CHARLES REID

Patti at Craig-y-Nos

Photos by Hans Wild

**In the days when prima donnas were personages,
Adelina Patti reigned over a castle in Wales—equipped with forty
servants, a private theatre, and a cellar full of champagne.**

IN THE UNLIKELY SETTING of the mountains of South Wales stands an enchanting miniature opera house—its structure as sound as the day it was erected, its gold and blue and cream interior solid and unflaking, its lighting and stage machinery in perfect working order. For a third successive summer it is housing a brief season by an amateur company (with some professional stiffening) from Neath, the nearest sizable town. Before the 1963 reopening the theatre's tiny orchestra pit, which



Ernesto Nicolini: he played the squire.

seats fifteen players, and the matching auditorium, which holds 160 at a pinch, had been tenantless and silent for forty years.

The story of this toy, or bijou as the daintier Victorian writers called it, is the story also of Adelina Patti, Queen of Song, who in the late 1880s built it on to Craig-y-Nos Castle, where she lived until her death in 1919. In the theatre there are two Patti portraits. One is the original curtain drop, marred only by a water-streak down one side; it shows the diva driving a chariot as Semiramis in Rossini's opera. She has pretty hair and girlish, soulful eyes. The other, a full-length oil by one Steinhardt, hangs at the back of the stalls. Here she appears in Renaissance costume, all ruff and stomacher. She trails her fingers in a jewel casket and, while ignoring a monster dish of assorted fruits proffered by a page, regards the beholder in a severe, sidelong way. The general effect is of an almost juvenile prettiness. But, as we see also from many photographs, mouth and chin betray petulance and obstinacy.

That the Patti theatre has not only survived but been continuously maintained in going order may be ascribed to the fact that Craig-y-Nos Castle as a whole has for most of the time been a children's or an old people's hospital. Whether "voluntary" or (as nowadays) State organs, successive governing bodies have had the good taste as well as the good sense to keep the relic as they found it, resisting all temptation to turn the place into, say, storage quarters or a county ambulance garage.

Craig-y-Nos (Welsh for Rock of the Night) is a crenelated, turreted mansion in mid-Victorian Gothic. It stands a hundred or two feet up the side of a valley that narrows to a ravine. In the valley bottom are lawns, rose gardens, trout stream, and artificial lakes with skiffs and swans. Today all this is precisely as it was in Patti's day. Beyond and behind rise fell slopes, hanging woods, and



The Queen of Song: she was the chatelaine.

crowning stretches of moorland where, on sunny days in late autumn, bracken flames pinkly. All is sublime, Byronic, and tumultuous.

Patti first saw the Tawe valley, as the immediate Craig-y-Nos setting is called, when she was in her late thirties. One of her socialite friends with a place near Neath invited her to a house party and took her for a drive into the mountains. As soon as she set eyes on the Tawe country she clapped her hands and, like the adorable, spoiled child Bernard Shaw (*qua* music critic) always insisted she was, couldn't wait to make her home there. When the Craig-y-Nos estate came on the market she bought it with a whoop of delight.

A thing that pleased her especially about her castle was its wild seclusion. For unimportant people outside Patti's circle, the railway journey from Paddington station to Penwyllyt station on the facing mountain slope took a full day and involved two changes of train. For Patti—and for Patti alone—the railway companies concerned contrived a through-route and leased her a private train. The saloon coach of this train was so big that it comfortably housed one of her wedding breakfasts (her third, in 1899), the toast to the bride and bridegroom being drunk while the party were passing through a tunnel. Another innovation at Craig-y-Nos was the telephone. Transmitted orally on a crackling line to Ystradgantais post office five miles away, Patti's telegrams were taken down by clerks especially schooled for the purpose. Thus she was able, while in her mountain fastness, to keep in touch through her London agent with anxious impresarios from Milan to Moscow, Berlin to Buenos Aires.

Craig-y-Nos and its improvements cost much money. For some choice spirits who are endowed with plenty of it, spending money can be a pleasure. Patti signed stately checks with gay alacrity. As well as being Queen of Song, she was—and remains—Song's record money-getter. At her peak in the mid-

Eighties she earned £100,000 on South American stages in a mere eighteen months. Now she did not invest her earnings in Craig-y-Nos to gush over the landscape in solitary state. She bought the Castle and built the little theatre on to it as much for Ernesto Nicolini as for herself.

SON OF A Dinard hotel keeper, Ernest Nicolas had changed his name on becoming an "Italian" tenor. An indifferent Faust, Romeo, and Lohengrin, he was compensatingly handsome in a twinkling, fringe-bearded way. He first sang publicly with Patti, as Edgardo to her dazzling Lucia, in 1866. By the early 1870s he was ensconced, for all his musico-dramatic limitations, as her preferred partner on all the great operatic and concert stages of Europe.

Ernesto's advent coincided with the breakup of Patti's marriage to the Marquis de Caux, sometime equerry to Napoleon III and his wife's senior by seventeen years. Under their ultimate separation agreement, prelude to divorce in the French courts, Patti was required to divide her fortune with him. De Caux's share is said to have been a million and a half francs. His personal income had never exceeded eight pounds a week. Such a settlement argues that Patti was the culpable party, or, at any rate, the vulnerable one. In Ernesto her bruised heart found balm.

The hints and eloquent reticences of Victorian and Edwardian memorialists, as well as contemporary South Wales newspaper files, suggest that he and she were known to be something more than musical colleagues as early as 1875. By the early months of 1877 the something more had become the common talk of every greenroom in Paris and the theme of more than one chronicler's gossip column.

Nicolini's wife, mother of his five children, had obtained a legal separation and was openly denouncing her castoff husband as Patti's lover. Forbidden by De Caux to appear on the same stage with Nicolini, Patti had defiantly sung Violetta to his Germont in a St. Petersburg *Traviata*. The result of this was a brawl between husband and wife in the diva's dressing room. De Caux informed Adelina what a low creature she was. Her infidelity, he commented, was a fine return for the noble title he had conferred upon her. "Right!" exclaimed Patti, "you can take your title back." Scooping up handfuls of jewels and trinkets from her dressing table, she flung them in De Caux's face, shouting "Take these as well—in payment!" De Caux seems to have struck her. The dressing-room door was locked and had to be forced. De Caux refused to leave. The manager had him ejected from the theatre. . . .

Such, more or less, was the story as put out between them by writers in *Le Figaro* and another boulevard sheet. Patti issued a *démenti* so half-hearted that it confirmed the scandal. Separation proceedings, settlement negotiations, and the divorce process dragged on for nine years. During this time the pair's *tutoiements* in English society

were those of a couple whose "irregularity" has been indulgently accepted. They married according to the Protestant rite, despite the bride's Roman Catholic upbringing, at Ystradgantais parish church in June 1886. He was fifty-two, she forty-two. But Nicolini had made Craig-y-Nos his home some years before this.

Playing the squire, he wore gaiters, hobnobbed with his gamekeepers, fished the trout stream, and warred on nursery-reared pheasant with comical abandon; he would pursue luckless birds from copse into kitchen garden and shower the greenhouse with spent shot. Over Patti's contracts he watched with an uxorious yet ruthless eye. It was under his aegis that her fees rose to £1,600 a night. Often there was a package clause whereby promoters who had been conceded the Queen of Song were obliged to bill her tenor husband as well.

Patti's biographer Herman Klein discreetly implies that "the good people of Glamorganshire," sticklers for *les convenances*, did not at first take kindly to the Craig-y-Nos ménage. He talks of "hesitancy on both sides," of ice that had to be broken, of friendly relations aimed at rather than achieved. In 1882, however, Patti and Nicolini organized and led a charity concert in Swansea. A flattered South Wales stopped prissing and took the couple to its



Patti's theatre, abutting the grim clock tower.



The jewel box, all gold and blue and cream, for perhaps fifteen musicians and 160 guests.

bosom. Driving into Swansea two years later with a cavalcade of guests and fellow artists for a second charity concert, the owners of Craig-y-Nos found ships in the harbor dress over-all, streets beflagged, crowds on the sidewalks, banners everywhere proclaiming "God Bless the Queen of Song" and "Long Live Adelina Patti." The mayor took off his silk hat and bent over the diva's hand, a militia company presented arms, bands played. It was a day of sunshine, finery, and special trains. Victoria Regina herself could hardly have been made more welcome.

IT WAS DURING an intermission at this or some other charity concert that Nicolini outlined Patti's plan for a theatre to the building contractor who later did the work. Its carved frontage surmounted by the statue of a young woman playing a tambourine (as Patti herself did occasionally), the Craig-y-Nos theatre looks as if it had been imported stone by stone from some gay, small Italian town. By comparison, the gritstone clock tower with staring white dials which stands alongside looks very prim, grim, and municipal. For two years or more the theatre underwent trial runs by amateurs, some of them Tawe valley villagers, who put on obscure comic operas and a black-face minstrel show. Not until 1891 did Patti let the world into her secret.

For the so-called inaugural performances of that year, she brought in a carefully composed house party. There were mayors and chief constables; assorted dilettantes from the Covent Garden crush room and the drawing rooms of Park Lane; a newspaper owner or two; hand-picked critics of the kind

who never referred to Patti's prodigious fees except as *cachets*; and Prince Henry of Battenberg, whose mother-in-law was Queen Victoria. When Prince Henry drove in from Swansea (he had left his yacht anchored off The Mumbles) the entire domestic staff of Craig-y-Nos, forty strong, from head butler to third parlormaid, stood to attention in the forecourt; and a salute of twenty-one blanks was fired by a small brass cannon which in the ordinary way was used only to celebrate Patti's return from foreign tours. From a sky of unflawed blue, sunlight fell as through a burning glass.

In the theatre that week, Patti sang in four operatic excerpts: *La Traviata*, Act I; the Garden Scene from *Faust*; the *Romeo and Juliet* Balcony Scene; and *Martha*, Act III. She had a "tame" conductor in Luigi Arditi, composer of *Il Bacio*, *Bolero*, and other ditties loved in their day. Poking about backstage at Craig-y-Nos, I came upon a garden backdrop with roses as big as cabbages blossoming amid recognizably Welsh mountains. According to tradition, this is the backdrop against which Patti sang Gretchen. There is also a lath-and-canvas flat with "practical" door and brass knob, which probably formed part of Violetta's drawing room seventy-four years ago.

So infatuated was Patti with her toy that she let Luigi Arditi, for all his tameness, talk her into rehearsals, an unheard of concession on the part of a singer whose contracts were notorious for their standard "no rehearsals" clause. In scores of theatres, Arditi had stood in for her at general rehearsals, singing or whistling the absent diva's lines and giving the other singers—who usually never glimpsed her until the first night—vague indications of where

Patti might be expected to stand, sit, move. This casual, not to say insolent, approach had a ruinous effect upon musical ensemble and dramatic verity alike. What of that? People didn't expect Patti to act, nor were people much concerned with how anybody else sang in Patti's presence. Even in a production as complex and magniloquent as *Les Huguenots*. Adelina was, for average eyes and ears, the sole focus of attention.

How she sang at the Craig-y-Nos inaugural may be surmised not from what was written by the courtly critics on the spot but rather from George Bernard Shaw. Naturally, Shaw himself—then writing on music for *The World* magazine—was not invited. One Mephistopheles in the precincts, even though only an operatic one, was enough. About Adelina's mercenary bent, her rag-bag concert programs, and her incapacity to act any other role than that of coy, petulant, capricious Adelina, he had written unsparingly. When it came to her voice and purely musical arts, however, the hatchetman of *The World* melted and babbled. After listening in London's vast Albert Hall, he wrote of her "... beautiful voice, so perfectly produced and controlled that its most delicate pianissimo reaches the utmost listener . . . magical roulades soaring to heavenly altitudes . . . pure, strong tone that made *God Save the Queen* sound fresh and noble . . . hushed, tender notes that reconcile rows of club-loving cynics to *Home Sweet Home*. . . ."

If this was how she had sounded two and a half years earlier, her Craig-y-Nos inaugural performances must have carried much the same dew, pearl, and diamond. As Gretchen at her spinning wheel she wore chaste white. Her figure and her demeanor were those of a twenty-year-old. Although halfway through her forty-ninth year, she had not yet begun her decline through transposition and roulade-dockings towards the status of mezzo ballad singer.

After clamorous curtain calls on the first night, she made off, wafting kisses as she went, through the prompt wing. A special stair led up to her bedroom suite with its vast wardrobes. (A white-haired lady who worked at the Castle as a sewing maid in Edwardian times still remembers the wardrobes vividly: "Every time Madame went on tour or holiday, she ordered new dresses from Worth of Paris. Every few years, she would weed them out. But always there were forty or fifty. Madame was small. Her skirts were ground-length, thirty-six inches from hem to waist. From waist to nape of the neck, she was fourteen inches. Add twelve inches for her head. That made her five-foot-two.")

The dress she chose for her first-night party was in ruched ivory. She carried an ostrich feather fan and wore one of her parures. There were so many of these at the Castle—composed of diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls—that to inspect all of them and (into the bargain) Patti's tour mementos and inscribed photographs would have taken a fortnight, wrote Madame Arditi in her diary. Maestro Arditi, for his part, noted that 450 bottles of cham-

pagne were drunk at the celebratory dinner. Under a firmament of electric lights fed by a throbbing generator on the grounds, Patti and Nicolini sat at opposite ends of the head table in the winter garden annex—a haven of potted palms, fountains, and plaster statues.

Patti flirted her fan, threw her head back laughingly, showed splendid teeth, and conversed in five languages. While keeping an eye on the roasts and the wines, and on those waiters who had been hired for the week, Nicolini talked of dry-flies, No. 14 trout hooks, twelve-bore muzzle velocity, and the nice, imperial things that had happened to Adelina while touring the Americas. Had Lady Vivian (he asked his right-hand neighbor) heard about the private saloon coach in which Adelina had journeyed from Detroit to Sacramento, with its solid silver bath and its 18-carat gold doorkey? To Baron de Reuter on his left he promised that after dinner he would show him the golden crown set with diamonds and rubies that she had received from President Diaz and the clock shaped like a sedan chair and the diamond-studded card case and the filigree silver box full of rare coins given to her by other worshiping and wealthy Mexicans.

But first he must show his guests something else: the Craig-y-Nos billiard room with its Swiss orchestrion. This, too, worked by electricity; it played fifty operatic potpourris or concert pieces, including things from *Meistersinger* ("Of course, I like Wagner. Didn't I sing *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden?") and Chabrier's *España*, which Adelina, if you asked her nicely—and often without being asked at all—would accompany on the castanets.

In the theatre, the little orchestra had by this time taken possession of the stage and was tuning up. The seats had been cleared away and the auditorium-floor jacked level. Adelina, Ernesto, and their guests rounded off an inaugural which has no parallel in operatic history by waltzing, quadrilling, and schottisching deep into the small hours.

As ITS REOPENING by the Neath amateurs has belatedly proved, the Patti theatre was built to weather the centuries. What future did Adelina and her husband foresee for it? Klein lists eight productions at Craig-y-Nos during the Nineties. My own inquiries in South Wales, where old Patti theatre programs are treasured like relics of royalty, turned up evidence of eight more. A total of sixteen productions, most of them bracketed in triple bills, is a pathetically small yield. A good half of the productions in which Patti took part as a mime—possibly because, while loving a bit of theatrical fun, she wished to spare her voice—were "wordless plays" on the lines of Wormser's *L'Enfant prodigue*, with orchestral commentaries adapted and thrown together *ad hoc*. Among these wordless pieces were *Tosca*, *East Lynne*, *La Dame aux camélias*, and *Kathleen Mavourneen*.

In 1896, an ailing

Continued on page 87

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Since no single phono cartridge can be all things to all people, we earnestly recommend that you employ these individual criteria in selecting your personal cartridge from the broad Shure Stereo Dynetic group:

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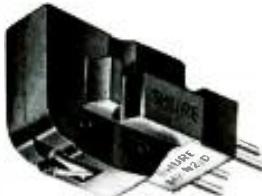
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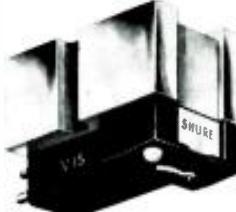
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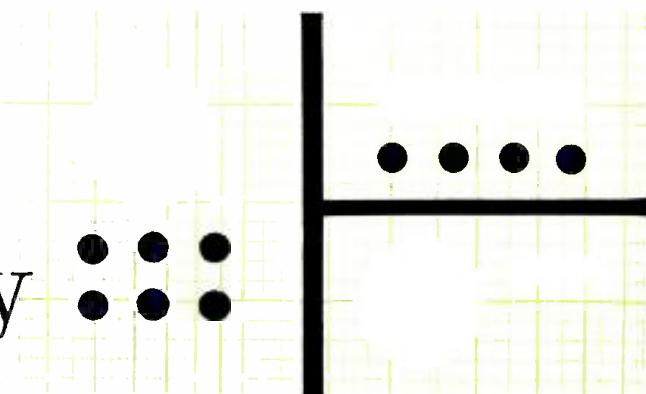
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High Fidelity Phono Cartridges . . . World Standard Wherever Sound Quality is Paramount
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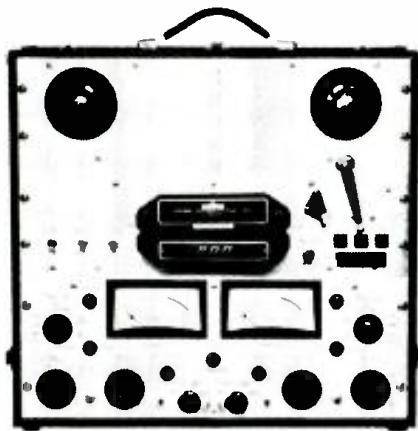
CIRCLE 43 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS



**Crown Model SS824
Tape Recorder**

THE EQUIPMENT: Crown SS824, a multispeed, quarter-track stereo/monophonic tape recorder consisting of a transport chassis and a solid-state preamplifier-control center. Dimensions: transport, 19 by 10½ inches; preamp, 19 by 7 inches. Both units fitted into carrying case: 20 by 19 by 11 inches. Price: transport and preamp, \$1,295. Various accessories and extended facilities available—supplied with test sample: four SS-2 preamps for high impedance microphone and stereo RIAA disc equalization, \$180; two SS-6 line amplifiers for stereo headphones, \$50; Model X carrying case, \$59. Manufacturer: International Radio and Electronics Corp., 1718 W. Mishawaka Rd., Elkhart, Ind. 46517.

COMMENT: Its performance and features mark the Crown SS824 as a thoroughly professional tape recorder that would be equally at home in the studio or in the installation of an advanced audiophile. It is big, expensive, and magnificent. It also is somewhat complicated—although while its numerous controls and input and output jacks might baffle the novice, they could be mastered by the serious amateur and, of course, would be quite familiar to a professional recordist.

The unit is one of the recent Crown SS800 (the SS denotes solid-state electronics) series of recorders, available with different head and circuit configurations for various applications. The SS824 is supplied with three

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization not affiliated with the United States Government which, since 1880, has been a leader in product evaluation. Speaker reports are based on controlled listening tests. Occasionally, a supplementary agency may be invited to contribute to the testing program. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. No report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. No reference to the United States Testing Company, Inc., to its seals or insignia, or to the results of its tests, including material published in HIGH FIDELITY based on such tests, may be made without written permission of United States Testing Company, Inc.

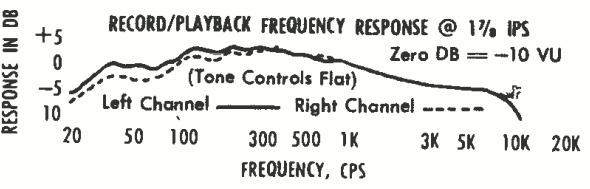
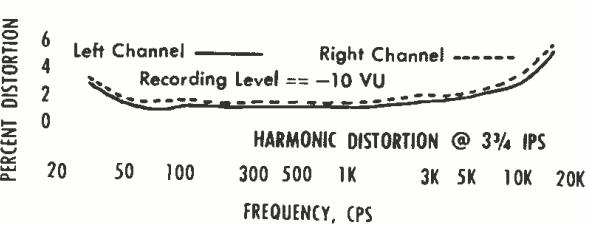
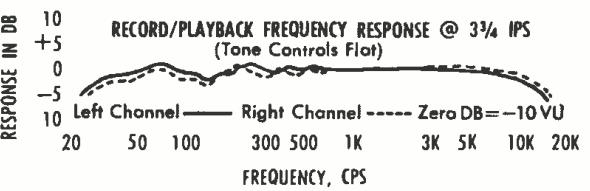
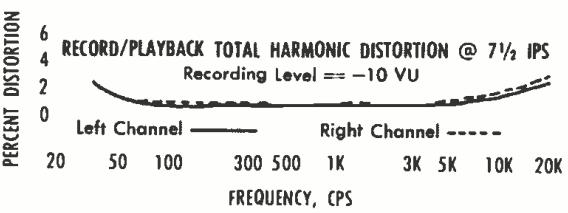
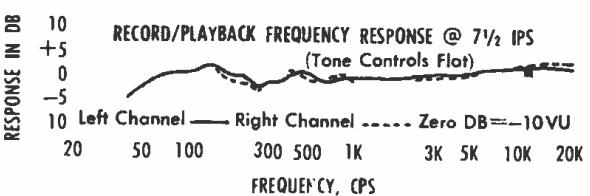
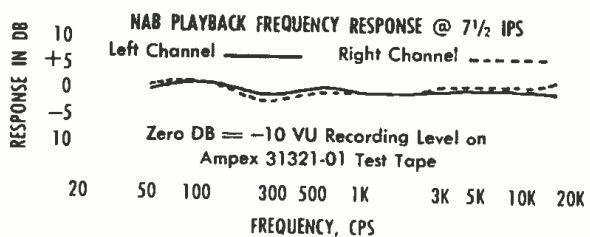
Crown SS824 Tape Recorder

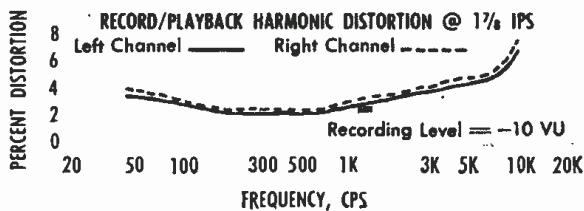
Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic

Measurement

Speed accuracy, 7½ ips	0.21% slow
3¾ ips	0.22% slow
1¾ ips	0.33% slow
Wow and flutter, 7½ ips	0.03% and 0.05% respectively
3¾ ips	0.08% and 0.12% respectively
1¾ ips	0.18% and 0.2% respectively
Rewind time, 7-inch, 1,200-ft. reel	38.5 seconds
Fast-forward time, same reel	38.5 seconds
NAB playback response, 7½ ips (ref. Ampex test-tape No. 31321-01)	l ch +1.5, -0.5 db, 50 cps to 15 kc r ch +1.75, -1 db, 50 cps to 15 kc
Record/playback response (ref. -10 VU recorded signal)	
7½ ips, l ch	+2, -2.5 db, 45 cps to 20 kc
r ch	-2.5 db, 45 cps to 20 kc
3¾ ips, l ch	+1, -2 db, 30 cps to 11 kc
r ch	+0.5, -2.5 db, 32 cps to 13 kc
1¾ ips, l ch	+3, -4 db, 24 cps to 6 kc (-6.5 db at 9 kc)
r ch	+2.5, -4 db, 28 cps to 5 kc (-6.5 db at 9 kc)
S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU, test tape)	
playback, either ch	55 db
record/playback, either ch	55 db
Sensitivity (0 VU recording level)	
mic input	l ch: 150 μ v; r ch: 150 μ v
aux or line inputs	l ch: 150 mv; r ch: 158 mv
phono input	l ch: 0.4 mv; r ch: 0.4 mv
Maximum output levels (0 VU recorded signal)	
OUTPUT JACK SWITCH POSITION L CH R CH	
low tape 870 mv 870 mv	
low tape & source 3 v 2.9 v	
high & line tape 2.2 v 2.3 v	
high & line tape & source 7.5 v 7.5 v	
(-10 VU recorded signal)	
low tape 290 mv 290 mv	
low tape & source 1 v 1 v	
high & line tape 740 mv 770 mv	
high & line tape & source 2.45 v 2.5 v	
THD, record/playback (-10 VU recorded signal)	
7½ ips	either ch: under 1%, 60 cps to 4 kc; under 2%, 37 cps to 12 kc; under 3.4%, 30 cps to 20 kc
3¾ ips	either ch: under 2%, 38 cps to 4 kc; under 3% down to 30 cps; left ch: 4% at 12 kc; right: 4% at 10.5 kc
1¾ ips	either ch: under 3%, 80 cps to 1.2 kc; under 5%, 40 cps to 7 kc
IM distortion, record/playback:	
-10 VU recorded level	l ch: 2.6%; r ch: 2.5%
-5 VU recorded level	l ch: 3.1%; r ch: 3.1%
0 VU recorded level	l ch: 4.2%; r ch: 4.5%
Recording level for max 3% THD	l ch: 6.2 VU; r ch: 5 VU
Accuracy, built-in VU meters	precisely calibrated for professional VU measurements





heads for quarter-track (four-track) stereo or monophonic erase, record, and playback. The machine also will play older two-track tapes. Its versatility would seem to be limited only by the imagination or technical understanding of the user—the preamp for instance, available with RIAA phono equalization, can serve not only for recording and playing tapes but as a system control center for handling various program sources and feeding their signals to amplifiers and speakers. The machine has built-in signal mixers, and can make multiple recordings (sound on sound); up to four independent signals may be recorded on a single track (a versatile musician thus can become a quartet). The mixing facility also may be used, if desired, as part of the preamp's general control-center functioning. Remote control can be added with an accessory unit. A front-panel control on each channel permits recording bias to be adjusted for best results with any tape used. Monitoring is possible through one's external playback system, or via headphones—two jacks permit direct plug-in of both mono and stereo headsets. The very large signal meters are true VU types and may be read during recording or playback; switches permit the meters to indicate signal levels as well as bias and erase voltages.

The completely solid-state electronics of the Crown are built around silicon transistors, arranged as a series of modular circuits on plug-in boards. Each channel has its own board for specific functions: microphone pre-amplification; VU meter driving and calibration; recording amplification; line amplification; voltage gain and tone control; multispeed equalization. In addition, there is one board for the bias oscillator, common to both channels, and another board that contains part of the power supply, also shared by both channels. This form of circuit design makes for a highly flexible tape system, which can be assembled or modified to meet different and specialized requirements. It also makes for a very high order of reliability and, at the same time, ultimate ease in servicing or replacement of parts, if needed.

Front-panel electronic controls include concentric selector switches for output and meter; separate treble and bass tone controls that may be used for recording and playback; four input level controls; separate output level controls; a play-record switch that has a press-to-move button safety interlock and separate positions for reading bias and erase voltages on the meters; and the bias adjustments. All these controls operate separately and independently on each channel, and are arranged symmetrically across the front panel. The equalization switch is common to both channels. The monophonic headphone jack is located between the two large knobs for "input 1" and "input 2"; the stereo headphone jack is between the knobs for "input 3" and "input 4." The meters are illuminated during use.

The transport of the Crown employs three motors: each reel has its own shaded-pole motor, and the capstan drive is powered by a hysteresis-synchronous motor which also operates a built-in cooling fan. The fan, in addition to ventilating the equipment, serves as a constant light load for the motor, so that variations in load during changes in the deck's operational modes are kept to a minimum. The Crown can take any size tape reel up to the standard professional 10½-inch types; a special switch sets the tension limits for "small" size reels

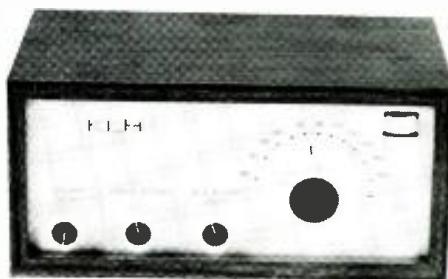
(seven-inch plastic) or the larger type. A cue switch permits rocking the reels by hand to locate a specific passage during recording. Speed change, between 7½ and 3¾ ips, is accomplished simply by a push-pull switch on the deck; the change to 1½-ips speed is more complicated, requiring the owner to add another drive-belt system. The transport is operated by push-button activated relays, and controls are provided for normal-forward, fast-forward, rewind, and stop. Braking is electrical through the use of a relay and transistor circuitry. A photoelectric sensing device automatically stops the transport when the tape runs out.

The path of the tape itself, from supply to take-up reel, weaves through a series of three hard plastic and nine metal capstans, including a swinging arm. Most of these are under the head cover and so are automatically engaged as the tape is threaded. A single switch, on the transport, activates both the mechanical and electronic portions of the system.

Careful examination and performance tests of the Crown at United States Testing Company, Inc., add up to a superlative verdict: this is an outstanding tape recorder, unsurpassed by any model yet encountered. Every detail of the unit's construction and circuitry is completely professional. Tape handling is positive and gentle, and the elaborate capstan system across the deck can iron out virtually any wrinkle on a tape. Controls are all generously proportioned, operate smoothly, and produce their intended effects accurately and quickly. Measurements are shown in the accompanying charts: they describe, in sum, a unit that easily meets or exceeds its published specifications. Speed accuracy is excellent; distortion extremely low; signal-to-noise ratio very favorable; wow and flutter insignificant; response very wide and linear. Even these figures, impressive as they are, do not tell the whole story of the Crown's excellence. For instance, the response curves were taken with all tone controls in their "flat" positions. However, it is possible to use the tone controls to obtain modified response, as desired—say, deliberately boosted bass at any speed, or extended high frequency response at the slower speeds—because the tone control circuits provide accurate tonal contours and do not add distortion to the signal. The signal gain of the Crown is controlled by a "sophisticated" circuit technique that provides extremely sensitive and accurate control and, again, without introducing nonlinearity in the response. The circuitry that controls the VU meter on each channel permits full and accurate read-out of signal amplitudes down to the lowest levels. The Crown's sensitivity is really remarkable: the zero VU level for microphone inputs on either channel was only 150 microvolts. With such sensitivity, you would expect to "peg the meter" (cause the needle to be slammed over to the right and possibly damaged) at a signal level of 200 microvolts (0.2 millivolts), but the needle—while it responded with alacrity to such a signal—could not be damaged, and only slight adjustment of the level control was necessary to accommodate the input signal to the recorder's high sensitivity.

In use and in listening tests the Crown proved to be as splendid as its measurements would indicate. Copies of mint-fresh discs made on the machine at 7½-ips speed were indistinguishable from the originals; playing of prerecorded tapes was superb. The 3¾-ips speed was virtually as good; indeed, characteristics at this speed on this machine were about the equal of the faster speed on lower-priced machines. The 1½-ips speed, while expectedly not as extended at the high end, and with somewhat higher distortion, still was—for that speed—quite good and well suited for noncritical applications such as background music or recording the speaking voice. The Crown SS824 plainly is a machine for the tape enthusiast who wants one of the best and who also is familiar enough with recorders in this class to be able to operate it to full advantage (the instruction manual itself presumes some degree of technical background, and does not spell out everything for the owner).

KLH-18 Tuner



THE EQUIPMENT: KLH-18, a stereo/monophonic FM tuner supplied in a walnut cabinet. Dimensions: 9 by 4½ by 5½ inches. Price: \$129.95. Manufacturer: KLH Research & Development Corp., 30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

COMMENT: The Model 18 tuner by KLH is the smallest FM tuner yet offered, thanks to complete transistorization, and such innovations as miniaturized IF transformers. Apparently, these developments—while responsible for the set's stylish compactness—also can be credited with providing superior performance. In fact, size notwithstanding, the KLH-18 is one of the finest FM tuners encountered, with performance characteristics and a clean sound that suggest more elaborate and costlier equipment.

The front panel, to begin with, is of anodized silver and contains a volume control combined with the power OFF/ON switch; a mono/stereo selector; an SCA filter switch; and the large direct-drive tuning dial. To the upper right of the tuning knob is a signal strength meter; at the lower right is a stereo signal indicator.

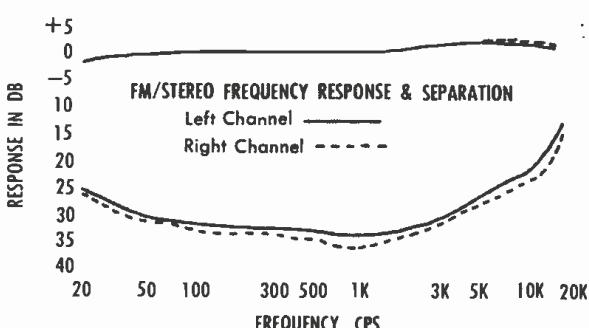
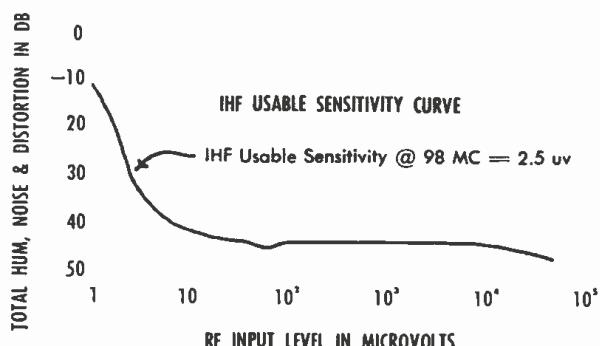
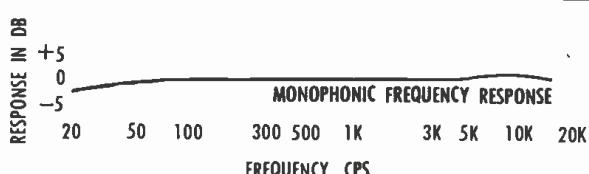
The rear of the KLH-18 contains 300-ohm (twin-lead) antenna terminals, the AC line cord, and two pairs of stereo signal outputs. One pair, for feeding signals to any external amplifier or tape recorder, is not affected by the volume control (maximum signal is available at these jacks). The other pair is intended specifically for feeding FM signals to KLH phonographs, such as the Model 11; these jacks are controlled by the front-panel volume adjustment.

Performance tests on the KLH-18, following the usual alignment done on all tuners at United States Testing Company, Inc., produced excellent results. FM sensitivity was extremely high at 2.5 microvolts, and the IHF sensitivity curve indicated that the tuner will exceed IHF standards by 10 db at an RF input of only 7 microvolts, which should qualify it for reception in the most difficult of locales. Distortion was very low; indeed, an outstanding feature observed in this tuner was the extremely slight increase in distortion when changing from monophonic to stereo operation. All tuners

KLH-18

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
IHF sensitivity	2.5 μ v at 98 mc; 2.5 μ v at 90 mc; 3 μ v at 106 mc
Frequency response, mono	+0.5, -1.7 db, 20 cps to 15 kc
THD, mono	0.6% at 400 cps; 0.67% at 40 cps; 0.5% at 1 kc
IM distortion	0.21%
Capture ratio	4.5
S/N ratio	52 db
Frequency response, stereo	
l ch	\pm 1.5 db, 20 cps to 15 kc
r ch	+1.75, -1.5 db, 20 cps to 15 kc
THD, stereo	
l ch	0.7% at 400 cps; 0.79% at 40 cps; 0.53% at 1 kc
r ch	0.66% at 400 cps; 0.77% at 40 cps; 0.59% at 1 kc
Channel separation, either channel	better than 32 db at mid-frequencies; better than 24 db, 20 cps to 6.2 kc; better than 20 db above 10 kc
19-kc pilot suppression	-35 db
38-kc subcarrier suppression	-48 db



show some increase, but in the Model 18 this increase was virtually nil. Channel separation on stereo was excellent, and stereo response was virtually perfectly flat across the FM audio band, showing no appreciable difference from the set's mono response. Both channels, too, were very closely balanced. Calibration of the tuning dial was highly accurate. Other measured characteristics, shown on the accompanying chart, simply add up to a really first-rate tuner.

The Model 18 tuner was connected, in listening tests, to a KLH Model 11 "suitcase" phonograph system and then to an elaborate component system. It seemed eminently suited, from a listening standpoint, for both applications. Its ultracompact size makes it a logical choice as the FM mate to something like the KLH 11; its clear, open sound and sensitivity to stations "all up and down the dial" qualify it unquestionably for use as a tuner in the finest of playback systems.

Empire Model 9000



Speaker System

THE EQUIPMENT: Empire Model 9000, a full-range, three-way speaker system in a cylindrical enclosure. Dimensions: 29 inches high, 20 inches in diameter. Price: \$285. Manufacturer: Empire Scientific Corp., 845 Stewart Ave., Garden City, L.I., N.Y. 11533.

COMMENT: The scene is a tastefully furnished living room. Aunt Violet, who has dropped in for tea, places her cup on the marble top of a new end table that she has been admiring. From another part of the room, her hostess presses a hidden switch and music pours forth from the new table and its mate several feet away. Aunt Violet is first incredulous ("This is a speaker too?"), then pleased ("And what a speaker!").

So may well go Empire's new versions of the song of two Grenadiers. In what represents a bold and, to our ears and eyes, a highly successful departure from conventional speaker design, Empire—a company well known for its top quality disc playing equipment—has introduced its Grenadier speaker systems, of which the Model 9000 is the latest and largest. The acoustic theory behind this system is responsible for its unusual shape; the shape, in turn, has enabled its designers to fashion the system as a strikingly handsome piece. The enclosure has the look of French walnut and boasts a warm, satin-like finish. Its heptagonal paneling is set off by fluted vertical columns and complemented by a matching base and a richly figured top surface of heavy, imported marble.

Three separate drivers, or speaker units, are employed. A 15-inch woofer faces downward near the bottom of the cylinder and radiates into a circular, surrounding horn-like opening which in turn is surrounded by a circular slot covered with a decorative grille. The dimensions of both the horn and the slot are calculated to aid the bass response, assist in the crossover to the midrange, and of course help diffuse the sound in an even, circular pattern. The rear of the woofer "looks" into a completely sealed chamber that is partly stuffed with sound-absorbent wedges, and so the system functions essentially as a modified "infinite baffle"—but with some front-horn loading. And its rounded sides are designed to minimize the formation of standing waves and internal resonances.

The midrange driver is a dome-shaped speaker about

four inches in diameter; the tweeter is a one-inch dome. Both are mounted behind a heavy, brushed gold escutcheon, itself a decorative, as well as an acoustic, element that contains "acoustic lenses" which help spread the sound from each. Frequency division—from woofer to midrange at 450 cps, and from midrange to tweeter at 5,000 cps—is handled by an inductive-capacitive network also housed inside the enclosure. Connections are made under the enclosure to binding posts marked for polarity. Input impedance is 8 ohms; efficiency is moderately high.

If the Grenadier's appearance is designed to please, so is its sound. Response was found to be wide, smooth, and well-balanced. Its bass end slopes gently from about 45 cps, but fundamental bass is evident to below 30 cps. No doubling occurs unless the system is driven abnormally hard. Upward from the deep bass region, response was found to be very smooth and uniform with negligible minor variations. Response extends to beyond audibility, with an apparent slope beginning at perhaps 13 kc. The dispersion pattern of the Model 9000 was among the widest encountered. Mid-frequency test tones were completely audible from all around the system. This effect diminished only slightly and gradually as frequency was increased, and a 12-kc tone was clearly audible very much off axis of the system. Response to white noise was smooth and fairly subdued, with no trace of hardness when checked from a normal listening position.

On program material, the Grenadier acquitted itself admirably. Voices sounded quite natural, with no coloration evident. Orchestral music was balanced and full; transients came through cleanly; the organ sounded authentic. Over-all, the sonic presentation was excellent; the speaker did not favor one type of instrument or any one portion of the spectrum, and it never sounded honky or "boxy." About the only limitation we can imagine being ascribed to the Grenadier concerns its ultimate "projection" ability: it is not, in our opinion, a theatre-type or large hall system—although conceivably a group of these systems, driven together, could fill such an area if desired. But a pair of Grenadiers does a clean, authoritative job on both stereo and monophonic program material in a larger-than-average living room; indeed, for a system of its size and price class designed for domestic use, the Grenadier strikes us as among the best.



Knight Model KN-990A

Record Changer

THE EQUIPMENT: Knight KN-990A, a four-speed record changer. Chassis dimensions: 14 by 12 inches; requires 3½ inches below, and 5 inches above mounting board. Price: \$49.95; with stereo cartridge (see below), \$49.96. Optional walnut base, \$3.95; unfinished mounting board, \$1.50; 45-rpm automatic spindle, \$1.69. Manufacturer: Allied Radio Corp., 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60680.

COMMENT: One would imagine that a record player with as many features as this one—and furnished, for one cent more, with a stereo cartridge of reputable manufacture—should be taken as a rare bargain, and without looking a gift-horse in the mouth. Yet, from a high-fidelity standpoint, even gift horses bear examination. We are happy to report that this one stands up well under critical scrutiny. The KN-990A may not, understandably at its price, be the equal of costlier record players, but it does represent exceptionally good dollar value on today's market: its performance, all things considered, is quite respectable and well suited for a modest or budget-type installation.

The ensemble may be used as an automatic changer, or as a manual (single-play) unit. In the former mode, it will handle up to fourteen 7-inch, or twelve 10- and 12-inch discs (these two sizes may be intermixed). Operating speeds are 16, 33, 45, or 78 rpm. In manual operation, the trip and changing mechanisms are completely disabled, which means that a record may be cued at any spot without inadvertently starting the change-cycle.

The 11-inch, 1-pound 14-ounce platter is made of aluminum and covered with a rubber pad. It is driven, via a rubber idler wheel, from the four-step shaft of a 4-pole induction motor. Inasmuch as the changing mechanism is driven by the platter, the recycling time during automatic operation depends on the turntable speed selected, and is naturally faster at 78 rpm than at the other speeds. At 33 rpm, the change cycle takes about 8 seconds. A spirit-level indicator is included on the metal base of the turntable, to facilitate installation.

The arm is a metal tubular type, fitted with a plastic plug-in shell for the cartridge, and an adjustable rear counterbalance weight. Initially balancing the arm takes

a little doing, because of the bearing friction in the arm's pivots; once balanced, however, tracking force is easily and accurately set by using the calibrated sliding weight along the body of the arm. Markings are at one-gram intervals from 0 to 5 grams and were found by United States Testing Company, Inc., to be accurate to within 0.2 gram. Variation in tracking force, from one record to the next in a stack, was negligible; total variation over a full stack of twelve 12-inch discs was a mere 0.3 gram. The arm, in general, is well made, although the finger-lift on the shell could be longer for easier manual cuing.

In performance tests at USTC, the player had low wow and flutter (0.12 and 0.06 per cent respectively), and good speed accuracy (shown in the accompanying chart). Rumble, measured by the NAB standard of 1.4 centimeters per second at 100 cps, was -22 db; the strongest rumble frequency seemed to occur at about 13 cps, which was also the resonant frequency of the tone arm. All this means, really, is that if used in a very wide-range system with speakers capable of producing strong deep bass, some turntable noise may be audible. However, in a more modest system, such as would logically seem to be the proper context for this changer, rumble would be inaudible.

Operation of the player was found to be smooth and reliable. At its price, the KN-990A would be hard to beat, even admitting its limitations from a perfectionist standpoint. Not to be ignored either is the fact that for an additional one cent, it is supplied with one of several well-known and "proven" makes of stereo cartridge. The exact models available in this offer vary from time to time, and the prospective buyer is advised to consult the Allied catalogue, or to write to the company for a list of specific cartridges offered.

Speed Accuracy

Speed	117 V	105 V	129 V
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33 rpm	0.67% fast	0.39% fast	0.72% fast
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McIntosh Model MR-71 Tuner

Acoustic Research Model XA Turntable

C/M Laboratories Model 35D Power Amplifier

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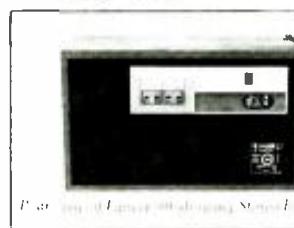
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CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Records in Review

HARRIS GOLDSMITH
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Birgit Nilsson and friend—for an authentic *Götterdämmerung*, even *Grane* must appear.

WE HAVE STRUGGLED ALONG for some years now with the only complete *Götterdämmerung* on records—London's own previous effort, made from a broadcast concert performance given in Norway in 1956—and a struggle it has been, every step of the way: a once great Brünnhilde giving us spasmodic, if emphatic, reminders of her stature in the role; a once suitable Siegfried making intelligence and musicianship count for their full, but still inadequate, worth; supporting artists in no way equal to their assignments: uninspired leadership and tolerable monophonic sound. We have been grateful for its existence, but are even more grateful that it can now in good conscience be retired, never to be more than sampled again.

It's been a long time in coming, but

at last we have a complete *Ring* in contemporary, stereophonic sound, and in performances that maintain a consistent, high level. (The *Walküre*, of course, is RCA Victor's, and reflects a somewhat different sound ambience and a different conductorial approach; but it will have competition from a London Solti version before too long.) When I had listened to some of my favorite passages from the new *Götterdämmerung*, I pulled out *Das Rheingold*. This recording, which to some of us represented the big, convincing breakthrough in stereo technique, is now six years old; it is the beginning of this latter-day *Ring* in more than one sense. The first thing I noticed as I put it on (I hadn't played it for two years) was some surface noise—a reminder that discs are, if I may use the term, mortal.

But the second thing confirmed what I had suspected—that while in all essentials the sound of *Das Rheingold* is still more than excellent (enough so to dovetail very convincingly with the later recordings in the series), the sound of the new recording is even better. The entry of the gods into Valhalla is tremendously impressive, but not so impressive as the *Funeral March*, or the *Rhine Journey*, or indeed almost any given section of *Götterdämmerung*. Onward and upward.

I mention the sound first partly because it is truly magnificent in every respect—quality, range, balance, handling of effects—and partly because London virtually asks us to consider it first. The accompanying booklet includes the libretto and translation, a synopsis, and some thumbnail biographies of the art-

ists; but pride of place is given to a lengthy essay by John Culshaw on the matter of recording philosophy—it makes its points about the *Ring* and about Wagner, of course, but it is essentially apologia. Now, this is all right. It's a good, interesting essay; and what with all the time, energy, and cash spent on the technical end of things, one can't blame London for wanting to be sure that we don't miss the point.

But why, at this date, is it necessary? I do not see pages of analysis on the *Ring*—the music and drama speak for themselves. Nor do I see paragraphs on the philosophy behind this performance—it speaks for itself. Why, then, cannot the engineering and production be allowed to speak for themselves? There seems to me to be a flaw in the balance of things here: the sound is important, but damn it, it's not all *that* important. I am very happy that this and that has been done, and done well, but in the scheme of things it just doesn't matter much. A recording is to live with, and on the twentieth playing we are not going to be agog over the different acoustical ambiances of various scenes or the presence of genuine, 100% steerhorns. We may be annoyed that Wolfgang Windgassen's voice has been made to sound in a way that it cannot sound for the Siegfried-as-Gunther scene (such effects wear out pretty fast), but probably even that will not draw our attention from the music and the performance. (I do hope that *Ring*-goers yet unborn will not flock to their first live *Götterdämmerungs* in the innocent belief that they are going to hear this sort of thing; and I hope too that budding *Helden tenors*, who of course will not read Mr. Culshaw's notes, do not tear their vocal cords loose trying to sound like Mr. Windgassen-plus-funny-business-with-tape-speeds—but that's their lookout.)

This subject is taking inordinate space in this review, just as it does in London's booklet. My own cease-fire conditions are that not a word about all this creep into the *Walküre* booklet. If the job is that thoroughly done, it justifies itself, I am sure.

To the performance, men. It is wonderful. It is not Flagstad, Thorborg, Melchior, Schorr, and Bohnen, but it is the finest *Götterdämmerung* I can imagine in the here and now. I suppose I am asking for an argument when I say that, for me, it is the singers who count in *Götterdämmerung*—but that is how I feel. The conductor may be Toscanini or Furtwängler or Wagner himself—if the singers don't do the job, *Götterdämmerung* falls on its face just as surely as *Rigoletto*. This *Götterdämmerung* is a success chiefly because it is beautifully cast from stem to stern.

There is, first of all, the Brünnhilde of Birgit Nilsson, a truly great creation. It is, of course, the monumental sort of Brünnhilde, knowingly and feelingly phrased, but distinguished above all for its endless outpouring of heroic, beautiful, exciting sound, its close to absolute fulfillment of the incredible demands the role makes on the dramatic soprano voice. The upward sweep of the Pro-

logue duet, capped by a thrilling C; the cold, cutting quality of the Oath on the Spear; the warmth and poise of the lyric portions of the Immolation, and the superhuman reserve with which she surmounts its climax—all glorious. Miss Nilsson's understanding of the role is beyond question, as all who have seen her do it (especially recently) know, but it is not the intense, highly personal sort of understanding and projection that some artists have brought to it (Varnay is a contemporary example), nor is it the sort that translates well on records. No matter. Here is the old-fashioned, bigger-than-life Brünnhilde, noble and all-powerful—the only kind which can really make the Immolation work. A stupendous performance, the finest Nilsson has yet recorded.

As Waltraute we have Christa Ludwig. Her voice is not the huge, solid, Gorr-style mezzo I happen to like in the role, especially at the bottom, but once she gets going on her narrative, she is really splendid, especially in her description of the gods awaiting doom at Valhalla ("Des Stammes Scheite," etc.) and in the final pages of this scene, where her easy command of G, A flat, and A is used to fine effect. Claire Watson sounds properly attractive and white as Gutrune—what a brilliant piece of musical characterization this role is, and how difficult for the artist to make much of an effect with; she is asked to sound pallid and passive. The three Rhine Maidens are beautifully sung, and the Three Norns are most impressive, though Anita Välikki's high notes do not sound as full as I had supposed they would.

Wolfgang Windgassen has never been more impressive; he meets the occasion with his very best effort. He does not, I need hardly observe again, have the heroic top or all the heft of voice that one would hear in the ideal Siegfried (why not gimmicked tape speeds for that? Wagner, I'm sure, wanted ringing high notes every bit as much as he wanted the right sound for the disguised hero); he is merely the best Siegfried of the last fifteen years. Everything here is clean, focused vocalism, phrased with real beauty, fresh-sounding and right on pitch, incisively proclaimed. The death is done with great sensitivity and fine tone—most moving.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is not a real *Heldenbariton*, even of the Gunther sort, for the top does not sound open enough to match the dark, weighty sound he is able to get farther down. But one can't really complain about the sound of the voice, which is far better than one usually gets in this role, when with it goes the singer's extraordinary dramatic sense and intelligence—the opening colloquy with Hagen, for example, is done with remarkable clarity and projection of the character's situation. Fischer-Dieskau's opposite number here is Gottlob Frick, the finest Hagen of our day. I wish he had been recorded a few years ago, when the top Fs were still really good singing tones, but as it is, he is superb. The tough, insistent sound of the voice is just right, and his rock-steady Watch takes on all its potential weight and

menace. His comprehension of the role and long experience in it show in many passages, among which the whispered baiting of the trap ("Träte nun Siegfried ein," etc., pp. 54-55 of the Schirmer vocal score) is representative.

Gustav Neidlinger is the same sort of Alberich he was for *Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, which is to say exemplary. He really sings the role, with a light, insinuating inflection perfectly conceived for this apparition sequence. And the engineering is especially successful here—throughout the scene, but most of all at the end, where Alberich fades from Hagen's consciousness with "Sei treu! . . . treu!"

Comment *in extenso* on the Solti *Ring* will be relevant upon release of *Die Walküre*. His work in it to date seems to me his best on records: his strongest qualities—crispness, lucidity, tautness—serve the music well, at least within the framework of what we might call "modern" Wagner conducting. The parts of this reading I do not much care for are those calling for massiveness or for a reflective quality; the *Funeral Music*, for example, seems too desperate-sounding, too harsh. (Indeed, the sound of the orchestra in general is a bit on the blarey side, which is clearly a characteristic of the conductor and not a built-in tendency of the Vienna Philharmonic.) The gathering of the vassals, on the other hand, the approach of Waltraute, and nearly the whole of the second act, are extremely exciting. In places such as these, Solti carries things forward, builds them, in a very persuasive fashion: Act II, indeed, is as fine as I have ever heard—this astounding drama-of-character-within-the-drama moves with the force and quickness it demands. I also like the light, singing reading of the *Rhine Journey*. The playing of the orchestra is beyond praise—surely these horns are without parallel in the world. For the rest, let us wait until we have the whole thing before us.

Do not let my reservations on engineering exegesis leave the impression that the sound and stereo production are anything less than stupendous. Here, as in the rest of London's *Ring* we have so far heard, Mr. Culshaw and his crew have demonstrated that their recording philosophy can be made to work, and can produce the most satisfactory operatic recordings ever perpetrated in a studio—all appearances on paper notwithstanding.

WAGNER: *Götterdämmerung*

Birgit Nilsson (s), Brünnhilde; Claire Watson (s), Gutrune; Lucia Popp (s), Woglinde; Gwyneth Jones (s), Wellgunde; Anita Välikki (s), 3rd Norn; Christa Ludwig (ms), Waltraute; Grace Hoffman (ms), 2nd Norn; Helen Watts (c), 1st Norn; Wolfgang Windgassen (t), Siegfried; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Gunther; Gustav Neidlinger (b), Alberich; Gottlob Frick (bs), Hagen; Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.
• LONDON A 4604. Six LP. \$29.88.
• • LONDON OSA 1604. Six SD. \$35.88.

Mozart's Last Six from the Indefatigable Klemperer

by Nathan Broder

AT THE AGE of eighty Otto Klemperer shows no sign of fatigue or diminution of enthusiasm. If anything, his performances grow even more polished, as well as more self-effacing, more completely at the service of the composer's thought. My memory of his appearances goes rather far back, and I don't recall that he ever showed any of the signs that make of some celebrated conductors public "characters" as well as artists. One gathers that his ancient propensity for haranguing the players during rehearsal has vanished. (Is there anyone who has not yet heard the tale of the Italian first oboist of a generation ago cutting short one of these lectures with the statement: "Mr. Klemps, you talka too much"?) Aside from his extraordinary physical height there is only his music making to talk about. It is music making of a high order, as the world has been far readier to recognize after his miraculous recovery from a severe and protracted illness than it was before. In its quiet authority and freedom from eccentricity his conducting is something like Monteux's. At his best he can reach the stars, as in the overwhelming recording of the *St. Matthew Passion*. He is seldom far below that level.

This new batch of the last six symphonies of Mozart shows Klemperer at his best—and at his second-best. The fast movements of the *Haffner* (coupled with the *Linz*, on 36128 or S 36128) may seem a shade slow to some, but they are not objectionably so, and the finale, while not precipitous, is pointed and fleet. The *Linz* strikes me as first-class throughout. The Philharmonia strings are especially lovely in the slow movement.

In the *Prague Symphony* (on 36129 or S 36129) the Allegros are lively, the orchestra sparkles, those telling little figures for the bassoons come through plainly and without smudge, everything sings in as fine a performance and recording of this work as I know. On the overside of this same disc the E flat Symphony is done almost as well. In Klemperer's

hands the first movement, after its foreboding Introduction, has the autumnal mellowness characteristic of this key in late Mozart. Or does the symphony only seem autumnal because we know that its composer was to die less than four years after he completed it? One of the most tantalizing—as well as futile—subjects for a Mozartean to speculate about is the kind of music the master might have written if he had lived as long as, say, Beethoven. Was it a premonition that accounts for the melancholy that suffuses this composition? Notice that for once in his symphonies Mozart omits the bright oboes here and replaces them with the softer clarinets. In any case, Klemperer conveys the full flavor of the work. In the Andante he maintains a long line by perfect dovetailing of phrases as they pass from one group of instruments to another. He gives the Trio of the Minuet just the right Ländler-like effect by choosing a deliberate tempo. If the finale could be a bit faster, the pace at which it is taken permits the woodwinds to come out cleanly in their solos.

There are also many felicities in the performance of the last two symphonies (on 36183 or S 36183). But here some slow tempos distort the spirit of the music. The first and last movements of the G minor lack the drama and passion that are immanent in the music. This is not a matter of opinion. There could be several justifiable interpretations of molto allegro in 4/4, but I do not see how from any point of view Klemperer's tempo for the first movement could be called a molto allegro *alla breve*, which is what Mozart prescribes. Similarly in the *Jupiter*. Here the Allegro vivace lacks vivaciousness. The finale, on the other hand, goes along at a lively pace, but here for the only time on these three records there is muddiness, caused perhaps by the use of too many strings. Otherwise and everywhere else the sound is splendidly clear and lifelike.

The last disc, it seems to me, is only second-best Klemperer, but the first two are warmly recommended.

MOZART: *Symphonies*

No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); No. 36, in C, K. 425 ("Linz"); No. 38, in D, K. 504 ("Prague"); No. 39, in E flat, K. 543; No. 40, in G minor, K. 550; No. 41, in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"); Overture to "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," K. 384 (on 36128).

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

- ANGL. 36128, 29, 36183. Three LP. \$4.98 each.
- • ANGL. S 36128 29, S 36183. Three SD. \$5.98 each.

Klemperer: at eighty, no fatigue.



Classical

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos*, S. 1046–1051; *Concertos for Violin and Strings*: in E, S. 1042; in A minor, S. 1041; *Concerto for Two Violins and Strings*, in D minor, S. 1043

Susanne Lautenbacher, Dieter Vorholz, violins; Mainz Chamber Orchestra, Günter Kehr, cond.

- Vox VBX 67. Three LP. \$9.95.
- • Vox SVBX 567. Three SD. \$9.95.

Complete *Brandenburgs* are now to be had not only in various types of instrumental dress but also at various prices. The present set belongs somewhere near the bottom of the list with respect to cost, but far above that with respect to quality. It offers, in fact, enjoyable and well-recorded performances. The playing is spirited, the tempos are convincing. Without taking liberties with the score, Kehr achieves nuance and variety, sometimes by simple means, as in the minuet of No. 1, where he features the oboes in the first statement of a section and violins in the repetition. Perhaps the best performance is that of No. 3. Here, although there seems to be only one player on a part, the group conveys all the richness and loveliness of the first movement, as well as the animation of the finale. In between, the unnamed harpsichordist plays a cadenza of satisfying length. All the soloists are excellent; the trumpet in No. 2 may be a bit shrill, but it is accurate. The balances in this work are very good, even though a recorder is used. They are less happy in No. 5, where the right-hand part of the harpsichord tends to be covered in the fast movements. The least satisfying performance is that of No. 6. Here, except in the slow movement, the violas seem to lack assurance, and do not project as well as their colleagues in the other works.

Miss Lautenbacher, the soloist in the violin concertos, is favorably known here for her fine performance in Locatelli's *The Art of the Violin*. She plays Bach with a tone that is clean and live, with no trace of romantic smear. Her partner in the double concerto does not have the most satiny tone imaginable, but perhaps satin is the wrong covering for Bach's creations anyway. In the solo concertos the basses sometimes lag slightly behind, but what mainly prevents these performances from offering strong competition to Heifetz, Menuhin, and some other available recordings is the rather deliberate tempos, which dull a good deal of the sparkle in the fast movements. N.B.

BACH: Sonata for Flute, in A minor
—See Telemann: *Fantasies for Flute*.

BACH, C. P. E.: Concerto for Harpsichord, Piano, and Orchestra, in F
—See Bach, J. C.: *Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra, No. 6*.

BACH, C. P. E.: Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra, in D; Siciliana—See Bach, J. C.: *Concertos for Piano and String Orchestra*.

BACH, C. P. E.: Sonata for Flute, in A minor—See Telemann: *Fantasies for Flute*.

BACH, J. C.: Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra; Op. 7, No. 5, in E flat; Op. 1, No. 1, in B; Op. 1, No. 6, in D

+Bach, C. P. E.: Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra, in D; Siciliana

Maria Kalamkarian, piano; Consortium Musicum.

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BACH, J. C.: Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra, No. 6

+Bach, C. P. E.: Concerto for Harpsichord, Piano, and Orchestra, in F

+Bach, W. F.: Concerto for Harpsichord and String Orchestra, in C minor

Robert Veyron-Lacroix, piano (in the C. P. E. Bach), harpsichord (in the J. C. Bach and W. F. Bach); Huguette Dreyfus, harpsichord (in the C. P. E. Bach); Chamber Orchestra of the Saar, Karl Ristenpart, cond.

- WESTMINSTER XWN 19096. LP. \$4.98.
- • WESTMINSTER WST 17096. SD. \$4.98.

Johann Christian Bach introduced himself to London, so to speak, with the set of six clavier concertos, Opus 1, which were published in 1763, the year after he had settled there. (It should be noted that although Christian, unlike Philipp Emanuel, took to the piano like a duck to water, he did not specify that instrument for his concertos until 1770, when he mentioned it as an alternate on the title page of Opus 7.) It is easy to understand, from the works on this disc, why Mozart thought highly of Christian, and probably learned a great deal from him—though in the end he was to reach far beyond the emotional horizons of his older colleague. To the modern ear these works seem, in retrospect, solid prototypes of the classical concerto in its essence: in the graceful interplay of solo and tutti; in the “feeling” slow movements which never probe to the point of really hurting; in the completely keyboardish character of the solo part, which manages to fill up any number of measures with a great amount of activity and somewhat less significance;

in the brisk and untroubled finales. The finale of Op. 1, No. 6, incidentally, sports one of those sets of variations on *God Save the Queen* which one seems continually to be stumbling upon; it doesn't sound as far out of context here as you might expect—at least not until Christian allows the pianist to split it asunder amid some octave leaps which must have caused a tremor of dismay to strike even Queen Anne, to whom Opp. 1 and 7 are dedicated.

Maria Kalamkarian is a pianist of complete technical security, with a driving, vigorous, masculine approach to this music. Every run, every ornament is incisive and sharp-edged; what one misses is a little more variety in tone, a little more mellowness in mood, occasionally. But by her very insistence she holds one's attention at times when the music might not. On the other hand, Robert Veyron-Lacroix stamps his foot, artistically speaking, less emphatically. He is more yielding, both as harpsichordist and pianist, and perhaps because he is much less well recorded (with the solo instrument sounding distant and, in the case of the piano, rather muffled and indistinct), he makes a less memorable impression.

But we must not, in considering Veyron-Lacroix's recording, overlook C. P. E. Bach. As so often seems the case when one attends a gathering of Sebastian Bach's most famous sons, it is Carl Philipp Emanuel who has most to say to the modern listener. Though one has more than a lingering doubt as to whether he designated a piano as one of the solo instruments in the present work (Geiringer mentions only one piano/harpsichord work—in E flat), the fact remains that it is an appealing work and one not to be taken lightly. The first movement, rhythmically elaborate and boasting a fairly extended development, sets the solo instruments in graceful partnership. The second movement, however, is the most individual, opening with a dark, operatic pronouncement which springs from the rather melancholy side of Philipp Emanuel's nature occasionally revealed to us—and which would seem utterly foreign to Johann Christian, for instance.

The Concerto of Wilhelm Friedemann is quite startling in its faithfulness to the outlook of Johann Sebastian. The keyboard writing is brilliant, set in a concerto grosso framework which the composer must have absorbed into his bones as a boy. S.F.

BACH, W. F.: Concerto for Harpsichord and String Orchestra, in C minor—See Bach, J. C.: *Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra, No. 6*.

BACH FAMILY: Organ Music

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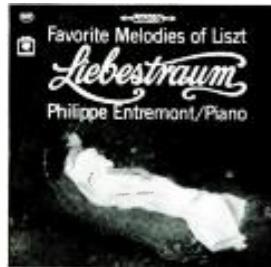
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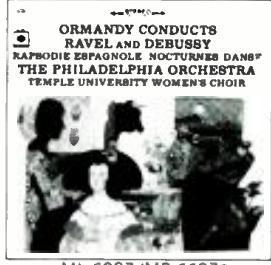
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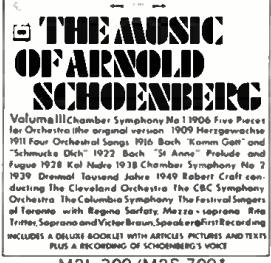
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Philipp Emanuel and Wilhelm Friedemann, his second cousin Johann Bernhard, his first wife's father Johann Michael, and her uncle Johann Christoph. There is something of interest by each. Among the pieces by Philipp Emanuel is an Adagio in D minor, a poetic reverie. Wilhelm Friedemann is represented by two imaginative short fugal pieces and a big, cheerful, skillfully made Fugue in E. Of Johann Bernhard there is a rather elegant set of variations on a chorale. Johann Christoph supplies a sturdy fugue on a chromatically descending subject and a fine chorale prelude with an effective pedalpoint at the end. And finally we have the great setting of *Am Wasserflüssen Babylon* by the master organ composer of them all.

Mr. Weinrich, at the organ of the General Theological Seminary in New York, shows his usual steadiness and command of the instrument. He varies the registration according to the style of the music, in a Sonata by Philipp Emanuel, for example, stressing the sharp and sudden contrasts in the finale. Excellent sound in both versions. N.B.

BARTOK: *The Wooden Prince*

Budapest Philharmonic Society Orchestra, Janos Ferenesik, cond.

- QUALITON LPX 1164. LP. \$4.98.

Superlatively fine recording and first-class performance fail to conceal the fact that this ballet of the war years 1914-17 is a second-rate work and one of the least interesting in Bartók's *œuvre*. It sounds as if it had been written by some very skillful but completely uninspired German academician who knew a lot about Mahler and Strauss and even a little about Bartók; it is not to be mentioned in the same breath, for example, with *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, Bartók's opera written earlier (1911) to a libretto by Béla Balász, who also provided the scenario here. The subject—a rather empty-headed fairy tale—may have inhibited the composer's flow of musical ideas. At any rate something did. A.F.

BEETHOVEN: *Trios for Piano and Strings*

Op. 1: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in G; No. 3, in C minor; 14 Variations on an Original Theme, in E flat, Op. 44; 10 Variations on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu," in G, Op. 121a; No. 9, in E flat, Op. posth. (153).

Mannheimer Trio.

- Vox VBX 53. Three LP. \$9.98.
- • Vox SVBX 553. Three SD. \$9.98.

This is Vol. 1 in Vox's integral recording of the complete Beethoven Piano Trios; Vol. 2 was reviewed in these pages last November. Once again, I must say that while the performances are thoroughly competent, they are also rather hard, grimly efficient, and stolid. One finds the metronomic quality so prevalent in run-of-the-mill Central-European music making; likewise, the nasal, vibratoless

raspiness and constricted dynamic scheme of the string playing. Moreover, the tempos are on the slow side and every first-movement exposition repeat is observed, with the result that the Op. 1 trios, usually occupying a single disc-side, here take a side and a quarter—and since Vox persists in its dubious practice of presenting these multiple-record sets in automatic sequence, only the Op. 1, No. 2, is complete on a single disc. (It is divided between Sides three and four with the *Kakadu Variations* rounding out the second of those two sides.) H.G.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique*, Op. 14

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18964. LP. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138964. SD. \$5.98.

As no advocate of "standard readings," I find it satisfying that this performance—whether one chooses to call it highly individual or merely eccentric—is decidedly one of a kind. Karajan has the personal force (and it projects even in recording) to capture interest and carry attention, even if one's curiosity is merely piqued as to what he is going to do next. Some will call this *Symphonie fantastique* the best they know; others (probably the majority) will regard it as more a monument to the conductor than to the composer. I am sure that Berlioz never dreamed of his music being played with this degree of freedom. What Karajan brings us is the major French symphony of the nineteenth century dramatically transcribed in performance to conform to a thoroughly Austro-German theatrical scheme.

Karajan attempts a performance with absolute flexibility of line. The whole tempo scheme is personal and highly unconventional. The fastest of the fast passages probably exceed those of any other recorded version, and some of the slow pages would appear to be similarly unparalleled in current catalogues. (One advantage of this pacing is that it puts the final three movements on a single side.) Some of the effects—the whiplash chords, the ringing bells (real bells, it seems, and big ones)—and the ethereal textures are quite without match, thanks in part to the high quality of the DGG recording.

It's an exciting reading. What I am unsure about is how many times I should like to hear it. If you are looking for a wholly fresh approach to the *Symphonie*, you may well relish this version. If you prefer a more orthodox edition which still escapes dullness, the Munch set has much in its favor. R.C.M.



BLOCH: *Scherzo fantastique*

†Khachaturian: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D flat*

Lorin Hollander, piano; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, André Previn, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2801. LP. \$4.98.
- • RCA VICTOR LSC 2801. SD. \$5.98.

Although nominally merely a filler for the longer Khachaturian work, the Bloch piece which here receives its first recording manages to say considerably more than the Concerto. Written in 1948, the *Scherzo fantastique* has many of the jagged dissonances and virile qualities of Bloch's writing in the early Twenties. It is fiercely virtuosic and thus ideally suited to the percussive, tigerish Mr. Hollander.

In the Khachaturian performance the deliberate inflections and pseudo-contemplation bear more striking similarity to the old Kapell/Koussevitzky recording than to the decidedly light-footed account of Lev Oborin (to whom the work was dedicated) with the composer conducting. (That disc was once available briefly on Westminster.) Without that authentic "swirl," the lush orchestration and compositional clichés suggest musical comedy à la Broadway. Mr. Previn is no stranger to that genre, of course, but his conducting here (and in the recent Rachmaninoff concerto disc with Pennario) shows him to be perfectly at home with serious material. Hollander's work is also first-rate technically, and—aside from my reservation concerning tempos—I find the performance excellent.

The engineering is of almost terrifying excellence. The acoustic is ultraspacious, the definition superbly natural, and the impact (of the percussion especially) shatteringly realistic. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B flat, Op. 83*

Eugene Istomin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 6115. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6715. SD. \$5.98.

Serkin and Ormandy have recorded this Concerto together so many times that it is almost strange to find one appearing in the work without the other. But as Istomin was one of Serkin's pupils, a kind of direct lineage is established. In any case the present performance has splendid eloquence. Istomin is a more gracious player than Serkin; he strives for the lyricism implicit in the score whereas Serkin imposed weight and tension. While Istomin is a romantic pianist who uses far more rubato than, say, Fleisher did, he is scarcely less concerned with structure. He brings a marvelously lucid coloration to his tone, and his exemplary fluidity of technique allows him to clear all the hurdles without chopping the line or thickening the sonority. Ormandy supports beautifully with a rich-textured, creamy smooth orchestral framework.

The recorded sound is unusual. For once the "Symphony for Piano and Or-

chestra" dictum is scrupulously followed by a balance which places the solo instrument well back in the orchestration. It is a pleasantly musical effect enhanced by the very live "top" on the reproduction and by the prominent emergence of important woodwind detail from the total mass of sonority.

There are too many excellent Brahms B flats to allow for a clear-cut preference, but the present one is well up among the best contenders. H.G.

BRITTON: Part Songs

Five Flower Songs; I Lov'd a Lass; Lift Boy; Chorale; A Shepherd's Carol; The Ballad of Little Musgrave and the Lady Barnard; Choral Dances from "Gloriana"; Old Abram Brown; Oliver Cromwell.

Elizabethan Singers; Wilfrid Parry, piano; Louis Halsey, cond.

• ARGO RG 424. LP. \$4.98.

• • ARGO ZRG 5424. SD. \$4.98.

Quite likely Britten was born with a feeling for chorus: for the graceful setting of words and for the creation of a wide and wonderful range of beautiful sounds from the combination of voice against voice and voices with instruments. Certainly no living composer can approach Britten in the variety and wonder of his choral writing; no Englishman since Purcell has set his own language so well.

This record covers two decades in Britten's career, from some early, jogging, folkslike pieces of 1934 to the rich and wondrous choral dances in the 1953 *Gloriana*, certainly the finest moments in the opera. Midway there comes one of the most wonderful pieces of them all, a sardonic, icy, and somewhat mischievous treatment of one of those bloodstained old English ballads, *Little Musgrave*. (The text is the same in most respects as the Child ballad *Matty Groves*, which Joan Baez sings so well.)

Some of the songs are simple chordal pieces (like the W. H. Auden *Chorale*) in which one just floats in a wash of lovely harmony; others are intricate and tricky (like the canonic *Old Abram Brown* and the madrigalesque textures in some of the *Gloriana* pieces). All are of a beauty almost beyond description.

The singing is of like quality, although there are a few moments in which, curiously enough, the diction is less than exemplary. The recording is remarkable in the way it preserves the intimacy of the performances and the music itself. A most pleasurable record. A.R.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 4, in E flat ("Romantic")

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

• ANGEL 36245. LP. \$4.98.

• • ANGEL S 36245. SD. \$5.98.

Economic interpretations of taste should not be overdone, but it seems fairly obvi-

ous that the popularity of the Bruckner symphonies in the record market has been retarded by the fact that a symphony by Bruckner costs twice as much as a symphony by almost anybody else. (The obvious exception, naturally, is Mahler, and here one notes that the most popular symphonies are the First and Fourth, both of which will fit on a conventional long-play disc.) With improved techniques for stereo mastering, it is now practical to get about an hour of music on two surfaces. Thus this Klemperer performance, which runs 60' 48", is contained on a single disc, while the competing Walter album, with a playing time only a fraction over five minutes more, is a two-record set containing a fourth-side filler. (Comparisons remain interesting. Klemperer's pace is a good deal faster than Walter's in every movement except the Scherzo, where Walter speeds up and he slows down, making it 11' 43" to 10' 58" in favor of the British.)

This is the second time that Klemperer has recorded this music. His earlier version (still available on Vox) is also a single record, but this was easily managed with an older recording of distinct sonic limitations. The new version is exceptionally well recorded; in fact, for weight of tone and presence it often surpasses the Walter set which has previously served as our standard of achievement.

The original text of this Symphony would be that of 1874, but Bruckner revised the work for its first performance and it is this version (of 1878-80) which Klemperer uses, in a critical edition of 1953 by Leopold Nowak. The *Romantic* symphony can be romantic in the conventional sense, and it is that quality which Walter stresses. Klemperer, although not indifferent to the warmth of the music, is plainly out for something

more. Even in the "hunting" Scherzo there is power and majesty; elsewhere the sentimental quality of the more overtly romantic material is counterbalanced by the "*Rheingold*" harmonic breadths" and "*Götterdämmerung*" climaxes" which Tovey found in this music. If you want your Bruckner with rugged strength, Klemperer is your man. And if you don't know this Symphony, here is a glorious way to add it to your collection for no more than the price of many a lesser work. R.C.M.

CHARPENTIER: "Music for Port-Royal"

André Vessières, bass; Instrumental and Vocal Ensemble, Roger Blanchard, cond.

• NONESUCH H 1040. LP. \$2.50.

• • NONESUCH H 71040. SD. \$2.50.

The music of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, thanks to the work of scholars and performers, is steadily impressing an increasing number of connoisseurs with its unusual mélange of positive attributes: elegance and poise, sincerity and fervor, melodic beauty which emerges as clearly from rich textures as from those of slighter body. It was typical of the composer that he should associate with the musical life of the Cistercian nunnery at Port-Royal, where simplicity in life and in devotion were the prevailing ideas. As Vivaldi scribbled in the names of his orphan girls of the Ospedale della Pietà whenever he wrote them a psalm or a Magnificat, so Charpentier added the names of Port-Royal nuns to the motets, canticles, and Holy Week music that we now find recorded on this disc. The one exception here is his dignified setting of the First Tenebrae Lesson for Holy Wednesday, which was intended

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for performance at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

André Vessières is the velvety toned bass soloist in this program, standing out effortlessly from a shimmering background of strings and woodwind. The unnamed sopranos and alto who play the part of the "singing nuns" offer less balm for the sensitive ear, for they sometimes tend towards the edgy and the shrill. True, they can be softened down a little by cutting the treble, but in general they sound less musically than Vessières, whose generous grasp of a melodic phrase compels attention and applause.

The relative simplicity of the music is reflected in its scoring: the Magnificat, Third Tenebrae Lesson for Holy Wednesday, and "Ave regina coelorum" call for nothing more than a plain continuo accompaniment. Harpsichord is used here, though organ would surely have been preferable, bearing in mind the associations with the nunnery. "Quam pulchra es" enjoys the luxury of two flutes as well as the continuo, and the performance is excellent. D.S.

FALLA: *El Sombrero de tres picos*

Victoria de los Angeles, soprano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, cond.

- ANGEL 36235. LP. \$4.98.
- • ANGEL S 36235. SD. \$5.98.

Spanish music when played by a French, Italian, or Spanish conductor has one character. When played by a German, Russian, or American it has another. Rafael Frühbeck is a German, reared in Spain, but educated in large part in Munich. Here he is leading an English orchestra. Victoria de los Angeles is, of course, Spanish, and the sounds of castanets and cries of *olé* come from the corps of the Teatro del Liceo, Barcelona. (The latter effects, heard only at the very beginning of the record, were made "on location" and spliced into the orchestral performance taped in London.)

Frühbeck's performance is theatrical, paced to stage action and dancing rather than to the concert room. It is always calculated, sometimes giving the impression of being overly deliberate, and although very effective, it never seems ready to cut loose with spontaneous fire and drive. Miss de los Angeles, as ever, sings with great sensitivity and vocal beauty. She is well recorded with the proper distance for the special effect Falla desired, yet with no loss of immediacy. The orchestral sound is very full and rich.

The sum, therefore, is a good record, but quite a different one from the two Ansermet versions. The original Geneva production is a real buy on Richmond, the stereo remake on London (with Teresa Berganza) is a considerably warmer performance than the Angel both in sound and style. The Franco-Swiss conductor and orchestra have a more Latin quality, textures are more open, colors brighter and brassier with less fat in the bass, and tempos are

quicker—designed for the ear rather than the foot. I find merit in the approach of both conductors, but if I had to choose between them my preference would be the Ansermet. R.C.M.

HAYDN: *Divertimentos for Baryton, Viola, and Cello: No. 45, in D; No. 49, in G; No. 60, in A; No. 64, in D; No. 113, in D*

Salzburger Baryton Trio.

- NONESUCH H 1049. LP. \$2.50.
- • NONESUCH H 71049. SD. \$2.50.

The baryton, an instrument of mixed breed, had a brief existence between the end of the seventeenth century and the final quarter of the eighteenth. An outgrowth of the bass viola da gamba, the baryton never was fully standardized, but generally provided six or more strings played with a bow on a fretted fingerboard plus a group of auxiliary strings which either resonated sympathetically or were plucked. Dr. Burney regarded it as an "ungrateful" instrument, and well he might. We remember it solely because Haydn composed about 175 works for baryton in various ensemble groups—no doubt because Prince Nicholas Esterházy delighted in playing the beastly thing.

Why anyone today should take the trouble to master so unwieldy an instrument is beyond my calculation, but Herr Karl-Maria Schwamberger has, and as a result we can listen to this sampling of baryton music from the great Joseph. The period of these works is 1767-72, Haydn's years of early maturity. Divertimento is the right word to describe these compositions. The material is light and is not developed at any length. (The more serious moments may prove to be the reworked material such as the Allegro of No. 64, which comes from the slow movement of the earlier Symphony No. 30.) The baryton is a center-stage soloist with accompanists rather than collaborators.

Since some of the material is quite charming and the baryton is a fantastic-sounding contraption (which here appears to be exceedingly well played and well recorded), the disc has a genuine curiosity value. But you may find that it has not much more. R.C.M.

KHACHATURIAN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D flat—See Bloch: Scherzo fantastique.*

KHACHATURIAN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*

Henryk Szeryng, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50393. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90393. SD. \$5.98.

Sometimes the best in a musician can bring out the worst in a composition. Szeryng plays Khachaturian's circus 1940 score with his usual penetrating musicianship, impeccable shading and phrasing. Dorati seconds his impulses

excellently with a strong and detailed probing of the orchestral part. But the result is merely to lay bare the music's fatal flaws: its hopelessly dull, four-plus-four structure, its derivative and undistinguished melodic and harmonic content. What the music needs to bring it off is the kind of brash, insouciant vulgarity that David Oistrakh managed to invent in his first recording (also on Mercury). Even Oistrakh had become too good an artist for the work by the time he re-recorded it for Angel. Perhaps the only salvation for this concerto is to turn it over to circus bands. A.R.

LISZT: *Sonata for Piano, in B minor* †Schubert: *Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in A minor, Op. 143, D. 784*

Emil Gilels, piano.

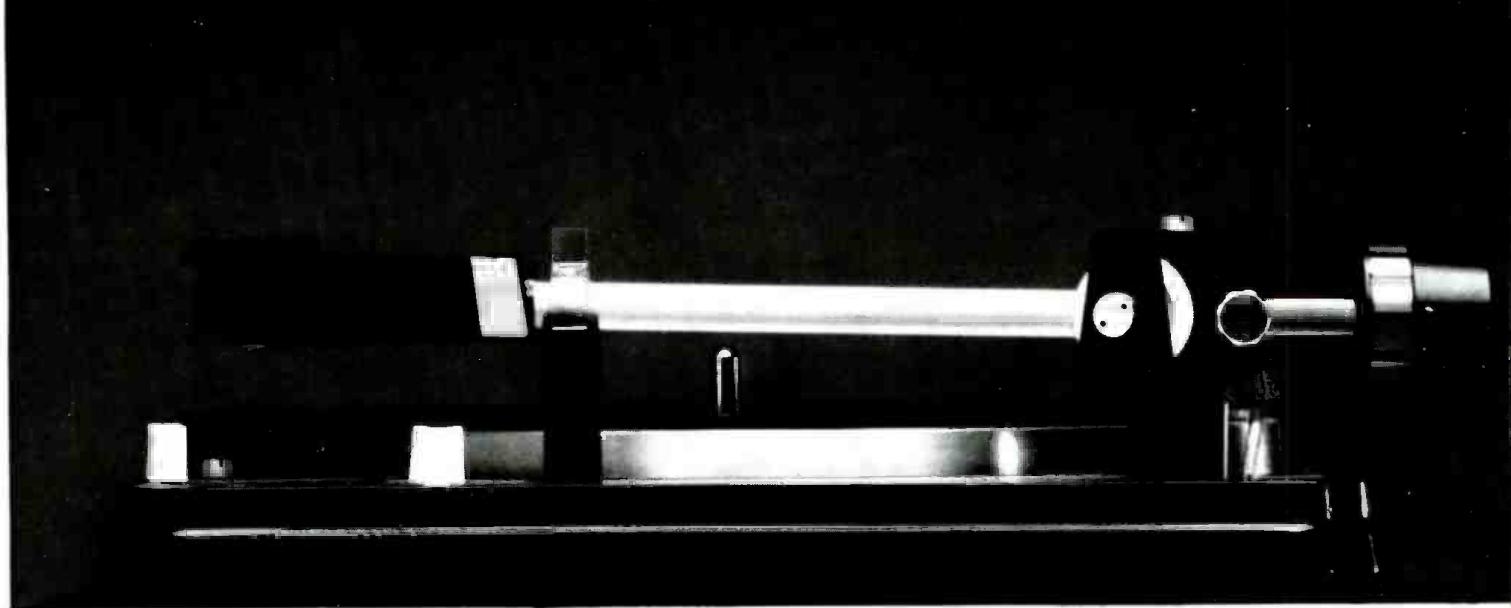
- RCA VICTOR LM 2811. LP. \$4.98.
- • RCA VICTOR LSC 2811. SD. \$5.98.

The cover for this record shows Gilels as he appeared in Carnegie Hall for the recording sessions, clad in white tie and tails. I wish he had played in his shirt sleeves—and in Liszt, with the sleeves rolled up!

As sheer pianism, it is impossible not to admire such superb dependability, such admirable steadiness, such wide dynamic range. But while Gilels' playing is always immaculately well groomed and scrupulously honest, it is not always imaginative, or even perceptive. One might expect the Russian virtuoso to give an all-stops-out rendition of the Liszt in the feverish Horowitz manner, but in truth his account adheres far more closely to the classical approach exemplified by Fleisher (Epic) and Curzon (London). He favors crystalline sonorities rather than thunderous ones; his tempos are straightforward; his playing of bravura passages is solid—never febrile. Lyrical pages emerge with quiet reflectiveness rather than with simpering soulfulness. But Fleisher and Curzon both bring far more inner tension and intellectual organization to bear on the writing. Note, for example, the idyllic last pages of what could be termed the slow movement. Fleisher and Curzon stress the suspenseful harmonic line and tonal tension behind the gossamer melody high in the treble: Gilels merely shifts color and makes a pretty tinkle-tinkle without causing the heart to beat faster.

A similar attitude of servility (rather than reverence) manifests itself in the Schubert. The playing is tasteful but completely literal. All three movements go rather slowly, with heavy deliberation replacing the springlike Ländler motion of the music. The third movement's second subject sounds listless and studied in the Gilels performance, while in those by Solomon and Lincoln Mayorga it bounces along joyously. Gilels' Schubert, incidentally, has two characteristics very much in common with Sviatoslav Richter's: its prevailingly slow tempos, and a structural philosophy that relies upon metronomic steadiness rather than punctuation to convey the formalistic anatomy of the material. Indeed, Gilels' only de-

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viation from a strictly maintained tempo comes in the development section of the third movement, where the climax prompts him to make a momentary accelerando.

The piano sound is beautiful but rather thin.

H.G.

MASSENET: *Thaïs*

Renée Doria (s), Thaïs; Françoise Louvay (s), Crobyle; Janine Collard (c), Albine and Myrtle; Michel Séchéchal (t), Nicias; Pierre Giannotti (t), A Cenobite; Robert Massard (b), Athanaël; Gerard Serkoyan (bs), Palemon; Jacques Scellier (bs), A Servant; chorus; orchestra. Jésus Etcheverry, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 2236. Two LP. \$9.96.

• • WESTMINSTER WST 236. Two SD. \$9.96.

Thaïs is probably as close as Massenet came, after *Manon*, to a lasting success. In this country it had considerable popularity just after the turn of the century, when Hammerstein introduced it (1907, with Mary Garden). The Metropolitan took it over (first for Farrar, then for Jeritza) but it has totaled fewer than thirty performances there—the last in 1939, with Helen Jepson and John Charles Thomas.

The piece is probably unfamiliar enough nowadays to warrant a very brief run-down: Athanaël, a native of the wicked city of Alexandria who has joined the hermitic Cenobite sect (this is Egypt, fourth century), dreams of the actress and courtesan Thaïs, whose example is symbolic of the city's decadence. Determined to convert her, he journeys to Alexandria, where he meets Thaïs through his old friend, the wealthy Nicias, who warns him that the conversion will probably work the other way around. Much to everyone's surprise, Athanaël wins over Thaïs, who by the end of Act II is more Cenobitic than the Cenobites. He leads her away on a cruel journey into the desert, and turns her over to the Abbess Albine to spend the rest of her days in a convent.

Soon, however, he sees a vision of the dying Thaïs. He rushes to the convent, where she is indeed near death. In a closing duet, she sings ecstatically of her coming union with heaven, while Athanaël bitterly and desperately confesses that he loves her.

This is, of course, wonderful dramatic stuff—the magnetic, promiscuous woman whose only true desire is self-denial and purity, and the ascetic fanatic whose love for her is a secret, even to himself, until it is too late. Add the Middle East (the teeming, perfumed city; the burning desert!), some lush, incensed religiosity, and fifty girls, fifty, and how can you miss?

You can miss by writing empty, syrupy music, that's how. Don't misunderstand—I like the opera. When it's bad, it's bad in a fun sort of way, and when it's good (as in most of the last act), it's the genuine article—lyric theatre of real emotional power. But one has to have a fondness for this kind of thing, a willing-

ness or even eagerness to excuse its failings and excesses, as with 1930s horror films or the New York Mets, or else one will simply hear the lousy music, of which there is a fair amount. Some of it is what I would call token writing, as if Massenet knew perfectly well that he could count on certain associations, religious sensual, to induce an audience response, and had only to make the gesture. Most of the arias have no real point, no real musical worth—they simply occur at the proper place, make the correct gesture, are finished off with the accepted sort of cadence, and end. Even the fairly well-known baritone aria "Voilà donc la terrible cité" has no great individuality. Where the writing builds some genuine force is in the scenes between Thaïs and Athanaël, as well as in the purely descriptive passages, such as the Big Mediterranean City Music at the opening of the second theme, or the Desert Wastes with Oasis Music at the opening of Act IV.

The last act, as I have indicated, is much the best. It would seem that Athanaël's emotional predicament is what really caught Massenet's imagination, and the writing takes on an urgency that becomes altogether persuasive in the final duet. These strictures on the music do not make *Thaïs* a poor opera. That is something that can be judged only in the theatre, and there, I suspect, the piece would stand or fall on the merits of its two principal singers (the Thaïs would have to be a genuinely sexy, irresistible actress with a large, free voice, the Athanaël an authoritative presence with a firm, colorful baritone—and both empathetic with the French romantic idiom), plus the willingness of the producer to splash around with color and old-fashioned, hokey effects. It could, I imagine, be enormously effective; for one who is willing to indulge the vaguely rotten aroma that is the nature of the beast, it is effective on records.

The present recording, which is several years old but is being released domestically for the first time, is certainly as close as we are likely to come to a complete performance on records, unless the rapidly decomposing corpse of the French romantic opera is suddenly sprung from the crypt to lurch about in imitation of its former life—and that would demand the true evil genius, a Callas Zeffirelli sort of collaboration. An old Urania recording with Géori-Boué is theoretically available, but I have not been able to locate a copy in New York. One scene is omitted here: the penultimate one, in which Athanaël envisions the dying Thaïs. Since I have never heard this music, I simply cannot evaluate the significance of the omission. I might observe, though, that the scene certainly has its place in the dramatic structure, affording a break between the two Act IV Athanaël Thaïs scenes, and by its mere presence adding

somewhat to the sense of epic confrontation which we should have in the last scene. Presumably it was dropped to keep the album to two records, and I suspect that for many prospective purchasers the decision was sensible.

The performance is not really first-class, but in judging it we are faced with the same context that surrounded so many of Cetra's Italian operatic releases in the early Fifties—it is the only one now, and for the foreseeable future. Its primary assets are very full, rich sound which does ample justice to the lush scoring, knowledgeable and sympathetic leadership by Etcheverry, and the thoroughgoing Frenchness of the entire production. Renée Doria, an experienced and musical singer, floats some haunting pianissimos and phrases everything with care and taste; the voice inclines to edginess, though, and the full-voiced ascents up to and including high D can be trying. The dry, rather nondescript baritone of Robert Massard is not my idea of the voice of Athanaël (whose is?—you've got me there, though Bacquier's would come a good deal closer), but he brings a certain conviction and security to the part—a perfectly workable job on a routine vocal level. Michel Séchéchal deals well with the character role of Nicias, and Gerard Serkoyan demonstrates an attractive, if sluggish, bass as the old Cenobite Palemon. Everyone else is quite acceptable, and the accompanying booklet includes libretto and translation.

C.L.O.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 21, in C, K. 467; No. 24, in C minor, K. 491

Robert Casadesus, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 6095. LP. \$4.98.

• • COLUMBIA MS 6695. SD. \$5.98.

Casadesus's playing of Mozart, with all its fine qualities, may appear to be rather impersonal, but underneath the elegant surface one senses an intense involvement with the music. In K. 467, especially, this inner tension seems to be nearer the surface than usual. The first movement flows along with contrast and controlled drama, the miraculous slow movement is enthralling from first note to last, and the finale sparkles. Szell furnishes a soloist's dream of an accompaniment, and the Columbia engineers enable us to hear everything Mozart and Szell wanted us to hear. If I could have only one recording of this masterpiece, it would be either the present one or Rubinstein's on RCA Victor.

My admiration for Casadesus's performance of K. 491 is a little less whole-hearted. The present version is in some respects an improvement over the older recording by the same pianist and conductor. Its sound is superior, its balances are juster, and Casadesus's fastidious articulation makes this reading of the slow movement even finer than the old one. But he takes the Allegro just a shade slower than he did before, and the difference is enough to turn passion into



mild melancholy. The pianist's playing here seems to me a bit too neat, and this time there is no pianissimo at the end of the movement, as there was in the earlier version. Generally speaking, Casadesus's approach to Mozart performance style is up to date, compared to the nineteenth-century attitude that prevailed during a good part of his career, but it still has a bit further to go; he does not fill in the little spaces Mozart left open for improvisation, and he still starts all trills on the main note. As far as K. 491 is concerned, I'm not sure that the Giesecking version is not still the most satisfying.

N.B.

MOZART: *Symphonies*

No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); No. 36, in C, K. 425 ("Linz"); No. 38, in D, K. 504 ("Prague"); No. 39, in E flat, K. 543; No. 40, in G minor, K. 550; No. 41, in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"); Overture to "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," K. 384.

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 59.

PROKOFIEV: *Romeo and Juliet*; *Piano Suite*, Op. 75; *Visions fugitives*, Op. 22 (complete)

Pavel Serebriakov, piano (in Op. 75); Heinrich Neuhaus, piano (in Op. 22). • MONITOR MC 2064. LP. \$1.98 (for a limited time only).

Here is a disc that no lover of the piano can afford to miss. Prokofiev's own adaptation of his *Romeo and Juliet* ballet for piano solo (he presumably made a similar version of *Cinderella*) is a delightful addition to the repertoire. Although in its orchestral dress the music boasts lavish orchestration and all sorts of exotic coloristic effects, here the composer has, rather surprisingly, disdained any showy pyrotechnics. He adheres mostly to a linear, three-part effect (which would be simple to play were it not for the rhythmic precision and tactile acumen required) and manages to conjure through this sparseness a variety almost equal to the original. Serebriakov's intense, elegant presentation would be hard to better.

At this late date, no comment is really needed for the famous *Visions fugitives*: they are, by now, classics. It is worth noting, however, that the late Heinrich Neuhaus was one of the Soviet Union's most esteemed musicologists and pedagogues. (Emil Gilels and Sviatoslav Richter are only two of the illustrious alumni of Neuhaus' classes.) Inasmuch as he was well into his seventies when this recording was made, one should not expect the dazzle of technical perfection, though the venerable artist's fingers still worked more than adequately. Rather, it is the style that matters here, and while I have heard some of these delectable miniatures played with more speed and

mercurial brilliance, rarely have I heard them done with greater point, wit, and pathos. If Richter's Prokofiev might be likened to Giesecking's Debussy, Neuhaus' Prokofiev was more analogous to that of Cortot: that is, he was broader, squarer, more solidly emphatic than his student.

Fortunately, the sound of this Monitor release is good throughout. H.G.

ROSSINI: *Mosè*

Caterina Mancini (s), Anaidé; Bruna Rizzoli (s), Sinaïde; Lucia Danieli (ms), Maria; Mario Filippeschi (t), Aménofi; Agostino Lazzari (t), Elisero; Piero di Palma (t), Aufide; Giuseppe Taddei (b), Faraone; Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs), Mosè; Plinio Clabassi (bs), Osiride; Ferruccio Mazzoli (bs), A Mysterious Voice and A Voice from Inside; Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro di San Carlo (Naples), Tullio Serafin, cond.

• PHILIPS A00393/95L. Three LP. \$14.94.

For some years now (since 1956, which must also have been approximately the date of this recording) a taped recording of an RAI performance of *Mosè* has turned up spasmodically, making clear to those who have heard it what Philips' release will, one hopes, reveal to a wider audience—that *Mosè* is a great opera, one which sums up all that is loftiest and most exciting in the pre-Verdi grand opera tradition. One listens to it with amazement—amazement at its musical and theatrical wealth, and at the fact that it has somehow slipped from the repertory of the world's great opera houses.

The original version of *Mosè* (*Mosè in Egitto*) was first performed in Naples in 1818. Rossini later revised it for the Paris Opéra, where it was first performed (as *Mosè*) in 1827. It is this version that is usually accorded the opera's infrequent performances nowadays, and it is the one recorded, though it is sung here in Italian, not French. In the nineteenth century it was regarded as one of Rossini's finest serious operas, thought not the finest, that ranking generally being given to *Seuniramide* or *Guillaume Tell*, or even *Otello*.

The tremendous strength of the work lies in its ensembles. It is not that the arias are not memorable, but simply that there aren't many. *Mosè* opens with a chorus for the captive Hebrews, a scene of great weight and beauty, and from there it evolves as a series of confrontations expressed in duet, trio, or quartet, and leading into a series of extraordinary concerted numbers. The music is thus primarily made up of passages of heightened *recitativo accompagnato* and ensemble writing of one sort or another. Rossini's genius was always most apparent in his ensemble writing, and never more so than in *Mosè*, and the opera is practically bursting with great music, inevitably springing from a valid theatrical situation. Of course, the forms are always completed and closed, with the result that the opera's progress is stately, not taut—the first-act scene

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between Aménofi and Anaïde, for example, starts with an allegro plea for Aménofi, continues with a reply in kind by Anaïde, and then with an andantino cavatina for Aménofi followed by another answer for Anaïde; then, after a short bridge, an actual duet. Once a musical form is moved into, it is completed and rounded out—the interruptions and violent contrasts which Verdi was to use to such effect were not part of Rossini's aesthetic vocabulary.

Mosè, in other words, is an excellent case study for the early nineteenth-century grand opera; that it also happens to be a wonderful work makes the study an exciting listening experience. The most famous number in *Mosè* is, of course, the concerted prayer from Act IV, "Dal suo stellato soglio," wherein Moses and the Hebrews pray for deliverance from the approaching Egyptian army. It is one of those great, simple melodies which can turn the opera house into a magical place, and the sudden turn into major for the final section is as effective as it is obvious. No wonder the melody was chosen for the occasion of Rossini's reinterment at Santa Croce.

But the score is full of things nearly as good—the lamenting ensemble for the Egyptians at the opening of Act II (the plague of darkness), with the entire scene knit together with a wonderfully descriptive string motif; the incredibly beautiful melody and ingenious canon development of the "Celeste man placata" ensemble later in the same scene; the equally memorable "Mi manca la voce," after Moses has extinguished the holy fire at the altar of Isis—there is too much else to mention, hardly a weak number in the score. The final effect is one of power and weight, and of absolute honesty—there is nothing cheap or simply "effective," as there is in so many of Rossini's comic works. In its grandness of design, integrity of execution, and sheer melodic wealth, *Mosè* is head and shoulders above several works in the standard Italian canon—surely it is precisely the sort of piece that the Met ought to be reviving.

To pick holes in the performance would be a bit futile, since it is certainly the only one we are likely to have for the nonce. Its sound is full and as spacious as monophonic recording generally gets—the many concerted numbers and the extended choruses have been recorded in excellent balance. Serafin is at his best—a stately reading, surely, but not limp, and phrased in that long-breathed, singing manner which comes only to the very best Italian operatic conductors.

Among the performers, there is some really outstanding singing by Giuseppe Taddei as the Pharaoh—fat, rich, and smooth—and wonderful work in small parts by Ferruccio Mazzoli and Piero di Palma. Bruna Rizzoli, Plinio Clabassi, and Agostino Lazzari all handle their secondary but important roles well, and Lucia Danieli, familiar primarily as a character mezzo, shows rather more and better voice than I had supposed she had. Caterina Mancini, always a singer of authority and temperament, also has things reasonably well under control here—more so, certainly, than in most of

her exciting but uneven performances for Cetra. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, alas, is a bare reflection of the noble-sounding Philip of Cetra's *Don Carlo*. He is a singer of great sensitivity, one who knows all the effects of the grand style and who applies himself to the spirit of the music; but the voice is so woolly and pushy, so dry and spread about the pitch, and so limited at the bottom, that he can hardly more than indicate how *Mosè* should sound. One respects his intentions, but can hardly be partial to the singing.

All told, though, the performance is competent enough to reward anyone interested in discovering a work of grandeur and inspiration. The album includes some notes, the libretto in Italian, and a running synopsis by Leo Riemans which is not a substitute for a translation but which is excellent of its kind.

C.L.O.

ROSSINI-RESPIGHI: *La Boutique fantasque; Rossiniana*

Orchestra of the Vienna Festival, Antonio Janigro, cond.

- VANGUARD VRS 1127. LP. \$4.98.
- • VANGUARD VSD 71127. SD. \$5.95.

Janigro's special flair and sympathy for Rossini was demonstrated some years ago in his recordings (with the Solisti di Zagreb) of the early Sonatas for Strings. These qualities are again at work in what remains of Rossini in these Respighi arrangements (rather more in *La Boutique*, which is for a lighthearted ballet, than in *Rossiniana*, a symphonic exegesis). The result is a record of supple and subtle charm, very neatly played and recorded. Janigro's *Rossiniana* is, by virtue of its gentler accents, a bit closer to the original material than was the Zeller disc (on Westminster) of some months ago.

A.R.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in A minor, Op. 143, D. 784*—See Liszt: *Sonata for Piano, in B minor*.

SCHUMANN: *Introduction and Allegro for Piano and Orchestra, in G, Op. 92; Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra, in F, Op. 86*

Roger Boutry, piano (in Op. 92); Georges Barboteu, Michel Berges, Daniel Dubar, Gilbert Courrier, French horns (in Op. 86); Chamber Orchestra of the Saar, Karl Ristenpart, cond.

- NONSUCH H 1044. LP. \$2.50.
- • NONSUCH H 71044. SD. \$2.50.

SCHUMANN: *Introduction and Allegro for Piano and Orchestra, in G, Op. 92; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 6088. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6688. SD. \$5.98.

It looks as if the Schumann Introduction

and Allegro, in G, is finally moving into the standard repertoire, at least on records. With the readings listed above, there are now five editions available, including one by Dennis (Westminster) and two by Richter (for DGG and a Russian label). Roger Boutry is a dependable pianist and his performance (like Richter's, somewhat reserved and depersonalized) is a fine one. Serkin's ardently impassioned interpretation, however, possesses a freedom and kinetic excitement which puts it at the head of the list.

Also contained on the Nonesuch record is the seldom heard *Konzertstück*, Op. 86 (written, as was the Introduction and Allegro, in 1849). It is such a hazardous feat to find four hornists willing to risk their reputations on the daredevil trapeze of virtuosity Schumann constructed that one need hardly ask why this composition is so rarely encountered in the concert hall. I do not particularly admire the raw, open sound of the French school of brass playing, but it must be admitted that the ensemble work here is very good. Furthermore, the able Karl Ristenpart conducts with idiomatic flair and galvanic propulsiveness, while the recorded sound throughout the disc is absolutely of the best.

Columbia's offering of the popular Concerto presents Serkin's third recorded collaboration with Ormandy in this work. The combination of more realistic sound and more rhapsodic playing makes this latest documentation by far the best of their efforts. It easily ranks with the top versions in the catalogue: Fleisher/Szell (Epic); Solomon/Menges (Paperback Classics); Istomin/Walter (Columbia); Lipatti/Karajan (Columbia); Cliburn/Reiner (RCA Victor); Janis/Skrowaczewski (Mercury). But it will be for the Introduction and Allegro that most people will buy this set. H.G.

SCHUMANN: *Noveletten*, Op. 21 (complete)

Beveridge Webster, piano.

- DOVER HCR 5239. LP. \$2.00.
- • DOVER HCRST 7002. SD. \$2.00.

Here is a disc that I cannot welcome too highly. The superb *Noveletten* have been out of the domestic catalogue (save for isolated renditions of one or two) since London deleted its old version with Jacqueline Blanchard some years ago. Webster does handsomely by the music. He is a structural player, much more interested in conveying power than in pianistic color, but his interpretations certainly do not lack for ardor, passion, and expressive strength. A strong technician, the artist sweeps through the difficult writing with wonderful momentum and a refreshing cohesion. He is able to knit the disparate sections together with exemplary architectural grasp, but in the process never slights the expressive, introspective facets of Schumann's music.

With superb, resonant sound, this should be the standard edition of the complete Op. 21 for some years to come. H.G.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 7, in C, Op. 60 ("Leningrad")*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

- COLUMBIA M2L 322. Two LP. \$9.98.
- • COLUMBIA M2S 722. Two SD. \$11.98.

One day in his postretirement years, while rummaging in the shelves of his music room, Toscanini came across a huge pile of photostatic copies of an orchestra score. He started to read them and then called to his son, Walter. "What is this music?" he asked.

"That is the Shostakovich Seventh Symphony," he was told. There was a long pause as the Maestro went on reading.

"I played this?" he asked.

"Yes, father," he was told. "You gave the American premiere."

"I memorized all this."

"Yes, father, you did."

A longer, more ominous pause followed.

"I was a fool!"

Certainly when Toscanini played this music in the summer of 1942 we all felt differently about it, and about the Soviet cause, than was possible three or four years later. With that change in the world situation, the Shostakovich Seventh became a sort of instant period piece. The Eighth, which is probably a finer work, suffered even more. Conductors in the United States and Western Europe rarely programmed this music, and the recordings of these scores in the current Schwann are of Czech and Russian origin.

Bernstein, however, has retained an interest in the Seventh, possibly because of its obvious links to Mahler, possibly because of the beauty of its best pages, or possibly because it is an excellent vehicle for his vigorously extroverted style of conducting. It is appropriate, therefore, that his should be the initial stereo recording. It brings us a performance in which the music is treated with respect and conveyed with strength and frequently with nobility. Technically, the set is notable for the full exploitation of the big orchestral effects with which the music abounds. For the younger generation who want to regard this work as the 1812 Overture of World War II, the attractions are obvious.

Rehearing the Seventh after twenty years, I find that I cannot divorce it in my mind from the circumstances of its composition. The Prokofiev Fifth, another Soviet wartime symphony, is significant as an artistic statement about man and the human spirit, but Shostakovich vacillates here between passages that are quite moving as absolute music and others that seem hollow and pretentious. At its worst, the Seventh is inferior to Prokofiev's film music for *Alexander Nevsky* (which may have been yet another influence); and hearing these mechanically built up sounds of battle and triumph, one can almost visualize the Soviet documentary film they might accompany. In the formal sense this is not music of great originality in development. Shostakovich adopted as his basic

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scheme the ABA movement with a strongly contrasting middle section. The opening and closing sections are generally the best, and (for me, anyway) the two middle movements are the finest in the work. The long first movement with its *Bolero*-like repetitions of the Nazi invaders theme remains more monotonous than impressive, despite the fact that Bernstein plays it well. R.C.M.

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

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond.

- LONDON CM 9408. LP. \$4.98.
- LONDON CS 6408. SD. \$5.98.

This is an eclectic performance and, as such, it fails utterly in being convincing. Maazel is here trying to be all things to all men. The pacing—broadly majestic in intent but stodgy in realization—suggests an aspect of a Klemperer interpretation; the pulsating lushness and especially bloated string tone bring to mind Koussevitzky. There is something of Stokowski also present in Maazel's theatrical toying with lyrical phrases and in his overzealous attempts at clarifying the writing, attempts which result in mere dissection.

London's engineering too veers towards the spectacular rather than the musical. The sound really blares at the listener in high volume, but playback at low volume dissipates the fullness.

Schippers' recent Columbia Sibelius Second was too Tchaikovskyan for my taste, but at least it was a consistent reading. I like the intellectualized Monteux for Victor and the Beecham/BBC for Odeon despite some ragged brass playing (this came from an actual 1954 concert). Best of all, though, in my opinion, is the powerfully impassioned Toscanini/NBC reading which the Maestro approved for issue. Since RCA seems to be going about bringing us the Toscanini treasures in earnest now, I would recommend holding off purchase of this Symphony for a while. H.G.

TELEMANN: *Fantasies for Flute: No. 1, in A; No. 3, in B minor; No. 6, in D minor; No. 8, in E minor; No. 10, in F sharp minor; No. 11, in G*

†Bach: *Sonata for Flute, in A minor*
†Bach, C. P. E.: *Sonata for Flute, in A minor*

Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute.

- EPIC LC 3899. LP. \$4.98.
- EPIC BC 1299. SD. \$5.98.

Probably few flutists could spin out a forty-minute solo recital with the clear, unbroken flow of tone, the precise articulation, the liveliness and serenity of Jean-Pierre Rampal. There is never a rough edge, never a gasp for breath from start to finish. As far as the music itself goes, however, there are no musical moments here which positively transport me: much of the Telemann is run-of-the-mill (with the exception of a Vivaldi-

like Allegro in No. 11, or the strangely sinuous line of the Dolce of No. 6). J. S. Bach's Sonata is not nearly so provocative as even the nonpolyphonic movements he wrote for solo violin, and Carl Philipp was obviously writing on order for Frederick the Great. Still, if solo flute is your cup of tea, you can hear it at its best. S.F.

WAGNER: *Götterdämmerung*

Birgit Nilsson, Claire Watson, Christa Ludwig, Wolfgang Windgassen, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Gustav Neidlinger, Gottlob Frick, et al.; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 57.

Recitals & Miscellany

CHOIR OF THE ABBEY OF MOUNT ANGEL: *Chants of the Church*

Choir of the Abbey of Mount Angel (Oregon), Dom David Nicholson, O.S.B., cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2786. LP. \$4.98.
- RCA VICTOR LSC 2786. SD. \$5.98.

The Benedictine Abbey of Mount Angel, in Oregon, was founded in 1882 by a group of monks from Engelberg Abbey, in central Switzerland. Presumably influenced by this background, the singing in the new monastery must have been vigorous and forthright in character, but the last half-century has seen a decided shift in the direction of Solesmes. Although the singing recorded on this disc reflects the basic style and technique of the French monks, it falls short of their high standards here and there in matters of intonation, and it must be admitted that certain tricks, when imitated, do not always come off.

The instinctive recoil before high notes is a case in point. One can hear this done naturally and beautifully in many Solesmes recordings, but the monks of Mount Angel tend to overdo it and so caricature a well-known physiognomical trait. In *Iesu dulcis memoria*, for example, this sudden recoil (involving a fall in dynamic level) occurs in each verse on a syllable that would normally be accented.

On the other hand, the choice of chants is so interesting that defects can

to some extent be overlooked. There are four extracts from the Mass of St. Benedict, at least one of them (*Laeta quies*) being unfamiliar; and there are five Communions from the monastic Gradual which are unusual in being based on the Gospels rather than the Psalter. The four great Marian antiphons form the nucleus of a group of chants in honor of the Blessed Virgin, but one of these (*Non est tibi similis*) is rather oddly described as an "interlude": in fact it is a processional responsory. The singing of tropes to the Kyrie has of course been banished from the Roman Catholic church for centuries, yet the monks—presumably on historical grounds—sing the words of the trope *Kyrie, fons bonitatis*, which must count as the first recorded example of such a procedure. No texts or translations are given. D.S.

TITO GOBBI: "The Art of Tito Gobbi"

Operatic Arias: Rossini: *Guglielmo Tell*; *Resta immobile*; Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'amore*; *Come Paride vezoso*; Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra*; *Plebe! Patrizi!*; *Falstaff*; *Quand'ero paggio*; *Otello*; *Credo in un Dio crudel*; Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur*; *Ecco il monologo*; Giordano: *Fedora*; *La donna Russa*. Classical Songs and Arias: Cavalli: *Beato chi può*; Vivaldi: *Piango, genio, sospiro*; Carissimi: *Vittoria, vittoria, mio core!*; Durante: *Virgin, tutto amor*; Giordani: *Caro mio ben*; Paisiello: *Nel cor più non me sento*; A. Scarlatti: *O cessate di piagarmi*; Monteverdi: *Rosa del Ciel*; Anon.: *Tre giorni son che Nina*. Popular Songs: *Fenesta che lucive*; *Santa Lucia*; *Silenzio cantatore*; *La Montanara*; *Piscatore e Pusilleco*; *O mia bella madonna*; *Mattinata fiorentino*; *Gondoliera veneziana*; *Anuri amuri*. Romantic Songs: Tosti: *Malia*; *Donna, vorrei morir*; *A Vuochetta*; *Ideale*; Gastaldon: *Musica proibita*; Respighi: *Nebbie*; Wolf-Ferrari: *Se gli alberi*; Serenata; *Commato*.

Tito Gobbi, baritone; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alberto Frede, cond. (in the Operatic Arias); Roy Jesson, harpsichord, Derek Simpson, cello, Freddie Phillips, guitar (in the Classical Songs and Arias); orchestra, Annibale Bizzelli, cond. (in the Popular Songs); Gerald Moore, piano (in the Romantic Songs). • ODEON ALP 2057 58, Two LP, \$11.96. • • ODEON ASD 606/07, Two SD, \$13.96.

What we have here is a group of four little recitals, each set up with its own appropriate instrumental grouping and ambience. What it shows is not so much this singer's ability to adapt himself to various sorts of music as his ability to make various sorts of music part of his own artistic individuality.

It is this individuality, vocal and interpretative, that has made Gobbi a singer of international rank. Certainly there are other operatic baritones, even nowadays, with more beauty of voice and polish of technique; indeed it would be hard to name another really prominent one with so short a practicable range.

Yet the voice's unique dark timbre, its unfailing rocklike steadiness, and its richness in the lower and middle ranges are unforgettable; even his most peculiar technical habit, that of switching between a raw, wide-open tone and an overcovered, hooty one in the upper-middle range, is executed with such energy and apparent belief that it adds to his arsenal of effects. Along with the voice, of course, goes an intelligence and interpretative sensitivity which set him apart from the rest of the crop—his singing always has a bigness of frame, a masculinity of sound, a maturity of musical approach.

This is not to say that even the Gobbi brio can make a silk purse from the diseased sow's ear that is De Serix's song from *Fedora*, or that his sense of word meanings will make us accept smarmy phrasing for a true legato in *Virgin, tutto amor*, or that any amount of conviction can replace open climaxes in the *Credo* from *Otello*. But it is remarkable that so much of this material can work for this singer. The arias are not surprising, for we are familiar with his operatic work. Michonnet's touching little monologue from *Adriana* becomes a wonderful theatrical moment in his hands, and the *Tell* aria captures and sustains its mood, despite the ugly climax. Belcore's entrance song is given a lusty, bouncy reading which Gobbi's energy makes workable; personally, I would like to hear a bit more old-fashioned grace—but that is what I mean about Gobbi's ability to turn many pieces to his own strengths in a convincing way. The address from *Boccanegra* has weight and force, but really can't make its effect without the surrounding ensemble; in addition, it is brought to a close here after the first "e vo gridando amor."

The *arie antiche* are all sung in very low keys, which makes them negotiable for the Gobbi voice but robs them of some of their variety and brilliance. His interpretations are very personal, but are always based on an interesting perception of the song's meaning, and it is gratifying to see a major, experienced singer turning his careful attention to this repertory, especially with such sensitively re-created accompaniments as are provided by the harpsichord, cello, and guitar used here.

The Italian and Neapolitan popular songs are also kept in rather low keys, and since we are accustomed to hearing them tenorized, they have a rather unusual color here. Gobbi treats them straightforwardly, with ample feeling but considerable dignity too, and they sound the better for it. Especially intriguing is *Anuri amuri*, a Sicilian song about a cart-driver befuddled by love, full of a fatalistic, almost Iberian atmosphere. Gobbi dramatizes it memorably.

The romantic songs are given the same sort of treatment, the sort that assumes that any music worth singing is worth all the respect one would give Schubert or Wolf. Most of the repertory is light—the charming and often moving salon songs of Tosti, and the clever, well-made pieces of Wolf-Ferrari. An exception is the Respighi song, which turns out to be

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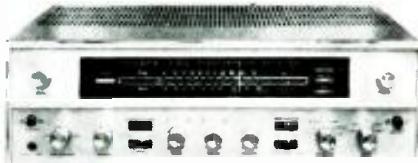
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C.L.O.

IGOR KIPNIS: English Harpsichord Music

Clarke: *The Prince of Denmark's March*; *Trumpet Tune*. Farnaby: *Loath To Depart*; *Tower Hill*; *Fantasia No. 10*. Handel: *Suite in B flat*. Byrd: *Earl of Salisbury Pavane*; *Galiardo*; *Wolsey's Wilde*; *The Queen's Alman*; *A Gigg*. Purcell: *Aire in D minor*; *Round O*; *Suite in C*. Bull: *Queen Elizabeth's Pavane*; *The Prince's Galliard*.

Igor Kipnis, harpsichord.

- EPIC LC 3898. LP. \$4.98.
- • EPIC BC 1298. SD. \$5.98.

Critic, scholar, teacher, performer, and son of the great Alexander, Igor Kipnis has rapidly emerged as one of the most imaginative musicians ever to approach the spirit of early keyboard music. In this, his second Epic disc, he has provided a concert full of delight, and a document of extreme importance.

The "document" consists of a penetrating and persuasive study in the value and purpose of keyboard ornamentation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Kipnis realizes or improvises the ornamentation in this repertory, one is made aware that the whole concept of the trill, the turn, and the mordent is central to the total design of the music. It is what defines the rhythm, brings to life the power of a basically percussive instrument to create the illusion of a lyric line, actually defines the basic sonority of the instrument. This is something worth close study by other performers who tend to learn the outline of a work first and apply the ornaments later. Without the one, there cannot be the other.

Mr. Kipnis uses a harpsichord with a gorgeous range of sound (built by the New York firm of Rutkowski and Robinette). While it has been microphoned a little too close, with the result that one is slightly disturbed now and then by the final descent of the keys at the end of a piece, this drawback can be overcome by keeping the volume low—as it should be in any case.

The recital itself is full of wonderful music, including the original version of the Handel theme used by Brahms in his piano variations and the original of the Purcell used by Britten in his *Young Person's Guide*. The particular flavor of the English keyboard style, with its occasional startling dissonances and cross harmonic relationships, is excellently captured in the programming and the way it is all played. From every standpoint this is a remarkable and important record.

A.R.

ROMERO FAMILY: "Baroque Concertos for Four Guitars, and Other Works"

Telemann: *Concerto in D*; *Allegro*, Breton: *La Dolores*; *Jota*. Schubert: *Two Waltzes*, Op. 9. D. Scarlatti: *Sonata in D*, L. 391. Villa Lobos: *Prelude No. 1*, in E minor. Vivaldi: *Concerto in D*. Bach: *Little Prelude No. 3*. Granados: *Spanish Dance*, No. 10. Sor: *Variations on a Theme of Mozart*.

Celedonio, Pepe, Celin, and Angel Romero, guitars.

- MERCURY MG 50417. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90417. SD. \$5.98.

Musically, there is no doubt that the Romeros excel in the Spanish idiom: they swing in to Breton's Jota with a life-giving lift, and create a warm and exciting glow over both the Granados and the Villa Lobos. (And to expand the horizons, they prove that their Scarlatti can be elegant too, and ornamented with a feather-touch delicacy.) The Telemann, on the other hand, is rhythmically somewhat overstated, and the Vivaldi rather hurried and mechanical. But this is a record for guitar fanciers, and the remarkable family from Spain can hardly fail to please. Stereo is pronounced in a fugal piece such as the Telemann, and pleasantly spread throughout.

S.F.

CESARE VALLETTI: French Art Songs

Fauré: *Après un rêve*; *Dans les ruines d'une abbaye*; *Le Secret*; *Automne*; *Clair de lune*. Szule: *Clair de lune*. Debussy: *Clair de lune*; *Beau soir*; *C'est l'extase*; *Romance*; *Mandoline*. Duparc: *Chanson triste*; *Extase*; *L'Invitation au voyage*; *Phidylé*; *Le Manoir de Rosemonde*. Hahn: *Si mes vers avaient des ailes*; *Rêverie*; *D'une prison*; *Paysage*.

Cesare Valletti, tenor; Leo Taubman, piano.

- RCA VICTOR LP 2787. LP. \$4.98.
- • RCA VICTOR LSC 2787. SD. \$5.98.

I had almost despaired of hearing this repertory sung really well by a tenor in my lifetime, although many of these songs seem to demand the range and the kind of sound Cesare Valletti produces: light, clean, and somewhat floating. He is not the master of that sound for every note on this record; there are a few spots where the tone seems to whiten briefly (*Dans les ruines* . . . *Si mes vers* . . . for example). On the whole, however, this is a wonderful recital—cultivated, ardent, and stylish. That it should emanate from an Italian tenor (an Almaviva, to be sure, not a Radames) raises one's hopes for the future of the breed. Leo Taubman's support at the piano is adequate at least, and usually more.

A.R.



Reissues

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral")* (A); *Overtures: Leonore No. 3, in C, Op. 72a; Fidelio, in E, Op. 72c; Coriolan, in C minor, Op. 62* (B)

Leontyne Price, soprano, Maureen Forrester, contralto, David Poleri, tenor, Giorgio Tozzi, bass, New England Conservatory Chorus (in the Symphony); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. [(A) from RCA Victor LM 6066/LSC 6066, 1958; (B) from LM 2015, 1957].

- RCA VICTROLA VIC 6003 Two LP, \$5.00.
- • RCA VICTROLA VICS 6003, Two SD, \$6.00.

If one must economize in buying this music, one can be assured that the essential impact of the Symphony comes across in Munch's statement. The former Boston musical director strives for a headlong, impassioned reading very much in the Toscanini tradition. He succeeds splendidly in the first movement, which is powerful and cumulative. He falls from grace in the Scherzo, which lumbers rhythmically, and in the heavenly Adagio, which is coarsely phrased and raggedly executed. The finale improves, and though it has some dubious features, it also has good singers (though too closely miked) and vibrant chorus. The engineering is compelling in the stereo edition, a mite constricted and bottom-heavy in mono.

Unfortunately, all three Overtures get routine readings from Munch. The *Coriolan*, in particular, is ruthlessly fast but its power is completely dissipated because the conductor refuses to make even the slightest distinction in the crucial climactic places.

H.G.

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

Ginette Neveu, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Issay Dobrowen, cond. [from HMV DB 6415/9, 1946].

- PATHÉ COLH 80, LP, \$5.98.

This is the third, and probably last, LP disc honoring the superlatively gifted young French violinist so tragically lost in an air disaster at the threshold of a brilliant career. Rehearing the performance makes one realize anew the magnitude of a loss such as this, for it seems almost impossible that an artist in her mid-twenties could have played with such total perfection.

This is perhaps the most fervent exposition of the Brahms ever committed

to records. Mlle. Neveu's searing passion and gaunt delivery had much in common with the playing of Szigeti at his greatest, although her violinism is powered by much faster tempos and a technical acumen that virtually sizzles. The vastness of her line, the purity of her tone, and nobility of her conception come close to overwhelming the music. Dobrowen's contribution adds to the glories of the performance: the rhythmic snap, the vital clarity of instrumentation, and the galvanic classicism are very much in the Toscanini tradition. He too is missed.

Fortunately, the sound is still quite ample. Detail and balance are exemplary by any standards; there is plenty of impact and amplitude. Only the overtones which lend luster and atmosphere are lacking. No matter which modern edition of the Brahms you already own, rush out and get this one too!

H.G.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 20, in D minor, K. 466 (A); No. 24, in C minor, K. 491 (B)*

Denis Matthews, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky, cond. [(A) from Vanguard VRS 1040/VSD 2028, 1959; (B) from Vanguard VRS 1037/VSD 2025, 1959].

- VANGUARD EVERYMAN CLASSICS SRV 142, LP, \$1.98.
- • VANGUARD EVERYMAN CLASSICS SRV 142SD, SD, \$1.98.

These excellent performances were originally issued, each coupled with a piano sonata, on two discs. It was pointed out in HIGH FIDELITY's review of the original issues that in the quality of the playing as well as of the recording the D minor Concerto was as fine as any other version available. The statement may still stand. The only thing that prevents this version of the C minor Concerto from ranking as high is the occasional covering up of important material in the woodwinds.

N.B.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano, No. 20, in A, D, 959 (Op. posth.)*

Artur Schnabel, piano [from HMV DB 3103-7S; RCA Victor DM 580, 1937].

- PATHÉ COLH 84, LP, \$5.98.

Slowly but surely, Schnabel's recorded legacy is returning to us. Indeed insofar as Schubert is concerned, we now have the Impromptus, the *Trout Quintet*, the D major, B flat, and A major Sonatas. All that remains of Schnabel documentations of this composer is the set of *Moments Musicaux* and perhaps we shall soon have that reissued too.

It may have been possible to fault Schnabel for erratic fluctuations of tempo in the B flat Sonata and in parts of the D major, though of course both of those great performances had features that more than compensated. In the present work, the occasional speed changes (mostly in the middle section of the slow movement) merely enhance the rhapsodic nature of the writing. And

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all of the magnificent aspects of Schnabel's art are present here in extraordinary degree: the pianist's humanity, his grandeur, his spacious spirituality, and—above all—his ability to relax and sing.

The posthumous A major has never had the popularity of its companion in B flat, but in my opinion it offers perhaps even greater riches. Admittedly, the piece is a tough nut to crack with its diffuseness and harmonic ambiguities. (How many other "classical" sonatas can you name that boast such features as a sudden, isolated interjection of B flat into an A major tonality?) Without belaboring the point, I shall say simply that you should get to know this score and here is the reading to reveal it in depth: there has never been—and probably never will be—a finer recorded performance. Fortunately, the restored sound stands up very well. H.G.

WAGNER: "Great Scenes for Bass-baritone"

Der fliegende Holländer: Die Frist ist um,
Die Meistersinger: Was duftet doch der Flieder;
Wahn! Wahn! Die Walküre: Leb' wohl, du kühnes, herrliches Kind!

George London, bass-baritone; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond. [from London OL 5044/OS 25044, 1959].

- LONDON OL 5897, LP, \$4.98.
- LONDON OS 25897, SD, \$5.98.

For anyone wanting these particular selections, this release is a sensible enough buy, for the sound still has warmth and sweep, the orchestral playing is splendid, and London never less than competent. His most impressive work here is in Wotan's Farewell; except for the slower phrasing of this version, it is similar interpretatively to his later recording under Leinsdorf, but is marginally better vocally. He has become a leading interpreter of the *Holländer*, and clearly understands the monologue, but there is not enough variety, not enough real legato, and too much dubious intonation. His Sachs catches the right spirit in the final section of the *Wahn-monolog*—until then, the *Meistersinger* excerpts sound like somewhat ponderous, conscientious readings. I happen to like the extreme breadth of Knappertsbusch's approach to the *Walküre* scene, and the way he sustains the *Meistersinger* passages, but the *Holländer* reading strikes me as just too deliberate for any dramatic use. C.L.O.

SOUVENIRS OF OPERA AND SONG (Eighth Series)

Bellini: *Norma: Casta diva*. Mozart: *Don Giovanni: Non mi dir*. Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Printemps qui commence*. Gounod: *The Queen of Sheba: More Regal in His Low Estate*. Massenet: *Thaïs: L'Amour est une vertu rare*. Bemberg: *Chant vénitien*. Hahn: *How Do You Like To Go Up in a Swing?; Oh, It's I That Am the Captain of a Tidy*

Little Ship. Schumann: *Frauenliebe und Leben*. Thomas: *Le Soir*.

Frieda Hempel, soprano (in the Bellini and Mozart); Marie Rappold, soprano (in the Gounod); Mary Garden, soprano (in the Massenet, Bemberg, and Hahn); Mignon Nevada, soprano (in the Thomas); Kathleen Howard, mezzo (in the Saint-Saëns); Julia Culp, contralto (in the Schumann) [from various recordings, 1910-28].

• INTERNATIONAL RECORD COLLECTORS CLUB IRCC L-7025, LP, \$5.50 (available from the International Record Collectors Club, P. O. Box 1811, Bridgeport 1, Conn.).

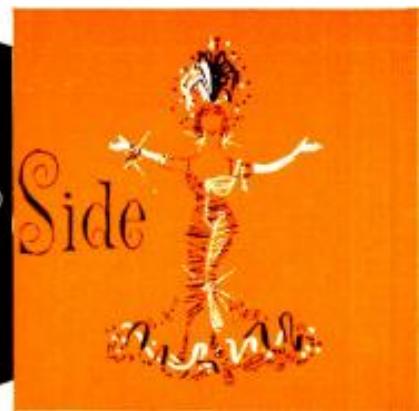
This rather curious potpourri is obviously designed for the historically oriented collector, and he will find several items of interest here. The two cylinders by Mary Garden (the *Thaïs* aria and Bemberg's *Chant vénitien*) show her voice to far better advantage than the series of Victors she made in the Twenties. Here is the true voice of the first Mélisande, a secure and voluptuous sound capable of the subtlest shadings. The two Hahn songs, supposedly taken from radio broadcasts in 1928, are slight pieces, but Garden sings them with a marvelously infectious naïveté.

Most of Side 2 is devoted to the 1910 recording of *Frauenliebe und Leben* by the Dutch contralto Julia Culp. During the early years of the century, this fine artist specialized in Lieder and oratorio, but her reputation as a recitalist has been somewhat eclipsed by another great Lieder singer of that era, Elena Gerhardt. (Gerhardt made her American debut on January 9, 1912, exactly a year and a day before Culp gave her first United States concert.) Mme. Culp was a genuine contralto, with a creamy, seamless voice, and her singing of the Schumann songs is particularly rich in thoughtful musical details. Especially fine is the superbly even and sensitively shaped legato line she spins out on the sixth song, *Süßer Freund*. The main drawback with this performance, however, is the bland sameness of her vocal characterizations and an occasional misfiring of interpretative ideas: the little gulps of joy between the phrases of *An meinem Herzen*, for instance, are simply not a success. On the whole, she is at her best in the slower songs.

Frieda Hempel's "Casta diva" is interesting primarily for the very generous amount of decoration she gives to the vocal line in the severely abridged cavatina: her account of "Non mi dir" is more straightforward. There is a gustily sung aria from *Samson et Dalila* by Kathleen Howard and some appealing vocalism from Marie Rappold, rather in the style of Maggie Teyte. And finally there is Mignon Nevada, introduced by her mother, the famous Emma Nevada. Mignon, who was Ambroise Thomas' goddaughter and named after the heroine of his most famous opera, had a mildly successful career at Covent Garden beginning in 1910, and here she sings a confection by Thomas very prettily indeed.

PETER G. DAVIS

The Lighter Side



"Count Basie in Kansas City." *RCA Victor LPV 514*, \$4.98 (LP).

A YEAR AGO RCA Victor launched its Vintage series, a plan to reissue recordings in a wide variety of styles—popular, folk, and theatre as well as jazz. The idea of a series involving nonjazz reissues was provocative, since relatively little has been done in this area. The discs released so far have been extremely worthwhile, ranging from John Jacob Niles, Woody Guthrie, and Leadbelly through Isham Jones and Coon-Sanders to Gertrude Lawrence's recordings of her *Lady in the Dark* songs and Kurt Weill's short opera *Down in the Valley*.

Jazz reissues, on the other hand, have been attempted by RCA Victor at various times since the arrival of LP with rather discouraging results. Two jazz reissue series—one on the ten-inch "X" label, one a twelve-inch LJM series—were started and dropped. The "X" discs probably laid too much stress on the recondite, but the LJM releases missed by trying, almost desperately at times, to fit into popular tastes. Since then RCA Victor's occasional jazz reissues have tended to cling to the most obvious names—Ellington, Armstrong, Morton, Gillespie.



Basie: reissues from 1929-32, nostalgia or plain fun.

The reasoning behind the use of the popular and the obvious is, of course, quite simple. There always had to be a reckoning with the accounting department and if a disc didn't earn its keep, it was dropped. Although the Vintage series, I gather, was launched with an understanding that its releases were not to be compared in immediacy of return with an Elvis Presley or an Al Hirt disc, still its jazz offerings had to be designed as reasonably profitable enterprises. Thus, in its first year, Vintage's jazz releases have focused on attention-catching names—Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Coleman Hawkins, Sidney Bechet, Earl Hines, and now Count Basie.

But there has been a difference between these reissues and those in Victor's past. Brad McCuen, producer of the series, has carefully avoided repeating discs that have already been reissued several times. The Jelly Roll Morton set (LPV 508) presents the latter half of Morton's Victor output, the half that had previously been neglected. A Duke Ellington disc (LPV 506) concentrates on the Duke's output in 1933-34, a period in his recording career that had hitherto been completely ignored. Earl Hines's band of 1939-40 is treated similarly (LPV 512). McCuen has also collected miscellaneous recordings into sets which focus on such "name" performers as Coleman Hawkins (LPV 501) and Sidney Bechet (LPV 510).

This kind of ingenuity is carried even farther in the presentation of the latest Vintage jazz release—*Count Basie in Kansas City*. The disc might have been called "Bennie Moten and His Orchestra Play Moten's Swing" (to quote one of the titles on the disc), since the set consists entirely of recordings made by the Moten band between 1929 and 1932. Still, the title is not really misleading because Count Basie's piano is heard prominently throughout the disc. These recordings show the musical foundation of the band that Basie brought East from Kansas City in 1936.

The first side is drawn from one remarkable session on December 13, 1932, when ten selections were cut. It was the Moten band's last recording session before Basie took over the group, and the loose, loping rhythm and the riffs that were to characterize the Basie band were already well developed in these pieces. Basie was playing in a rollicking stride style then, a striking contrast to the

very spare, economic manner that he later developed. He romps joyfully through tune after tune, climaxing the side with a magnificent series of solos on *Prince of Wails*, where he invokes both Fats Waller and James P. Johnson. Ben Webster is equally stimulating on tenor saxophone and fortunately he has some space of his own on almost every piece. Eddie Barefield's wild clarinet dresses up several selections and Hot Lips Page unleashes some brilliant trumpet work on *Lafayette*, although he seems strained in other solo spots.

The second side, recorded in 1929 and 1930, shows the Moten band in transition, shortly after Basie had joined it. Some of the heavy, deliberate

beat of the early Moten band is still evident, but there are also suggestions of the looser, more electric band to come. Basie's solos betray less of his "stride" origins and the other soloists in this band—Thamon Hayes on trombone, Woody Walder on clarinet, and Leroy Berry on guitar—are suitable enough but they are not on a level with the 1932 soloists (unhappily, Buster Moten contributes several dreadful intrusions on accordion). Jimmy Rushing is present on both sides, singing with the same lifting shout that has made him such a joy all the years since then. Approached as history, nostalgia, or simply as exhilarating fun, "Count Basie in Kansas City" provides endless rewards.

J.S.W.

Mavis Rivers—Red Norvo: "We Remember Mildred Bailey." Vee Jay 1132. \$3.98 (LP); S 1132, \$3.98 (SD).

"Tributes" to popular singing stars of the recent past, whether serving as a well-intentioned memorial or simply as a crutch for a new singer, are almost bound to be disappointing. A really distinctive singer cannot be copied (how many singers have stumbled over the seemingly inviting mannerisms of Billie Holiday?), and arrangers have a tendency to write in contemporary styles that are inevitably at odds with the kind of accompaniment a singer might have had in the Thirties, the Forties, or even the Fifties. This disc is remarkable, however, not only because the accompaniment is in the understanding and authoritative hands of the late Miss Bailey's husband, Red Norvo (he often provided the backing on her recordings), but, even more importantly, because Miss Rivers does not make a noticeable effort to copy Miss Bailey's style. Both singers' voices have a similar texture and lilt and, given Miss Bailey's songs and accompaniments, the total effect made by Miss Rivers does have its Bailey-like qualities. Yet Miss Rivers remains herself and when she feels a song somewhat differently she goes her own way. The songs include *Georgia on My Mind*, *Lover Come Back to Me*, *Easy To Love*, and, of course, *Rockin' Chair*. The latter is a particular triumph for Miss Rivers because, despite its very close association with Miss Bailey, she manages to imprint her own special personality on it. Two especially delightful performances are *Confessin'* and *Ghost of a Chance*, which Miss Rivers sings ad lib with only Norvo's vibraphone as accompaniment.

Peggy Lee: "Pass Me By." Capitol 2320, \$3.98 (LP); S 2320, \$4.98 (SD).

With one exception, the songs on this disc are done by Miss Lee in her close-up, risible vein, a unique variation of the hot-breath routine. By appearing to throw the songs away, she imbues them with a much greater animal appeal than any overt mannerism possibly could. The fact that she can apply this system to materials as varied as Henry Mancini's *Dear Heart*, the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night*, the bossa nova *Quiet Nights*, and the Italian adaptation *My Love, Forgive*

Me, only makes her spell more amazing. The one entry that moves her to a different style—and, in the long run, the most delightful performance on the disc—is *Pass Me By*, the frolicking bit of cockney braggadocio written by Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh for *Father Goose*. Miss Lee gives it the zest and spirit that it deserves.

Irene Reid: "Room for One More." Verve 8621, \$4.98 (LP); 6-8621, \$5.98 (SD). Miss Reid has recorded before, both with Count Basie's band (she was Basie's vocalist for a year or two) and on her own after leaving Basie. But this disc amounts to a debut performance because the Irene Reid heard here bears little resemblance to the Basie band singer or the vocalist who later made an LP of her own. On these occasions, she showed much vocal prowess but little indication that she would truly develop a personal style of her own. Now, it appears, she has found herself. Singing a collection of relatively familiar ballads, she uses a delivery that combines the strongly rhythmic, semirecitative style reminiscent of Dinah Washington, with the more gracious, lyrical tones that one might expect from Ella Fitzgerald. It is an unusual mixture and Miss Reid uses it with such authority that she makes it completely her own despite the readily apparent sources. Oliver Nelson's big-band settings give her the forceful rhythmic support that her vocal style needs. She ranges from a reflective *Who Can I Turn To* to a lusty treatment of *If Ever I Would Leave You*, stumbling only when held to an agonizingly slow tempo on *Every Time We Say Good-bye*.

Gale Garnett: "The Many Faces." RCA Victor LPM 3325, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 3325, \$4.98 (SD).

Miss Garnett continues to be a fascinating oddity among today's popular singers even though she is not quite as striking in this set as she was on her two earlier discs for RCA Victor. She seems completely at ease in any type of song—folk, popular ballad, blues—and in any style from the big beat to gentle romanticism. She has a big voice and a dark, earthy timbre that often makes her sound very much like Bessie Smith. In addition she has a dry, sly humor that

suggests Pearl Bailey. Part of her charm stems from a projection that is so effortless that she rarely gives the impression of pushing. On this disc, however, she sometimes carries her casual underplaying a bit too far to be properly effective. Still she produces lusty performances of *Forget It*, a very unusual treatment of *St. James Infirmary*, and several interesting mixtures of folk and blues. Her one mistake is an overly mannered performance of Billie Holiday's *God Bless the Child*.

Emery Deutsch: "Selections from *Fiddler on the Roof*." RCA Victor LPM 3363, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 3363, \$4.98 (SD).

The score of *Fiddler on the Roof* has already provided material for several interesting, off-beat albums. The Eastern European flavor of Jerry Bock's music makes it ideally suited to Emery Deutsch's gypsy violin. Supported by guitars, mandolin, cimbalom, woodwinds, and occasionally some voices, Deutsch runs the gamut of the gypsy style, drawing out long brooding lines and weeping tremolos on *To Life*, *Sunrise to Sunset*, and *If I Were a Rich Man*, and playing with appropriate gypsy abandon on *Anatevka*. For a change of pace, Deutsch settles into a standard 4/4 dance treatment on *Now I Have Everything* and *Do You Love Me?* Producer Herman Diaz, Jr., has not settled simply for Deutsch's violin. The arrangements are imaginative and surprisingly varied considering the basic idea of the set. As a result, the exotic flavors keep reappearing in varied and provocative mixtures that sustain the entire set unusually well.

Botho Lucas Chorus: "Germany Sings." Capitol 10389, \$3.98 (LP); S 10389, \$4.98 (SD).

Gunter Kallmann German Chorus: "Serenade for Elisabeth." Four Corners 4209, \$3.98 (LP); S 4209, \$4.98 (SD). Both of these large vocal groups sing songs in German from various areas of the popular repertory—but there the similarity ends. The Botho Lucas Chorus does all its songs (which include *Star Dust*, *Sentimental Journey*, *When the White Lilacs Bloom Again*, and *Donkey Serenade*) with a crisp, bright attack over a rhythm accompaniment that has a strong, loping beat. The vocal ar-

rangements are light and airy and the performances glisten with warmth and vitality. The effect is very like that of an unusually good swing band (even to the extent of sneaking in a trombone or saxophone for very brief solos).

The Kallmann Chorus, on the other hand, is in a more traditional vein—sweeping along over strings and bells, creating a rich vocal blend but producing rather bland vocal treatments of Tosselli's *Serenade*, *O Mein Papa*, *Melodie in F*, and other songs in a similar vein.

André Previn: "Plays Today's Big Hits." Columbia CL 2294, \$3.98 (LP); CS 9094, \$4.98 (SD).

Previn, who must be the most complete all-purpose musician extant (a pianist recognized in the popular, classical, and jazz fields, a conductor, a composer, a songwriter, and, at present, a putative writer for the Broadway theatre), is shown here at his all-purpose best. Through big-band arrangements written and conducted by Marty Paich, Previn's piano or harpsichord trickles, swings, or floats with sense and sensitivity. Previn has reached that happy point where he no longer feels he must prove himself (he can now use a jazz device casually without feeling compelled to pull out all the stops to show that he really *can* play jazz), and addresses everything he plays with calm authority. The only weak points in this generally splendid set (which includes bossa novas, pop hits, pop-jazz such as *Bluesette* and *Gravy Waltz*, and show tunes) are two of Previn's own compositions, both attached to films—*Kiss Me, Stupid* and *Good-bye, Charlie*—which are sung by a shrill set of girls over a very ordinary big beat. This carries versatility one step too far.

Cole Porter—George Gershwin: "Favorite Composers," Vol. 1. Polydor 84002, \$4.98 (LP); 184002, \$5.50 (SD).

This is a surprising and delightful and fascinating record. Surprising because although there have been innumerable recordings of the tunes of Porter and Gershwin, this disc presents them in yet another light. Delightful because these varied performances are devoid of pretension and are skillfully executed. Fascinating because each composer is presented in a continuous medley (Gershwin one side, Porter the other) in which fourteen tunes by each are played—and played with character—by well-known German instrumental groups or soloists. A large part of the fascination lies in the skillful tape editing involved: how one tune has been tied directly into the next, thereby creating a smooth flow of melody. The groups involved include those of Bert Kaempfert, Helmut Zacharias, Kurt Edelhagen, Hazy Osterwald, and Max Gregor, as well as Toots Thielemans (the harmonica virtuoso), Crazy Otto (a pianist who has abandoned his old ricky-tick for a commendable light style), and The Old Merry Tale Jazzband, an ensemble which includes a soprano saxophonist who has taken careful note of Sidney Bechet's treat-

ment of *Summertime*. Technically and musically, this is a winning disc.

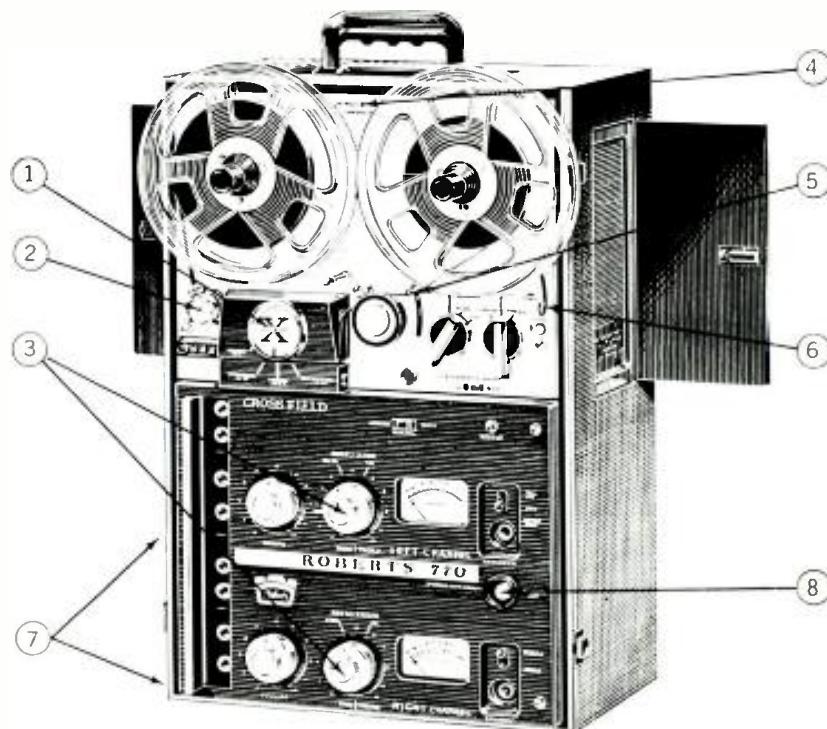
Fred E. Finn (and Friends): "Mickie Finn's, the West Coast's No. 1 Speak-easy." Capitol 2210, \$3.98 (LP); S 2210, \$4.98 (SD).

Finn, a collector and player of nickelodeon pianos, operates a San Diego "speak-easy" (named for his wife Mickie) where he leads a five-piece band. The group has been augmented for this recording by ten violins, three guitars, two trombones, and the soprano saxophone of George Probert, a quondam member of the Firehouse Five. Although Finn seems to favor material from the Twenties or earlier (*Sweet Georgia Brown*, *Freckles*, *Five Foot Two Eyes*

of Blue), he also draws on the Sixties both for music (*More*) and for style (*Freckles* opens with a contemporary big beat behind Finn's tinkly piano). The net result is a set of glorious and uproarious performances in which Finn's piano or Probert's soprano saxophone are eventually overtaken by the full band—after which everyone runs for dear life. To an extent, the group is an enlarged version of the Village Stompers, but they churn up a kind of hard-driving attack that the Stompers can only suggest. The performances are essentially corn—magnificent, opulent corn—and Finn very wisely stays away from funny sounds, letting the high spirits of the musicians carry the day.

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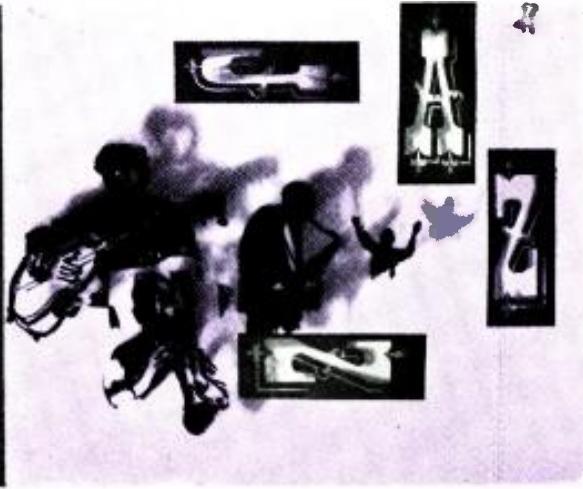
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Count Basie: "Count Basie in Kansas City." RCA Victor LPV 514, \$4.98 (LP).

For a feature review of this recording, see page 75.

Bob Brookmeyer: "And Friends." Columbia CL 2237, \$3.98 (LP); CS 9037, \$4.98 (SD).

"Deft" is the word for this recording by a group of experienced, skillful, and sophisticated jazzmen. Brookmeyer's "friends" include Stan Getz (tenor saxophone), Gary Burton (vibraphone), and a strong but subtle rhythm section made up of Herbie Hancock (piano), Ron Carter (bass), and Elvin Jones (drums). The eight selections are in a moderate, generally subdued vein, ranging from slow, wistful treatments of *Misty* and *Skylark* to a bright jig (very characteristic of Brookmeyer) called *Jive Hoot*. For the most part it is Brookmeyer and Getz in the foreground, noodling around each other in ensembles or moving in and out of the background during the other's solos. The interplay between the two is close and understanding, a form of mutual recognition between jazz musicians all but discarded in this age of the almighty solo. Burton also joins in these colloquies on occasion, adding a third perceptive voice. Although polish and control are always in evidence, there is a sense of freedom too, especially when Getz swings out and builds ideas in the stimulating vein he has adopted over the past few years. This disc has everything to recommend it—approach, individual performance, and total fulfillment.

Kid Shiek Cola: "In England." Jazz Crusade 2003, \$4.95 (LP).

Kid Shiek is a veteran New Orleans trumpet player (his last name is usually spelled "Cola," not "Cola" as on the jacket of this disc), and he is heard here with the English band led by Barry "Kid" Martyn. It is an odd combination, for while Martyn's band has a hearty ram-bunctiousness, Kid Shiek possesses a firm and steady but relatively self-effacing trumpet style. Sammy Rimmington, Martyn's clarinetist, is the most striking performer, and like most English traditionalist clarinetists, his playing reflects that of George Lewis. Unlike his colleagues, however, he establishes a

personality of his own within this idiom. Trombonist Jack Wedell adds a lusty voice to the group, helping to make this one of the better recordings by a revivalist group.

Wild Bill Davis: "Free, Frantic, and Funky." RCA Victor LPM 3314, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 3314, \$4.98 (SD).

Davis provides a much needed refutation to the impression that the jazz organ has to be a harsh and clamorous instrument. He is heard on this disc with a seven-piece group which includes Jerome Richardson and Seldon Powell on tenor saxophones and flutes and Dicky Thompson on guitar (Thompson also leads a quartet which features Bob Brown on tenor saxophone and flute). Both groups are straight-arrow, middle-of-the-road swingers. The septet plays Davis' arrangements with a crisp, tight attack, while the quartet provides remarkably varied fare for a four-man group, thanks to the solo strength of Thompson and Brown. Davis plays the organ for its rich warmth and color, always with a light touch, propelling the music ever so easily with his astute phrasing. The choice of material is excellent—great swinging standards by Duke Ellington, Sy Oliver, and Count Basie, a pair of basic blues (*C. C. Rider* and *Don't Cry, Baby*)—the latter a fine example of the true merit of the organ on a blues), and two of Davis' own pieces: the lovely *Azure-Te* and *Free, Frantic, and Funky*, which is all that the title implies.

Eric Dolphy: "Last Date." Limelight LM 82013, \$4.98 (LP); LS 86013, \$5.98 (SD).

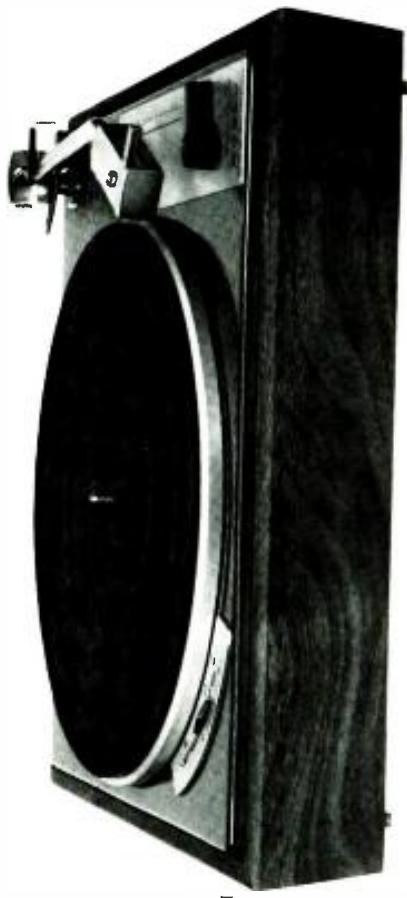
Eric Dolphy: "Memorial Album." Vee Jay 2503, \$4.98 (LP); S 2503, \$4.98 (SD).

Several years before his death in June 1964, Eric Dolphy used his highly developed talents on alto saxophone, bass clarinet, and flute in a search for broader ranges of expression. This often led to performances that were raw and exacerbating. Behind these outbursts, however, was a superb technician and a probing mind, and Dolphy's talents were apparently just coming into focus at the time of his death. The Limelight disc was made at a concert in Hilversum, Holland (less than a month before

Dolphy died), with three European musicians: Misja Mengelberg (piano), Jacques Schols (bass), and Hans Bennink (drums). Dolphy is heard on all three of his instruments and, while his work contains passages that are eruptive and exclamatory, the long, squawking imitations of conversation that filled some of his earlier efforts are absent. It is particularly impressive to hear his assured, pliant bass clarinet and flute. He plays an exquisitely shaded, soaring flute on *You Don't Know What Love Is* (although his solo wears thin after the opening chorus), and his bass clarinet is swingingly assertive on a long treatment of Thelonious Monk's *Epistrophy*. His accompaniment is unusually good; particularly fine is the pianist, Mengelberg, who has absorbed a great deal of Monk's style while maintaining a more positively direct beat.

The "Memorial Album" on Vee Jay provides a broader view of Dolphy in its four selections. First comes a real tour de force as Dolphy plays *Love Me* on an unaccompanied alto saxophone; he carries it off with amazing aplomb. He then progresses to a long and amazing duet (on bass clarinet) with Richard Davis (bass), on *Alone Together*, that is a brilliantly sustained interplay—a musical conversation that is a far, far cry from the raucous dialogues that Dolphy once carried on with Charlie Mingus. On *Music Matador* Dolphy is heard (again on bass clarinet) as part of a four-man woodwind section (with Clifford Jordan, soprano saxophone, Sonny Simmons, alto saxophone, and Prince Lasha, flute) accompanied only by Davis' bass. The ensemble produces a weird and fascinating blend on the calypso-like theme but the individual solos, aside from Dolphy's, are routine. Much the same situation occurs on Fats Waller's *Jitterbug Waltz* which Dolphy plays on flute with trumpet, vibraphone, bass, and drums. Dolphy's contributions are excellent but the others are largely time-filers. Both discs are fitting tributes to Dolphy's unusual talents.

Duke Ellington: "Ellington '66." Reprise 6154, \$3.98 (LP); S-6154, \$4.98 (SD). The continued determination of Reprise to dilute the unique talents of Duke Ellington and the members of his remarkable band, singly and collectively, by



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feeding them current pop tunes is deplorable—even though the Ellingtonians can usually rise above any circumstances. In defense of this policy, it has been pointed out that, in the 1930s, the Ellington band played a lot of pop tunes and played them well. This is perfectly true, but the pop material was never served in such staggering quantities. In between the pop tunes there was always a lot of genuine Duke during those pre-LP days. But it is a waste of one of our national musical assets to load Ellington with *Red Roses for a Blue Lady*, *All My Loving*, *I Want To Hold Your Hand*, *Moon River*, and the like. Not that the Ellingtonians don't comport themselves with their usual distinction. Cootie Williams' trumpet growls and bites through *Charade* and *I Can't Stop Loving You*. Lawrence Brown's trombone is elegantly suave on *Red Roses* and *A Beautiful Friendship*, the saxophones of Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, and Paul Gonsalves are all effectively present. But the sameness of the material casts a pall on the proceedings despite the enlivening moments. There is, however, one superbly worthy Ellington performance—*The Good Life*—and here Carney and Hodges engage in a beautifully shaded duet followed by Brown with his most persuasive singing style.

Benny Goodman: "Great Vocalists of Our Times," RCA Camden CAL 872, \$1.98 (LP); CAS 872, \$2.49 (SD).

The obvious basis for this collection of recordings made by the Goodman band between 1935 and 1939 is to show some of the vocalists who recorded with the band—Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Rushing, Helen Ward, Martha Tilton, Buddy Clark, and Johnny Mercer are all represented. And while that is as good a reason as any for putting the set together, the most impressive aspects of the disc are instrumental. This early Goodman band could swing in a magnificently effortless fashion even when it dealt with current run-of-the-mill pop tunes (the mill was running much better then than it has in recent years). Pianist Jess Stacy brought a sparkle to the band, not only in his occasional solos but in the way he made his piano dance through the ensembles instead of merely clumping out chords. The vocalists are all superior band singers; but there is special interest in hearing a very young Ella Fitzgerald, as well as Jimmy Rushing successfully coping with a song well out of his range (*We Ain't Got Rhythm*) and, at the same time, infusing it with tremendous drive.

Coleman Hawkins: "Meditations." Mainstream 56037, \$4.98 (LP); 6037, \$5.98 (SD).

In the excellent series of reissues by Mainstream from the Commodore catalogue, this rates as one of the finest. The first side, devoted to a session involving Hawkins, Benny Carter, Roy Eldridge, Bernard Addison, John Kirby, and Sidney Catlett, is superb from start to finish. It includes two elegant ballad performances by Hawkins (*I Surrender*,

Dear and Dedication) and a pair of joyous swingers (*Sinbad* and *I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me*) on which Carter, Hawkins, and particularly Eldridge rise to wondrous heights. The other side glitters with names—Cootie Williams, Art Tatum, Edmond Hall, Oscar Pettiford, Al Casey, Catlett, and Hawkins—but the performances are pale in the face of that first side. Tatum is unfailingly excellent, but the others are merely their usual, capable selves.

Earl Hines: "Spontaneous Explorations."

Contact 2, \$4.98 (LP); S-2, \$5.98 (SD). When Earl Hines flew to New York from California in March 1964 for three concerts, he also found time to record this set of unaccompanied solos. They are, by and large, excellent examples of undiluted, unharassed Hines—the first side, consisting of *Undecided*, *Fatha's Blues*, *A Sunday Kind of Love*, and *I've Found a New Baby* is superb, the second side a little less consistent. "Undiluted" and "unharassed" mean that Hines is playing exactly as he wants, without concessions to accompanists and without indulging in one of his frequently misguided excursions into "pleasing the public." The result is delightful: we have the sly, rocking Hines, trimmed with breaks on *Undecided*, a gently ruminative mood on *Fatha's Blues*, and a suave ballad style on *Sunday Kind of Love*. The famous Hines strut breaks out of *I've Found a New Baby* and *You Always Hurt the One You Love*. A light and gay original, *Tosca's Dance*, even has some of Willie the Lion Smith in it. Hines has lost none of his sparkle during the past fifteen years—a period when he has rarely been heard to advantage. In fact, there is now a depth to his playing that was not always apparent in the earlier days.

"A Look at Yesterday." Mainstream 56025, \$3.98 (LP); 6025, \$4.98 (SD).

This is a miscellaneous collection reflecting the last stages of the bop era, originally recorded for the Sittin' In label. There are a pair of strong, forthright Stan Getz performances (tubbily recorded in 1948)—a great deal closer to the contemporary Getz than his work of the Fifties. Two delightful selections are built around the seat virtuosity of Dave Lambert and Buddy Stewart who are joined in ensemble passages by Blossom Dearie, thereby anticipating some aspects of Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross. In the group with them, Allen Eager shows his accomplished absorption of Lester Young's style and Benny Green has forthright moments on trombone, both muted and open. (How times change: Gerry Mulligan is present but is not given one note by himself.) Two pieces feature bop vocal duets by guitarist Jimmy Raney and Terry Swope who sing extremely well in a fashion usually associated with Jackie Cain and Roy Kral. Further variations on the Lester Young style are provided by Paul Quinchette in two selections. Of the five groups represented, only a quartet led by Wardell Gray fails to make an impressive showing. JOHN S. WILSON

FOLK MUSIC

"Introducing the Beers Family." Columbia ML 6105, \$4.98 (LP); MS 6705, \$5.98 (SD).

The three members of the Beers Family—parents Robert and Evelyne and daughter Martha—late of New Year, Montana, offer a dulcet program of ballads in the Old World tradition. The roots of most of their sea-changed selections lie in England, Ireland, and Scotland; even the songs of their own composition draw heavily upon the time-worn imagery of the British idiom. While this disc scores on all counts—not the least from the translucent stereo sound—it is the pellucid soprano of Evelyne Beers that shapes the most moving moments. Her singing of *The Water Is Wide* projects purest heartbreak; in *Dumbarton's Drums* she weaves a silvery spell of young and hopeful love. Without trepidation, the group has even fitted words to a melody from Beethoven's Sixth Symphony and, under the title of *The Green Grass of Shiloh*, carries it off creditably. Among this record's many and varied delights, I would include the fascinating sounds of old, half-forgotten folk instruments—psaltery, limberjacks, fiddlesticks. The ballads, particularly those sung by Evelyne, linger long in the memory. Recommended.

The DePaur Chorus: "Dansé, Calinda!" Mercury MG 50418, \$4.98 (LP); SR 90418, \$5.98 (SD).

A refreshing, unhackneyed recital of American Negro traditional song that explores a brand-new avenue—the gay but biting creole dances of Louisiana. The title selection, *Dansé, Calinda!*, sung to the thundering throb of big African drums, showcases the gifts of this remarkable ensemble. Embodied here is the near-paradox of Leonard DePaur's rigid musical discipline molding a sense of spontaneity. The seemingly unfettered (but actually very carefully controlled) frenzy of his twenty-six male voices rising above the drums creates an authentic musical vignette of nineteenth-century America. This is the way it really sounded in New Orleans. Another set of creole songs combined in the lovely suite *Pou' la belle layotte* strikes a sensuous note and *Gué, gué solingaie*, a lullaby, melts with tenderness. Among the spirituals, *Take My Mother Home* is infused with somber sorrow and *Tol' My Cap'n* almost explodes with hatred. On the whole, however, one finds far more grief than bitterness in these marvelous songs from the age of slavery. Conduc-

tor DePaur brings to their interpretation both sure scholarship and sure musicianship. His singers once again prove themselves without peer, and Mercury's engineers have framed this superb, moving performance in stunningly realistic stereo sound. *Magnifique!*

Mark Evarts: "Music of the Pawnee." Folkways FE 4334, \$5.95 (LP).

Here is the poignant, dying echo of a people. By 1910 the Pawnee, who once roamed the plains of the Midwest in arrogant thousands, were reduced to a mere 630. The ferocious Sioux and the westward march of the white man had combined to decimate a culture that had flowered through half a millennium. Although tribal rolls have swelled somewhat in recent years, today's Indians have all but lost contact with their history. In this documentary recording by D. Gene Weltfish (taken from 78s originally cut in 1936), Pawnee Mark Evarts—already by then an old man—chants the ancient war songs and love songs, religious songs and hunting songs out of his people's past. He accompanies himself on a small water drum. The thick, undefined sound shows its age, but Evarts provides a classic evocation of the rich, lost life of the Plains Indians. As ever, Folkways adds superlative annotations.

Ricardo Modrego and Paco de Lucia: "Guitars—Fantastic and Flamenco." Philips PHM 200153, \$3.98 (LP); PHS 600153, \$4.98 (SD).

A beautifully recorded duet in the flamenco idiom that sets each guitar within its separate speaker and periodically fuses them in flashing interplay. Modrego and De Lucia display splendors of technique, but they have overrefined the substance of their art. This is not necessarily a disability: indeed, a majority of listeners might find these eminently civilized *solerares* far more to their taste than the harsh and moody flamenco of a Montoya or Sabicas.

The Corrie Folk Trio with Paddie Bell. Elektra EKL 291, \$4.95 (LP); EKS 7291, \$5.95 (SD).

Apparently this fine group is to Scotland what the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem are to Ireland. The stylistic similarities between the two ensembles indicate that the Scots have listened intently and profitably to their Irish forerunners. Still, this is by no means musical plagiarism: the Corries have

managed to forge a hallmark of their own lending luster to the fourteen fine ballads on this release. Miss Bell's high, light soprano threads like a glittering strand through the modern lullaby, *Coorie Doon*; old war cries ring through James Hogg's virile ballad of border raids, *Lock the Door, Lariston; O'er the Water* is still another nostalgic relic of Bonnie Prince Charlie. There are also chants and street songs and a very old Child Ballad, *Fine Flowers in the Valley*, that probably dates from the Middle Ages. An engaging disc.

Fleury: "The Isles of Greece." Vanguard VRS 9168, \$4.98 (LP); VSD 79168, \$5.95 (SD).

Due largely, I suspect, to the lingering influence of Melina Mercouri and *Never on Sunday*, Greek popular song will be with us for some time to come. While the bouzouki has limitations, it remains an unalloyed delight in the compelling yet lyrical interpretations of this young lady with the singular name. Fleury's soprano is true and clear, but spiced with the slight abrasive edge prized throughout the Mediterranean world. This quality is beautifully apparent and beautifully controlled in the traditional ballad *Rampi*. Further, Fleury possesses a flair for the dramatic: she acts her songs as well as sings them. Oddly enough, the most appealing item on this disc is a Brazilian entry, *Manha de carnaval*, which, along with a Spanish selection from Garcia Lorca, effectively counterpoints the rhythmic complexities of the Greek songs. The stereo edition, adding breadth to the atmospheric orchestral accompaniment, stands as the version of choice.

John Jacob Niles: "Folk Balladeer." RCA Victor LPV 513, \$4.98 (LP).

Here, caught at the peak of his powers, is one of America's greatest folk singers. The ten songs on this album, recorded between 1936 and 1941, are all Child Ballads whose origins are lost in the mists of the past. The engineers, incidentally, have worked a small miracle: there is nothing antique about this sound. Born in Kentucky in 1892, John Jacob Niles perfected a distinctive high, almost wailing singing style that I, for one, have always found profoundly—and eerily—effective. Somehow, that unnaturally pitched voice illuminates nuances of bitterness, pathos, joy that remain obscured in conventional interpretations. Witness the savage dialogue of good and evil in *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*, one of four selections on this disc never previously released. On the wings of that same piercing alto, share the tragic fate of the cruel *Barberry Ellen* and the doomed *Mary Hamilton*; savor the black terror of murder and incest in *Bonnie Farday*. And perhaps too as you listen to this very great artist, you will feel a certain rue for the present debased state of folk balladry—engulfed by quantity, bereft of quality, drifting far from the classic heritage of a thousand years. This sublime, enduring record belongs in every collection of American folk music.

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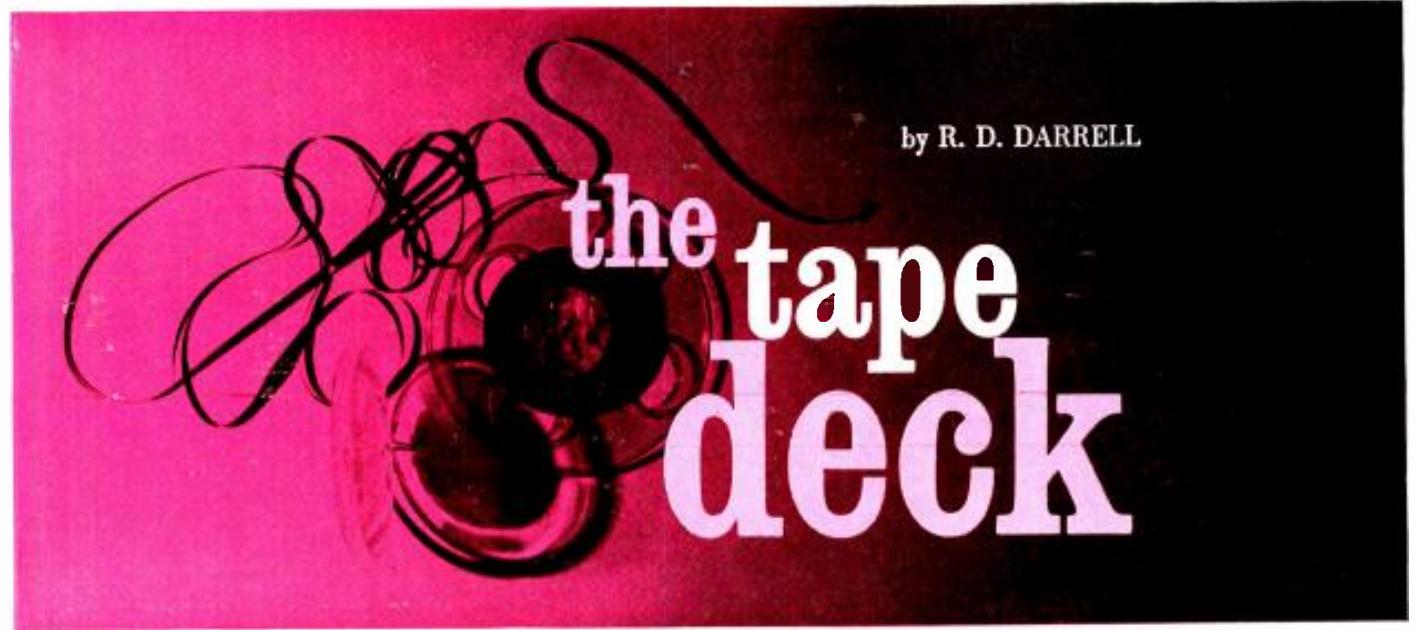
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by R. D. DARRELL

the tape deck

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

BELLINI: *Norma*

Joan Sutherland (s), Norma; Marilyn Horne (ms), Adalgisa; John Alexander (t), Pollione; Richard Cross (bs), Oroveso; et al.; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Richard Bonynge, cond. • • RCA VICTOR FTO 8010. Two reels; approx. 93 and 69 min. \$21.95.

Joan Sutherland's wisely waiting to develop fully her exceptional *bel canto* talents before recording Bellini's masterpiece may have led some collectors to expect more than even the now artistically matured Sutherland genius can give them. Her singing, as such, is as fine here as it's ever been, and in some climactic moments perhaps even more thrillingly brilliant; yet surely there are many of the role's dramatic potentials (exploited so memorably in the past by Maria Callas and others) which are scarcely suggested here.

In compensation, however, there is Marilyn Horne's truly superb acting as well as superb vocalism (for me, she steals the show!) and Richard Bonynge's beautifully proportioned, if slightly smaller-scaled than usual, direction—notably more authoritative than in any of his previous recordings. The other soloists are good (although Richard Cross's High Priest is tonally somewhat unfocused and John Alexander's robust Pollione rather mannered for my taste); the chorus and orchestra are very good; the balances are excellent, and the recording is impressively broadspread, vivid, and yet natural, with highly effective stereo spacings if no special stereo-staging effects. And in the Sutherland-Horne duos, especially "Mira, o Norma," there is matched vocal excellence rarely if ever heard today.

KODALY: *Háry János: Suite and Two Arias; Dances of Galanta*

Olga Szönyi, soprano (in the Arias);

London Symphony Orchestra, Istvan Kertesz, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80159. 45 min. \$7.95.

Back in the 2-track era, a prize demonstration reel for many tape fanciers was Dorati's performance of the *Háry János* Suite for Mercury. An exuberant tonal tribute to a Hungarian "Baron Munchausen" folk hero, the work remains not only a delight for its sprightly tunes, but its kaleidoscopic scoring makes it well-nigh ideal as an orchestral showpiece. Not the least of its attractions are the relatively exotic tonal qualities of that Hungarian favorite national instrument, the cimbalom. The fact that the high-powered, markedly stereoistic Mercury version (which still sounds fine) has never been reissued in the 4-track medium makes the present version by another Hungarian conductor all the more needed. The Suite is played here with more warmth, if less snap, than by Dorati; and the combination of supremely luminous recording and first-rate tape processing makes the most of both the score's and the performance's iridescence (as well as of the sonorous clang of the cimbalom part, played with exceptionally clear articulation by John Leach).

The rest of the 1926 opera from which the Suite is drawn is heard so seldom outside Hungary that the present quasi-encore arias ("Szegény vagyok," a lament with effectively twittering cimbalom obbligato; and "Hej ket tíkomp," a cheerful dairymaid's air) should have been occasions for genuine rejoicing. Unfortunately, however, only the lively air is really enjoyable; the slower one is made quite intolerable by the soprano's vocal unsteadiness—seemingly a bad tremolo on top of an overwide vibrato. Luckily, there is a far more satisfactory addition to the reel's appeal in Kertesz's tautly controlled performance of Kodály's scintillating evocations of the gypsy bands heard in his childhood in the little town of Galanta. As electrifying a showpiece as the Enesco Second Rhapsody, this work too should become a real hit in its first tape edition.

PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 3, in C minor, Op. 44; Le Pas d'acier, Op. 41: Suite*

Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond.

• • VANGUARD VTC 1699. 47 min. \$7.95.

Two unexpected tape firsts to delight Prokofiev specialists: the seldom heard Third Symphony, based on musical materials first used in the composer's opera *The Flaming Angel*; and a now neglected but once ultrasensational example of the "mechanistic" music of the late Twenties. I can still remember how exciting this *Steel Step* ballet music seemed when Koussevitzky first played it in this country in the fall of 1927. And, rather to my surprise, it seems to have worn better than the more spectacular *Scythian* Suite. Certainly it has much the same brash verve and piquancy as some of the favorite excerpts from *The Love for Three Oranges*, and yet often highly distinctive individuality. Personally, I relished it more than the Symphony, a work new to me, although the latter is a more substantial, if perhaps overserious, achievement.

The whole program is an adventurous one, and Abravanel is to be congratulated for having the imagination to tackle it on records. I am not so much impressed by the orchestral playing as was Alan Rich in his review of the disc version [May 1964], but the Utah forces are fully professional and the Vanguard recording is, as always, effective.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade, Op. 35*

Erich Gruenberg, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

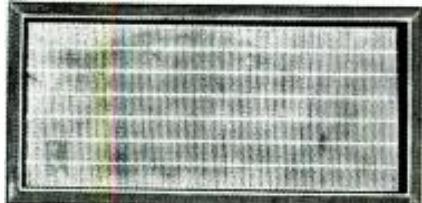
• • LONDON LCL 75005. 46 min. \$7.95.

Since it was only last March that I re-

Continued on page 85

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Tosca in a Slow-Speed Reel

SINCE THIS is apparently the first large-scale work of serious musical interest to be released in a non-cartridge taping at the 3 3/4-ips speed, the vital questions it raises are sonic ones. How does it sound—intrinsically and in comparison with standard 7.5-ips tapes? My preliminary answers are twofold: an unhesitating "surprisingly good"; and a "not so good." Heard by itself, this tape is almost sure to seem better than one might have expected: as soon as comparisons are made with 7.5-ips technology, however, there is no mistaking the loss of brilliance at the high end. This may make no great difference where a wide frequency range is not demanded by the music at hand or by technically unsophisticated listeners, but it certainly will otherwise. To experienced audiophiles, the 3 3/4-ips sonics will seem markedly darker than those to which they have become accustomed—a darkness undoubtedly resulting from proportionately slightly stronger mid- and low-frequency registers. The tape processing, however, seems well up to 7.5-ips standards in surface quietness, relative freedom from pre-echoes, and complete freedom from reverse-channel spill-over.

I should stress again the preliminary nature of my present judgments, which

may be qualified by further experience with other slow-speed tapes and other playback equipment. (My present Ampex is several years old and has been used so consistently—and satisfactorily—at 7.5 ips that it is not always rock-steady at the slower speed.) While I would guess that the more recent a model one's tape machine and the more reliable its slow-speed operation, the better the 3 3/4-ips tapes will sound, I also suspect that it will be some years yet before new tape materials and still narrower-gap playback heads enable them to be technically competitive in repertoires other than those of the spoken word and background music. Meanwhile, it remains to be seen how important the potential savings in cost and in fewer reel turnovers (not too impressive so far) may seem to present collectors of operas and other large-scale classical works on tape.

As for this *Tosca* performance itself, it's already one of the most controversial in recorded opera. I doubt that it will please anyone who demands beautiful singing, and it is sure to sadden admirers of the famous Callas/Angel mono *Tosca* of some eleven years ago. Yet, while granting the justness of practically every disc reviewer's criticisms of both the star's deficiencies and Gobbi's lapses, I'm not too much bothered by them, since the present *Tosca* and Scarpia are so exciting dramatically—melodramatically, perhaps, but then this is a melodramatic work if there ever was one! And the melodrama is further enhanced by some stereo staging and sound effects which normally might be considered overrealistic but which seem quite justified here. I must add too that Carlo Bergonzi's Cavaradossi is magnificently sung (though, in my opinion, far too carefully and self-consciously for theatrical effectiveness) and I've never heard the Sacristan's role done better, in every respect, than by Tadeo.

If you prefer not to hear Callas in her present vocal estate or if you want 7.5-ips technical quality (and original engineering as good as if not better than that of the latest version), the reel choice is the Price/RCA Victor version of December 1963 (the Tebaldi London taping of 1962 has never been in the running). Inasmuch as that set was issued in a three-side layout with a fourth-side Price aria recital, it is relatively expensive, but it presents a *Tosca* vocally far more appealing. R.D.D.

PUCCINI: *Tosca*

Maria Callas (s), Flora Tosca; Carlo Bergonzi (t), Mario Cavaradossi; Tito Gobbi (b), Baron Scarpia; et al.; Choeurs du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Georges Prêtre, cond.

• • ANGL 2Y2 3655. 112 min. \$11.98.

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THE TAPE DECK

Continued from page 83

viewed the disc edition of this first outstanding classical excursion in Phase-4 technology—a work which is notably one of the most completely characteristic, in both interpretative and sonic mannerisms, of all Stokowski's innumerable recordings—there is little more to say about the present flawlessly processed tape transfer. In it one hears what are essentially the same sonic qualities except for the seemingly inevitable minor qualifications that the over-all modulation level is slightly lower; the extreme high-register timbres, especially of the percussion instruments, are not quite as sharply defined; and the extreme low registers have even more solidly substantial tonal body. A genuinely spectacular *Scheherazade*, this tape as well as the disc edition is destined for best-sellerdom—which is not to say, however, that for many connoisseur listeners it will match the Beecham Angel version in sheer musical charm or the Ansermet London in concert-hall acoustical authenticity.

STRAVINSKY: *L'Histoire du soldat*

Jean Cocteau, Narrator; Peter Ustinov, Devil; Jean-Marie Fertey, Soldier; Instrumental Ensemble, Igor Markevitch, cond. • • Philips PTC 900046. 54 min. \$7.95.

Attention, Stravinskyans! Here at last we have the first truly integral and complete *Soldier's Tale* to be recorded. Except for the composer himself, I doubt that anyone could match the snap of Markevitch's performance, and now—sadly—it would be impossible for any version to present so ideal a choice for narrator as the late Jean Cocteau. Yet even he is pressed for honors by the incredibly versatile (and multilingual) Peter Ustinov, while the instrumental septet for which Stravinsky has scored so succinctly plays with zestful assurance. Furthermore, everything is recorded with superbly crystalline clarity.

Unhappily, even so enthusiastic a review must include a special warning: if you don't understand French, you'll find the long stretches of talk without music hard to take. A booklet of French and English texts is provided, but it isn't as helpful as it might be since the French text actually used differs somewhat from that printed and even more from the printed translation. I don't care much, either, for several unimaginatively realistic sound effects (which aren't called for in the score). So, valuable as this release is, we still have need for a tape of the instrumental suite (sans narration) alone—such as that we actually did have once, conducted by Mandell for Sono-tape, back in the two-track era.

"*Baker Street*." Original Broadway Cast, Harold Hastings, cond. M-G-M STA 4288. 45 min., \$8.95.

Reviewers have been so unanimous in

Continued on next page

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THE TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

labeling this Grudeff-Jessel score nondescript at best that one wonders why the show itself has continued to be so popular. The present excerpts hint at one of the main reasons by at least suggesting something of the charismatic personality of Fritz Weaver, especially in his elucidation of Sherlock Holmes's detection techniques, *It's So Simple*, and in an amusingly stereo-staged sound-effects scene, *Pursuit*. Then Peter Sallis Watson is engaging as he too "talks" more than sings *A Married Man*; and Martin Wolfson leads a rousing patter chorus in *Jewelry*. Although the only member of the cast who can actually sing, Inga Stevens, is given pretty thin materials (*Letters* and *I'll Do It Again*) to work with, the over-all effect is disarming. Hastings conducts jauntily, and the recording is brightly vivacious.

"Command Performance": "The New Elgart Touch," Les and Larry Elgart and Their Combined Orchestras, Columbia C2Q 720 (double-play), 59 min., \$11.95.

I suppose it shows my age but I confess that few of today's dance records strike me as both danceable and listenable. Hence my relish of the Elgarts' avoidance of the Seylla of schmaltz and the Charybdis of rockiness in this double program of memorable standards. The fine arrangements, mostly by Charles Albertine, suggest (rather than imitate) the original celebrity-band treatments and display plenty of originality of their own. They also serve as ideal media for the players' distinctively pungent tonal qualities and consistently swinging rhythmic vitality. I've starred too many of the two-dozen selections to list them all here, but I must single out at least *A String of Pearls*, the original *Elgart Touch*, *Caravan*, *Tuxedo Junction*, *Blues in the Night*, and *Woodchoppers' Ball*. There are a number of sax solos by Les, very few on trumpet by Larry. The latter, however, leads one of the best brass sections (with outstandingly fine trombonists) playing today. The high-level recording is suitably stereostic for the frequent reeds/brasses antiphonies as well as ringingly big and open, but in the "A" side of my copy the otherwise first-rate tape processing is plagued between selections by faint whispers of reverse-channel spill-over.

"For Django," Joe Pass, guitar; rhythm section, World Pacific WPTC 1022, 32 min., \$7.95.

"Guitar . . . Paris," Tony Mottola, guitar; orchestra, Command C 877, 32 min., \$7.95.

Different as the two soloists are stylistically, each is preëminent for sheer skill and artistry in his own field. The jazz guitarist Joe Pass contributes exceptionally atmospheric and relaxed performances to a memorial program for the late Django Reinhardt which features several of the master's originals (notably the romantic *Django's Castle*) as well as many of his special favorites; a jumping

Limehouse Blues, lyrical *Insensiblement*, bustling *Night and Day*, and an expressive piece that some illiterate at World Pacific not only spells "*Nanages*" but credits to DeBussy. (In the jazz world a musical education may not be a handicap, but it's certainly no necessity!) At least the World Pacific engineers prove their expertise by providing admirably clean, natural recording, flawlessly processed.

Tony Mottola of Command's all-star Light Brigade (and apparently a television fame that is outside my ken) enjoys even more richly vivid and markedly stereostic recording, and no less ideal tape processing in the latest of his solo recitals. This one is devoted to pop French tunes, only a few of which (*Gigi* and *The Poor People of Paris*, for two) have been overelaborately arranged, presumably by Lew Davies, or accompanied. Mottola does especially well with a bouncing *Dominique*, *Mimi*, and *Under Paris Skies*; and as usual he features a composition of his own—here a romantically melodic *Michele*. It's a shame that a program like this is apt to be too often played merely as background music; it deserves close attention for any adequate appreciation of its wealth of both executant and sonic felicities.

"The Astrud Gilberto Album," Astrud Gilberto; Antonio Carlos Jobim, guitar; orchestra, Marty Paich, cond., Verve VSTC 325, 28 min., \$7.95.

The "Girl from Ipanema" again, with the same itty-bitty voice and deliberate nonexpressiveness. She is not without some charm in the Portuguese songs, especially *Agua de Beber*, where composer-guitarist Jobim joins her in some momentarily animated scat duos; but in most of the English selections, except perhaps for Jobim's *Photograph* and *How Insensitive*, there just isn't much of any real substance—or personality either. However, everything else—the selections themselves, Jobim's guitar playing, that of Paich's orchestra, and the typically pure Verve recording—is more attractive. Incidentally, I have a repertory suggestion for Mrs. Gilberto, provided she knows German: Peter Cornelius' currently neglected Lied, *Ein Ton*, which is deliberately written for monotone performance yet which is a genuinely fine song.

"Live from Ledbetter's," Back Porch Majority, Epic EN 830, 39 min., \$7.95. Flushed by his success with the New Christy Minstrels, Randy Sparks has promptly launched another ensemble to sing much the same pop-folk materials in much the same extroverted fashion. But the present group of three girls and four men is neither as large as the Minstrels nor nearly as professionally polished. Only a (for once) straightforwardly sung *Hey, Nelly Nelly* really comes off well; the comic stuff is mostly just plain silly; and although the West Los Angeles on-location recording is robust (and not too close), the live audience's frenetic applause, whistles, and cheers sound patently synthetic and in any case are dragged out to inordinate lengths.

ANTIDOTES FOR NOISE

Continued from page 42

cause is severe transient distortion in the speaker or the amplifier, though both are most unlikely in components of good grade. Speaker noise may also result from something loose in the speaker enclosure or a nearby object that rattles. The source may be hard to identify because the noise is heard only on certain notes and is gone before you can track it down. If you can borrow an audio signal generator, it is simple to sweep slowly through the musical scale until the rattle starts; then leave the oscillator set on that note while you find the cause.

The one noise that may develop anywhere in a music system is hum—a constant threat inasmuch as its source, the 60-cps AC of house voltage, is carried right into the amplifier, which, of course, is linked to all the other elements of the system. In today's better amplifiers, hum leakages have been controlled by the designer. Signal-to-noise ratio of such an amplifier, by definition, is 55 db or better from magnetic phono to output, and 65 to 70 db or better from FM or tape input to output. These figures mean that the amplifier will produce no hum unless a major breakdown occurs. But varying degrees of hum, ranging from a loud, overt noise to a vague, annoying buzz, may ride through the system from the program sources. Tracking down and eliminating such hum can be a fairly complicated process and one occasionally demanding intuition as much as technical know-how. The game, in any event, has been found by many audio perfectionists to be both fascinating and rewarding, and its ground rules—a comprehensive list of causes and cures of hum—are given in the chart accompanying this article.

PATTI AT CRAIG-Y-NOS

Continued from page 47

Nicolini, already beginning to look wizened and yellow, sang for the last time in his wife's theatre, just able to pull through one of the *Romeo and Juliet* duets. Sixteen months later he was dead. A year after that, in a little Roman Catholic church across the mountains, Patti married her third husband, a Swedish baron with a passion for Richard Wagner, Olof Rudolph Cederström. The marriage certificate at Somerset House gives Adele Maria Juana Patti-Nicolini's age as fifty-five, Cederström's as twenty-eight.

With the third husband's advent the old gaieties stopped abruptly. The Baron took his wife to Bayreuth, introduced her to Hans Richter, added *Parsifal* excerpts to the orchestrion's repertory. Patti's voice began to dwindle, like the incidence of her public concerts. The voice we hear on the famous acoustical

records made by Fred Gaisberg and his brother at Craig-y-Nos with portable equipment in 1905 is obviously no more than a wraith. It cannot have been long after this that the young Igor Stravinsky heard her on some "farewell" platform. He remembers a tiny woman in a bright orange wig, with "a voice that sounded like a bicycle pump." Until nearly the end, she sat for an hour or two each day at one or other of her seven pianos, accompanying herself in vocalises and fragments of Mozart, Rossini, Verdi. When Cederström was away, she would treat the house staff to *Home Sweet Home* and *Comin' thro' the Rye* and tell Longo the butler to "pop the champagne cork."

Alongside her bedroom was an oratory with *prie-dieu*. Here she spent much time during her last years. The oratory has become the Craig-y-Nos hospital's sewing room. Its carved wall panels of the Apostles, of holy figures mitered and erosioned, were taken out and now form part of the walls and ceiling of the Castle's entrance hall. In their way, they are as much a memorial to Patti as is her theatre. No revelatory Life and Letters has yet been published. We do not know a great deal about the essential Patti. But we know enough to be sure that hers was a life that had its share of pain, frustration, and sorrow as well as joyful dominance. The oratory panels are a reminder. She had as much to pray about and seek solace against as the rest of us.

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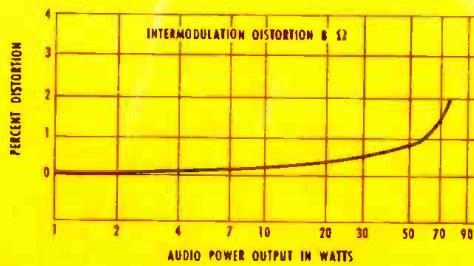
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