High Fidelity

December 1959

The Magazine for Music Listeners

60 Cents

Handel's Messiah

Newly Recorded

An appraisal of four new stereo versions

by Nathan Broder

Otto Klemperer

A tall man against adversity

by Peter Heyworth

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High Fidelity Magazine

AUTHORitatively Speaking

Peter Heyworth, former music critic of the Times (London) Educational Supplement and present music critic of the London Observer, was introduced in these pages with his memorial to Ernest Newman in our October issue. In "Otto Klemperer: A Tall Man Against Adversity" (p. 68) we have another disarming interpretation of another musical giant.

One of Mr. Heyworth’s predecessors on the selfsame Observer was a certain Charles Stuart, also author of the official Covent Garden analysis of Benjamin Britten’s opera Peter Grimes. We don’t really know what happened to Charles Stuart, but we think we detect that pseudeonymus hand in the work of music critic (New Amsterdam, London) and Britten specialist Charles Reid. See "Back to Britain with Britten," p. 72.

Every day on our way to work we pass by a large stone house, framed by massive maples and surrounded by the longest and whitest picket fence we have ever seen. Perfect domicile for a typical country square, we used to think. It isn’t. It’s the home of John F. Index, owner of a flourishing mail-order business and life-time amateur of the lively arts. In fact, London-born Mr. Index once was a production aide for a couple of touring stock companies, and even appeared on the boards himself. Today he’s still faithful to the theatre as manager for local theatrical groups and frequent pilgrim to Broadway. His other great avocation is records: see our “World of Entertainment”—and, in this gift-giving month, Mr. Index’s report (p. 77) on some of the year’s best stereo discs.
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The RCA VICTOR Metropolitan Opera Record Club

December 1959

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High Fidelity Magazine
Opera in the Original

Sir:

Do proponents of Opera-in-English give any thought to what is called "focus"?

In her autobiography (My Life, New York, 1922) Emma Calvé speaks of her refusal to sing Carmen in Italian because "the effect of my French diction would be lost and the whole opera would be thrown out of focus ... I was in despair. I could not make the directors realize what I saw so clearly; that this work of art, conceived in the mind of a Frenchman, put to music by a French composer, must be sung by me, a Frenchwoman, in French. In no other way could it be given its full value, its true flavor and quality. ... In my agitation and helplessness, I appealed to the elder Coquelin, who was acting in New York at the moment. He sympathized entirely with my point of view, went to the directors himself, and used his influence to persuade them to give up the idea. They told him that they had no French tenor to sing the role of Don José, and that, therefore, I would have to sing in Italian. Undaunted by this rebuff, he determined to succeed where they had failed. He would find a tenor. He went to Jean de Reszke, and laid the case before him. Although it was not in De Reszke's repertoire, he promised that he would sing the role. ... What a triumphant success was that production of Carmen ... !"

If the idea of a French opera in Italian so shocked such artists as Calvé, Coquelin, and De Reszke, how would they have reacted to the thought of a performance in English?

Dale Warren
Boston, Mass.

Down with Love

Sir:

If the romantic chronicle of Duse and Boito in your October issue is a portent of things to come, please put a stop to it. Leave the tender passion for the ladies, and continue to offer the practical services for which we pay our hard cash. After all, High Fidelity is

Continued on next page

DECEMBER 1959
No finer selection for family enjoyment than this stereophonic “first”...smart furniture styling, component flexibility, console performance! ‘Stereo Suite’ is all this and traditionally high Ekotape quality, unbelievably true fidelity.

Cabinets are handsomely crafted in hand-rubbed Danish walnut or fruitwood — trim-styled to fit in any decor. Speakers are easy to arrange for precise stereo balance. And, ‘Stereo Suite’ includes — in addition to tape programing — inputs for a record changer, tuner and microphones.

See the ‘Stereo Suite’ at your Ekotape dealer, or call him for a demonstration in your home.

‘Stereo Suite’ is a complete stereophonic tape recorder and playback control center. New Ekotape GL 04 preamp and all controls are housed in the base. It records and plays back monaural, 4-track and 2-track stereo. Each matching speaker cabinet includes a 12-watt high fidelity amplifier, 3-inch and 8-inch speakers with network.

LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

a man’s magazine—or at least we’ve always thought so.

Charles H. Oakes
Birmingham, Ala.

Factory-Sealed, Pro

Sir:

If Mr. John Holt cannot afford to buy records to which he has not listened, as he says in September High Fidelity, I cannot afford to buy records to which he has listened.

There are persons like Mr. Holt who want so much to hear what they are buying that they will buy no records unless they can first hear them. If I have read good reviews, I am willing to take a chance on the musical content of a record—particularly if by not insisting on having the record played I can make more likely the possibility that its physical condition will be good when I get it home.

Of course, cellophane and cardboard can conceal a record with an off-center hole and visible scratches, but they are not likely to. In the few cases where something is really wrong, a reputable dealer will care. The record manufacturer has already shown that he cares by sealing his records in the first place. If an occasional bad one slips through, it should be replaced without question.

So let the record companies go on sealing their records. Sales will not suffer, and both new and old music will get bought and heard. Since Mr. Holt implies that he will not buy a record unless he likes it the first time he hears it, and since as things are now he cannot hear it unless he buys it, Nussio and Howhaness may have to be sold to those persons who are willing to take a musical chance. But that is as it should be.

Louise Davies
Ventura, Calif.

Factory-Sealed, Further Thoughts

Sir:

Mr. Holt’s letter in the September issue fully describes the difficulty of hearing new records of nonstandard music. If it were not for WFMT in Chicago, which plays many new records, it would be practically impossible in this area as well.

The best solution to this problem would be for recording companies to:
1) Send review copies as a matter of course to as many FM stations as possible, especially in New York, Chi-

Continued on page 12

High Fidelity Magazine
General Electric's all-new VR-22 Stereo Cartridge

try it in your own home

money-back guarantee!

We believe that once you hear General Electric's all-new VR-22 in the privacy of your own home, on your own equipment, you'll want to have this superb stereo cartridge for your very own.

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Acclaimed by the experts!

Oliver P. Ferrell
Editor Hi-Fi Review
as quoted in issue of Aug. 1959

"...the VR-22 is a top performer. The frequency response is as flat as any cartridge tested to date. Channel-to-channel separation in the vital area between 700 cycles and 6000 cycles was equal to the very best stereo cartridges now offered the public."

Wm. A. Stocklin
Editor Electronics World
as quoted in issue of Sept. 1959

"...listening tests did not show up any flaws. Frequency response from 30 to 15,000 cps (limit of our test) was within 2.75 db of flat. Provides about the best channel separation available of any checked with the exception of [cartridge selling for] $65.00 in the frequency range from about 5000 to 9000 cps."

C. G. McProud
Editor Audio
as quoted in issue of Sept. 1959

"...it is even better than its predecessor with respect to output, channel separation and extended frequency response and the two channels balance within ±1 db to 15,000 cycles. The shielding has been improved and the grounding of the shield and the method of shorting the two 'ground' terminals are well thought out."

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SE-60
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LETTERS

Continued from page 10

cago, Boston, Washington, San Francisco, and other large cities; 2) send new recordings to large public libraries with record collections.

I think that the number of recordings of nonstandard music which could be "sold" in this way would be quite a surprise to the manufacturers.

F. L. Forstall
Evanston, Ill.

How To Make Enemies

Sir:

I'd like to add an admonition of my own to those directed at the record makers in your October editorial. It concerns a situation which I, as the owner of a stereo phonograph, have been confronted with all too often. I'm referring to those times when I've gone out and bought the monophonic version of a particular performance, in the absence of the stereo version, only to be confronted shortly afterwards with the issue of said stereo disc! In fact, the record makers' policy towards this matter strikes me as an almost ideal way to Make Enemies and Alienate People. Would it be too much to ask that we be told which monophonic records are destined for release in stereo form?

Eileen R. Kammin
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Eileen No Salome?

Sir:

In the "Letters" section of the September issue Mr. J. T. Henderson rightly deplores the lack of first-rate recordings of Salome and Elektra and suggests Eileen Farrell for both roles, because "... Columbia's old Wozzeck proves that she is equal to the most complex scores..." I would suggest that Mr. Henderson listen to Wozzeck sometime with the score in hand, and mark well the incredible inaccuracy of the Farrell performance... in rhythm, pitch, and diction. By "inaccuracy" I mean inaccuracy often by miles, and on almost every page.

If these Strauss operas are ever going to overcome their present opposition, let us hope that they do so on the strength of the music they contain. Spare us Miss Farrell, at least for this repertory; there are many other things she does far better.

Alan Rich
Music Dir., KPFA
Berkeley, Calif.

Eunice R. Kammin

Continued...
new General Electric stereo amplifier

Power: 56 watts (28 watts per channel) music power. More than enough to drive even low efficiency speakers. Response flat (3 db) from 20 to 20,000 cycles, with less than 1% distortion. Channel separation 40 db.


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56 watts of power, soundly engineered, a versatile beauty.
From front to back, a remarkable achievement at $189.95*

Designed for beauty and value: Featuring a recessed front panel, the G-7700 comes complete in a beige vinyl case, the G-7710 in a white vinyl case. The price is a modest $189.95*, including case. (The G-7600 delivers 40 watts, 20 watts per channel, $139.95.) Other General Electric stereo amplifiers from $119.95, including case.

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*Manufacturer's suggested resale prices. Slightly higher in the West.

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DECEMBER 1959
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"SCOTCH" brand Magnetic Tapes, pioneered by 3M Research, offer: 1) precision oxide dispersion for flawless fidelity; 2) controlled uniformity for perfect response on every inch of every reel; plus 3) dry silicone lubrication to reduce recorder head wear.

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General Electric presents
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This dramatic new design brings you General Electric’s famous Extended Bass performance in an ultra-compact one cubic foot enclosure ideal for stereo.

Hear it... and you’ll agree that here is full, natural sound as good as, or better than, many much larger and more costly systems. The G-501 offers realistic, smooth response within ±3 db over most of its frequency range from 45 to 16,000 cycles.

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But small size is gained through no sacrifice in sound! The Extended Bass design puts out four times the low-frequency power (+6 db) as standard 12-inch speakers in the same enclosure. Complete G-506 in four most-wanted finishes. $129.95*

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hear both of these fine speakers at your Hi-Fi dealer now

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December 1959
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Built for the long, long life that only transistors can give, the Nobles stereo preamplifier eliminates tubes and replacements. It develops no heat; hum pickup is minimized; distortion becomes virtually non-existent. Completely individual channel control at all times for level, bass and treble, separate switch compensators for bass and treble to match all types of record pickups and tape heads, automatic compensation for standard recording curves when switched into tape and phono positions, direct-reading edge-lighted VU meters. A brilliant engineering first!

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A highly compact "power package" that represents an outstanding accomplishment in design. The Nobles Stereophonic Amplifier, with plug-in amplifier units, meets the most rigid demands made by the stereo listener for honest, distortion-free high fidelity sound reproduction. Quality features include: full 15-watt power from each channel, frequency response with $\pm \frac{1}{2}$ DB from 20 to 20,000 cycles, amplifier output to match, 4, 8 or 16 ohm speakers. Additional power supply outlet provides filament voltage and "B" supply voltage for tubes and 0 to 18 volts for transistors. Stereophonic Amplifier 70-watt (Dual 35), Model NS170, also available.

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December 1959
Mesmerizing! The Connoisseur turntable is a masterpiece of craftsmanship, engineered to provide the ultimate in stereo reproduction. Made in England, this turntable is constructed by skilled hands, delivering remarkable performance that sets it apart from ordinary models. The hysteresis synchronous motor-driven turntable is non-magnetic and equipped with an illuminated strobe disc to ensure precise speed regulation. Its electronic components are housed in a robust, silent operation chassis, assuring a perfect audio experience.

High priced speakers are a must? Made in England, the RA-1 series offers a perfect solution. These speakers don't demand a high price tag but offer the same performance as much more expensive models. The Mark III Magnetic systems ensure a wide frequency response, delivering a balanced, clear sound that is both joyful and educational.

STUZZI magnetite - Portable Tape Recorder

Time for listening. The Vitavox D120 offers high fidelity for dictation, transcription, and recording. This versatile machine provides the best of both worlds, allowing for the highest broadcast and recording quality.

Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques by the British scholar Winston Dean is, on its face values, a formidable specialized study, running over 700 closely packed pages, illustrated with 10 plates of period facsimiles and 136 musical examples, including a dozen appendixes, numerous tables, countless footnotes, a four-page general bibliography, and two indexes—and priced (not at all unreasonably) at $20.20. And yet, in all seriousness, I urge nonspecialist music lovers not only to buy a copy—and read it in full—but to send copies to their favorite conductor, chorus leader, singer, or record company executive. If even a few should do so, it might well put an end to some centuries of the most disgraceful neglect and grossest distortion any great composer has suffered. Some of us have long suspected that the great wealth of Handelian music we know must be only a tiny fraction of that never given a hearing, many of us have realized that most Handel performances (including practically all of those on records) depart widely from the original scores; but not until we read Dean’s book can we grasp any real measure of what we’re missing and what travesties have been perpetrated by otherwise honorable musicians.

It is almost incidental that this detailed study of some eighteen specific works (and their times) is a monument of inspired scholarship or that it signals the emergence of Mr. Dean as one of the musicological giants of our age. The real value of Dean’s study lies partly in its reminder that a true scholar can see his facts in the large perspectives of both artistic and social history (and that he can write with acidulous bite as well as accuracy), but even more vitally in its single-handed triumph over some of the most deeply rooted misconceptions in all music. Here is a heartening reminder that (thanks to the preservation of original scores, libretti, and sketches, and to the revival of knowledge about authentic baroque instrumental and interpretative practices) it is now possible for a more enlightened generation to make belated atonement for the sins of its fathers. The power to move mountains is seldom given to one man, but Dean has provided a practical lever and fulcrum which the rest of us can use to work the miracle (Oxford University Press, $20.20).

Continued on page 44
There is one way to be sure of

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WITHOUT COMPROMISE

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COMPLETE STEREO SYSTEMS

UNCOMPROMISING STEREO because each unit, components and speakers, has been designed to a single set of standards—FISHER quality standards—to produce the world's most perfectly matched stereo systems. Compare! Hear all the conventional, casually assembled stereo "packages" you desire. Then listen to any of the five FISHER STEREO PERFECTIONIST Systems. You will hear hitherto unattainable tonal purity, stereo depth and realism—a panoramic sweep of living sound that will envelop your entire room. Even to the untrained ear, THE FISHER makes the difference obvious... instantly.

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DECEMBER 1959
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Sonotone 8TA cartridge...
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The new Sonotone 8TA cartridge gives greater than ever stereo performance...has 4 big extras:

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The 10T sells at record low price of $6.45.* And it covers the complete high fidelity range. 10T's unitized construction makes it easiest to install, even for the person with ten thumbs. Snaps right in or out. Cuts stereo conversion costs, too.

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- Frequency Response: Smooth 20 to 20,000 cycles. Flat to 15,000 with gradual rolloff beyond.
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- Output Voltage: 0.3 volt
- Cartridge Weight: 7.5 grams
- Recommended Load: 1-5 megohms
- Stylus: Dual jewel tips, sapphire or diamond.

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- Frequency Response: Flat from 20 to 15,000 cycles
- Channel Isolation: 18 decibels
- Compliance: 1.5 x 10^-6 cm/dyne
- Tracking Pressure: 5-7 grams
- Output Voltage: 0.5 volt
- Cartridge Weight: 2.8 grams
- Recommended Load: 1-5 megohms
- Stylus: Dual jewel tips, sapphire or diamond.

*Including mounting brackets

Sonotone ceramic cartridges have more than impressive specifications...always give brilliant performance. You'll hear the difference with Sonotone. For highest stereo fidelity, use genuine Sonotone needles.

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Electronic Applications Division, Dept. CT-129
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Leading makers of fine ceramic cartridges, speakers, microphones, electronic tubes.

Continued from page 42

Kathleen Ferrier: Her Life and a Memoir. Barely a year after the contralto's premature death in 1953, a collection of tributes edited by Neville Cardus achieved best-seller status in Great Britain and quickly led to the publication (1955) of an authorized biography by her sister, Winifred Ferrier. Cardus' memoir apparently never became widely known in its American edition (now out-of-print) and the "life" was not issued here at all. So it is surely one of Penguin Books' happiest inspirations to reprint both works in a single low-cost paperback volume, which also includes some forty of the original photographs as well as an updated discography. The singer's sister writes artlessly, but includes a generous selection of "Kath's" own even more artless—and deliciously jaunty—letters; the contributors to the memoir (Bruno Walter, Sir John Barbirolli, Benjamin Britten, Gerald Moore, Roy Henderson, and Cardus himself) frankly write panegyrics; yet at their best all of them convey much of that wholly unique, heart-wrenching tenor-ness which those of us who never knew "Kath" herself found so precious in her memorable recordings of Blow the Wind Southerly, Das Lied von der Erde, and so many (yet so few!) other masterpieces. The story of this country girl's and oinetime pianist's rise to world-wide fame within a scant ten years is one of the most remarkable in musical history, but the present memorial is to be treasured in particular for its disarmingly warm portrait of an individual whom to know, or even to hear once, was to love wholeheartedly (Penguin paperback, $1.25).

Designing and Building Hi-Fi Furniture. As audio literature burgeons, it begins to spread out to extremely peripheral, yet by no means unimportant, fields—in the present instance to what is elegantly called the decor of home sound systems. So much nonsense on this subject and so many overfancy installations have been published and illustrated in the audio press that it's refreshing indeed to find that this book by Jeff Markel not only describes and pictures highly practical cabinetry, but also includes a wealth of useful information on basic design principles and specific constructional procedures. To many audiophiles—and perhaps particularly to their wives—the last chapter alone, on furniture finishing, re-touching, and repairing, will be worth the price of the entire book (Gernsback Library paperback, $2.90).
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The search has ended—and in blazing success! For years we have sought to make available a basic speaker system that would do justice to the electrical quality of FISHER components and at the same time meet the decorative and space requirements of the average home. Compactness—plus-quality was the goal. Speaker efficiency was the problem. The breakthrough came with the development of a special magnet assembly that is 92% more efficient. In practical terms, the XP-1 combines in one compact assembly the best features of high compliance with those of high efficiency. The magnetic lines of force driving the woofer are totally captured in the air gap, where they belong, and where they can be put to work toward unexcelled bass and transient response. Want proof? Hold a metal object near the magnet of any conventional speaker; it will be drawn out of your hand. Then hold the same object near the FISHER XP-1 magnet; nothing happens! Because there are no stray, wasted magnetic fields in the XP-1. Designed for bookshelf or floor installation. In Mahogany, Walnut, Cherry or Blonde, $129.50 In Unfinished Birch, Ready for Staining, $124.50

POWER REQUIREMENTS: Can be used with any amplifier, 10 watts to 60 watts. SPEAKERS: One 12” woofer, one 5” mid-range and one super-tweeter. FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 30 cps to well beyond the range of audibility. IMPEDANCE: 8 ohms. SIZE: 13½” x 24” x 11¾” deep.

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Specifications: Power output: 100 watts stereo program peak power; 50 watts rms continuous stereo or mono • Rumble filter: 12 db per octave below 30 cps • Distortion: Less than 1% THD at 25 watts 1000 cps each channel; Less than 1% THD at 20 watts 30-15,000 cps each channel • Response: 20,20,000 cps at 25 watts, ±0.5 db; 10,30,000 cps at 1 watt, ±0.5 db • Noise level: Radio, tape, multiplex (250 mv signal): 82 db below 20 w output; Magnetic phono (5 mv signal) 60 db below 20 w output; Tape head (2.5 mv) 58 db below 20 w output • Dimensions: 5½” H x 15” W x 11½” D • Weight: 35 lbs. approximately • Price: $199.50

353A MONO AMPLIFIER-PREAMPLIFIER

A precision 20-watt monophonic amplifier-preamp unequalled in its price class for flexibility, response, and ease of operation.

Specifications: Power output: 20 watts • Range: 20-22,000 cps • Tone controls: Bass 17 db boost, 15 db rolloff, Treble 15 db boost, 20 db rolloff • Volume controls: 4 separate and independent volume controls with lighted indicators • Filters: 3 position bass and treble attenuators • System gain: 138 db maximum • Load impedance: 4, 8, 16 ohms • Dimensions: 4¼” H x 13¼” W x 7½” D • Weight: 18 lbs. approximately • Price: $111.00

445A STEREO PREAMPLIFIER

This advanced stereo control system delivers the high degree of performance and flexibility vital to true stereo reproduction. Lighted, error-free push buttons control all input selection and on-off switching. Transistorized preamp stages reduce hum and noise level. Ganged level control maintains perfect stereo balance even during volume changes.

Specifications: Channels: Two • Input: Total of 12-3 high level pair, 3 low level pair (channels may be used for single or stereo relayance pick-up, tape head, or flat for microphones) • Outputs: Total of 4—1 main output each channel, 1 recorder output each channel, independent of volume setting • Range: 20-22,000 cps • Dimensions: 4½” H x 12½” W x 6¾” D • Weight: 6½ lbs. • Price: $189.00

345A STEREO POWER AMPLIFIER

This rugged power amplifier packs two 100 watt (peak) channels in one package. 60 watts rms continuous, stereo or mono. Independent level control for each channel. Five-control switching permits use in nine different combinations for stereo or mono. Speaker impedance is set automatically for each channel. Unity damping factor.

Specifications: 200 watts stereo program peak power; 100 watts each channel; 60 watts rms continuous stereo or mono • Response: ±1 db 10-100,000 cps • Gain: 66 db • Noise level: -40 dbm, 85 db below full output • Distortion: Less than ½% THD 40-15,000 cps at 40 watts • Dimensions: 6½” H x 16½” W x 12½” D • Weight: 38 lbs. • Price: $270.00

346A MONO AMPLIFIER

Independent volume and tone controls plus full frequency response make this dual-channel amplifier an outstanding choice for a monophonic system, or as an additional amplifier to bring your present system up to full stereo. Ideally suited for paging and public address systems.

Specifications: Power output: 20 watts at less than 2% THD • Range: ±2 db, 20-22,000 cps • Controls: Pushbutton switches select phono, mic, or line output; Individual volume controls for each channel, separate bass-treble controls • Dimensions: 4½” H x 13¼” W x 7¼” D • Price: $99.00

Attractive hardboard cabinets (112542) and low-silhouette metal cabinets (113094) available for 346A, 355A, 445A.

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ALTEC

12-88

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
press comment on the

The American RECORD GUIDE  (Larry Zide)

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high fidelity  (TITH report)

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HI-FI SYSTEMS

"In terms of bass response, these two speakers [the acoustic suspension AR-1 and AR-2] represent a phenomenal improvement in the state of the art.

"The complete AR-3 speaker system, in addition to containing a superb acoustic suspension woofer, which has enjoyed wide acceptance by professionals as well as audiophiles, constitutes, in our opinion, a mid and high frequency system which is in every way complementary to the bass quality. The new AR-3 rivals in overall quality the very best woofers and combinations."

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4, 8 AND 16 OHM
IMPEDEANCES

TWIN VOICE COILS

DUAL CONES

NEW! LORENZ S-1288

Value-packed basic 12" loudspeaker with dual cones — for stereo or brilliant monaural. Twin voice coils provide 4, 8 and 16 ohm impedances on one speaker! Frequency response: 18 to 15,000 cps. Magnet assembly weight: 61.5 oz. Power rating: 30 watts peak.

NEW! LOMEGA I

Completely finished on four sides for use horizontally or vertically. Inside, a full spectrum Lorenz 12" speaker, two tweeters and high pass crossover. • 18-18,000 cps. • 16 ohms. • 40 watts peak. • 27" x 14½" x 11½". • 46 lbs. • Unfinished Birch. $109.50

NEW! KAL ADETTE

Compact for bookshelf or table — or attach brass legs for console. Houses superb Lorenz 8" woofer, tweeter and crossover. • 25-17,000 cps. • 8 ohms. • 18 watts peak. • 11" x 2¾" x 10". • 16 lbs. • Brown or Blond Leatherette. $49.50

NEW! ADETTE III

Big performance in small space! Use singly or pair for stereo. Completely finished on four sides for use horizontally or vertically. Features Lorenz 8" woofer with matching tweeter and crossover. • 30-17,500 cps. • 8 ohms. • 18 watts peak. • 11" x 2¾" x 10". • 20 lbs. • Unfinished Birch. $57.50

NEW! ADETTE SR.

Intimate baffle construction for "big sound" performance. Completely finished with 4" legs. Houses famous Lorenz 8" woofer and tweeter with crossover. • 30-17,500 cps. • 8 ohms. • 20 watts peak. • 2¾" x 10½". • 37 lbs. • Satin Mahogany. $69.50

Never before, so many quality features in loudspeakers — yet priced for the modest budget! • Dual cones for breathtaking wide range performance! • Twin voice coils in 12" loudspeakers with flexible impedances of 4, 8 or 16 ohms, enabling you to select the impedance you require • Non-resonant cast aluminum girder constructed frames! • Fully tropicalized for finest operation in any climate • For stereo or monaural — singly or in matched pairs.

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HP-1 High Pass Crossover

Crosses over at 2,000 cps at rate of 3 db per octave — feeds highs to tweeters, lows to woofer. Extends speaker system range to limit of audibility. For use with 2 or 3 way systems. $4.50

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High Fidelity Magazine
LONDON—According to the reckoning of EMI’s Walter Legge, his company’s recently completed recordings of Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni, with mainly Italian casts, absorbed 344 rehearsal hours, including 160 hours at the piano for soloists and ensembles, 96 recording hours with orchestra (the Philharmonia), and 62 recording hours for recitatives with harpsichord. Mr. Legge, who planned the recordings, said Angel would issue them sometime in 1960. At EMI’s Abbey Road studios here, I sat in on one of the 100 hours of piano rehearsal. Joan Sutherland (Covent Garden’s noted Lucia, who a fortnight earlier had sung Donna Anna at the Vienna State Opera) was perched on a contrabass player’s stool with a music stand in front of her, in the throes of the “Fuggi, crudel!” duet from the first act of Don Giovanni. She was partnered by a young Ottavio, Luigi Alva, who while serving with the Peruvian Navy won a prize for the best male voice in South America. Giuseppe Taddei (Leporello and Figaro) and Eberhard Wächter from Vienna (Giovanni and Almaviva) awaited their turns on the far side of the piano, with their elbows on its lid. On all entries and at all climaxes, Miss Sutherland looked pronouncedly away from the music. Somebody asked why. “Because,” explained Miss Sutherland, “I cannot sing the notes when I’m looking at them.”

Heinrich Schmidt, principal coach of the Vienna State Opera, was at the piano. Herr Schmidt was engaged for both recordings to school the singers—especially the twelve Latin principals out of a total of eighteen—in Mozartean style. (To complete the balance, Antonio Tonini, principal coach from La Scala, Milan, was brought in to watch the Italian diction, especially that of the German-Austrian group, who—except for a fluent minority—tend, for example, to turn their maledetti into maledetos.) At the keyboard Herr Schmidt was joined by Mr. Legge, a recording and concert impresario who has some strong convictions of his own about phrasing, expression, and technicalities of the singer’s trade, breathing included. There were constant stoppages, rectifications, repolishings; Schmidt and Legge, between them, gave Mozart’s vocal line the minutest going-over I ever heard.

Now for the casts. Apart from singers already named, Don Giovanni has Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Mrs. Walter Legge) as Elvira (her greatest role, as some of us think), Graziella Scintti (Zerlina), Piero Cappuccilli (Masetto) and Gottlieb Frick (Commendatore); Figaro has Schwarzkopf (Countess), Anna Moffo (Susanna), Fiorezza Cossotto (Cherubini), Ivo Vincenzo Bartolo, Cappuccilli (Antonio), Renato Ercolani (doubling Don Curzio and Don Basilio), Dora Gatta (Marcellina), and Elisabetta Fusco (Barbarina).

The trend here is away from the Germanic approach to the Da Ponte librettos, so brilliantly pursued in Vienna immediately after the war, and back towards the Italianate costs and ambiance of Mozart’s time. In keeping with this tendency, the Italian conductor Carlo Maria Giulini was engaged for Figaro. He came new to the work (though not to many of the singers— or to the Philharmonia Orchestra) and studied it for a year before going into rehearsal. Giulini also took over Don Giovanni, when illness forced the withdrawal of Otto Klemperer from the recording sessions.

PARIS—The word enfin, pronounced with fervent accent on the first syllable, has been heard rather often at Pathé Marconi this fall. At last, if there are no perfectionist afterthoughts, the long adventure of recording in stereo Sir Thomas Beecham’s Carmen, with Victoria de los Angeles singing the title role, has been completed. As this is being written, Sir Thomas is listening to his achievement and preparing to approve the release, and so the discs (Capitol label in America) should soon be available. Nicolai Gedda is Don José. Janine Micheau and Ernest Blanc, of the Paris Opéra, are Micaëla and Escamillo. The orchestra and choruses are those of the French National Radio network.

Few recording enterprises in recent years have required so much hard work in the face of so many misgivings and misfortunes. The epic began more than a year ago in the Salle Wagram in Paris. There soon developed what can best be described as clashes of temperament, and finally the whole business sputtered and ground to a suspension. Pathé Marconi made several attempts to get the principals together again in Paris; but whenever all the temperaments seemed in tune, one of their owners had to leave for South America or some place equally far from the Salle Wagram. Prospects were bright early this year, and then the French musicians’ union called a strike that lasted for two exasperating months. When it was over Mr. Gedda and Mme. De los Angeles had engagements elsewhere. The cast could not be reassembled until the first week in September. Then, helped by the charm and tact of the new Lady Beecham, everybody pitched in and finished the job with surprising speed and immense enthusiasm. The records should be interesting not only as music, but also as a sort of documentary of perseverance, a theological term which Webster defines as “continuance in a state of grace until it is succeeded by a state of glory.”

Victoria de los Angeles is reported to be so pleased with her performance as Carmen that she is thinking of undertaking the role in the opera house.

Diminuendo. The talk of a new deal at the Paris Opéra and Opéra-Comique has subsided a bit, as was perhaps to be expected, now that the season is well under way and the hopes of last spring are encountering the usual wintry realities. The administration has had trouble nailing down some of its arrangements with foreigners—with Callas and the Bayreuth com-

Continued on next page
pany, for example. The thousandth performance of Gontard's *Romeo and Juliet*, in a new production at the Opéra-Comique, was scarcely the triumph the occasion called for, although Janine Micheau's Juliet was justly admired. On the credit side should be placed a new *Carmen* (Bizet is having a good year) with Jane Rhodes and Gloria Lane alternating as the heroine, and Roberto Benzi, suddenly twenty-one years old, conducting. Mme. De Los Angeles may, only may, appear at the Opéra at the end of winter, but if she does it will not be in *Carmen*. *La Traviata* is probable. In the meantime, lacking great voices and star personalities, the Paris public is consoling itself as in other years—with old acquaintances in such spectacular sets as those for Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*, now well past its three-hundredth performance. Even on the big nights there is a close-family atmosphere which tends to disarm criticism. Opera in the eighteenth century at some provincial court must have been rather like this.

Comparison. Speaking of the eighteenth century, at one point in that period Paris had 194 composers. The figure comes from Professor Barry S. Brook of Queens College, N. Y., who has just completed his doctor's thesis at the Sorbonne. If the total had kept pace with population growth the city would have more than 1,200 today. Perhaps all that is wrong with modern music is that not enough people are writing it to give us a percentage break.

ROY McMULLEN

**HAMBURG—Deutsche Grammophon continues to accelerate its classical recording program. Three important Beethoven projects are now under way. The Amadeus Quartet is to record the sixteen string quartets, Pierre Fournier and Friedrich Gulda the five cello-piano sonatas, and Wolfgang Schneiderhan and Carl Seeman the ten violin-piano sonatas. In addition, DG has brought off a real coup by recording in stereo the celebrated Soviet pianist Sviatoslav Richter in a large repertoire, including concertos by Mozart, Schumann, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev. The sessions were held in Poland with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Warsaw under the direction of Stanislaw Wislocki.**

**ELECTROLA—The Bavarian Radio Orchestra have been brought off a stereo the Brahms's *First Symphony*. The sessions were held in Munich with the Czechoslovak Radio Orchestra, where the Deutsche Grammophon group would make possible the recordings.**

**MILAN—Ricordi, the noted music publishing firm, has completed its La Scala recording of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. From what this writer heard at the sessions, it should prove to be a first-class effort. Renata Scotto handled Lucia's pyrotechnics very well, and her associates—notably Giuseppe di Stefano and Ettore Bastianini—were in top vocal form. Prior to taping Lucia, Ricordi and its American recording team (Mercury's Robert Fine, Wilma Cozart, and Harold Lawrence) turned their attention to some off-the-beaten-path opera repertoire. The sessions took place in Brescia and had the collaboration of Renato Pasano and the Virtuosi di Roma.**

**ROSSINI—Two recordings of Rossini's Nocturne, one by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the other by the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, have been made. The orchestra sessions were held in London with conductor Sir Colin Davis, who recently recorded the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.
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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 50

The two highlights of the festival were undoubtedly the visit to the newly renovated Castle of Esterháza (see High Fidelity, August 1959) and the revival of Haydn’s opera L’infedeltá delusa at the Budapest State Opera.

Having seen Esterháza half a year ago, your correspondent doubted that the Hungarian authorities would ever get it ready for the festival: the interior had been a shambles; huge wooden beams had supported the roof, and enormous scaffolding had covered the walls; piles of building material and rubbish were scattered over the floors, and gaping holes in the ceiling had allowed buckets of cement to be transported from the ground floor upwards. When we drove out for the festival (as a guest of the American chargé d’affaires) on a mellow autumn afternoon, the stately and beautiful castle looked as if there had never been a cruel war in which German and Russian soldiers had reduced the place to a shabby and dirty ruin. The façade shone in the gentle afternoon sun; the peasants had donned their best Trachten, and the courtyard was brilliant with the reds, blues, and greens of costumes which had hardly changed since Haydn’s time. Furniture from local museums had been placed in the stately reception rooms, and Gobelin tapestries hung on the walls. The sleepy town (now called Fertőd) somehow reminded us—quite incongruously—of Lenox: a quiet, Massachusetts town which suddenly comes alive in the summer. Outside Esterháza Castle they had erected, as at Tanglewood, a huge car park in the fields, with policemen directing traffic; the whole corps diplomatique had been invited, and when our car, the American flag waving on the right mudguard, turned past the main gate, we were confronted by television cameras and radio announcers. From the balcony of the castle, trumpets screamed fanfares. It was all rather like a fairy tale; but then, Esterháza has always been something of a fairy tale, too good to be true. Later, we heard The Seasons, performed in the castle courtyard; the sun gradually set, and the shadows lengthened along the yellow and green and gold of the façade; Professor Jens Peter Larsen, the great Danish Haydn expert, leaned over to me: “This is the way it must have been,” he said. “This is the secret of those thirty years”—referring to the three decades in which Haydn served...
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NOTES FROM ABROAD
Continued from page 52

as Esterházy Kapellmeister before going to London. And indeed that afternoon at Esterháza told us more of Haydn's life than you will find in any biography.

L'infedeltà delusa was written at the height of Haydn's creative power, in 1773, following the Stabat Mater, the powerful symphonies in minor keys (Trauer, Farewell, La Passione, No. 52 in C minor), and the string quartets of Op. 20 which so changed the face of classical chamber music. Haydn called his new opera "Burletta," and the work has much of the razor-sharp sarcasm of late Mozartean drama. The Hungarians chose it partly because the whole autograph (except that of the Overture) is in the National Library at Budapest, and partly because the Director of the National Library's Music Division, Dr. Jenő Veesey (who edited the score for the present performance) thinks it is Haydn's greatest opera.

L'infedeltà is in two acts and lasts about two hours. In the Budapest stage version, they cut half an hour so as to enable a wretched ballet to be played after intermission. The cuts were in part pretty barbarous, including a chunk out of the magnificent first-act finale, which is as tight a musical-cum-dramatic structure as Haydn ever wrote. The conductor, Ervin Lukacs, gave a sensitive stylistic account of the work, however; the orchestra played very well (though here and there a touch on the heavy side); and the stage sets and costumes were delightful. The overall mise en scène was, we thought, a trifle old-fashioned, rather like the nineteenth century's conception of what Haydn and Mozart were supposed to have been.

It is hard to predict whether a revival such as the Budapest staging of L'infedeltà delusa will achieve Europe-wide attention, that is, whether the opera is now on its way to a permanent place on the stage. But after the sensational success of Haydn's Il mondo della luna at the Holland, Aix, and Salzburg Festivals this year, it looks as if L'infedeltà—which is a far greater work musically, though it lacks the more obvious Sputnik attractions of Il mondo—is on its way to international recognition. It may interest readers to know that the score is about to be published by Universal Edition, Vienna.

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MODEL TR-1A: Monophonic two-track record/playback with fast forward and rewind functions. Includes one TE-1 Tape Electronics kit. Shpg. Wt. 22 lbs.

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TR-1A SPECIFICATIONS—Frequency response: 7.5 IPS ±3 db 50 to 12,000 cps; 3.75 IPS ±3 db 50 to 1,000 cps. Signal-to-noise ratio: better than 45 db below full output at 1.75 vts/channel. Harmonic distortion: less than 5% at full output. Bias erase frequency: 60 kc (push-pull oscillator).

MODEL TR-1AH: Two-track monophonic and stereo record/playback with fast forward and rewind functions. Two TE-1 Tape Electronics kits. Shpg. Wt. 36 lbs.

$150.00 DN., $130.00 MO. $149.95

TR-1AH SPECIFICATIONS—Frequency response: 7.5 IPS ±3 db 50 to 12,000 cps; 3.75 IPS ±3 db 50 to 10,000 cps. Signal-to-noise ratio: better than 45 db below full output at 1 volt/channel. Harmonic distortion: less than 2% at full output. Bias erase frequency: 60 kc (push-pull oscillator).

MODEL TR-1AQ: Four-track monophonic and stereo record/playback with fast forward and rewind functions. Two TE-1 Tape Electronics kits. Shpg. Wt. 36 lbs.

$150.00 DN., $130.00 MO. $149.95

TR-1AQ SPECIFICATIONS—Frequency response: 1 IPS ±3 db 50 to 12,000 cps; 3.75 IPS ±3 db 50 to 10,000 cps. Signal-to-noise ratio: better than 45 db below full output at 1 volt/channel. Harmonic distortion: less than 2% at full output. Bias erase 60 kc (push-pull oscillator).

HEATH COMPANY / Benton Harbor, Michigan

December 1959

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New "Acoustic Suspension" Speaker System

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The size of the AS-2 speaker cabinet is dictated by acoustical considerations and represents an advance, rather than a compromise, in quality. The 10" Acoustic Suspension woofer delivers clean, clear bass response over an extended range with markedly low harmonic distortion. Outstanding high frequency distribution is a result of the specially designed "cross-fired" two speaker tweeter assembly.

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A Nay for NARAS

On November 29 the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences meted out thirty-four awards to the supposedly most meritorious records of 1959. NBC televised the proceedings on a coast-to-coast hookup, and a constellation of high-powered show people was on hand to attract a large audience. It was an event calculated to receive—in the cant of Madison Avenue—"maximum exposure." The Academy (best known in the trade as NARAS) quite obviously hopes to turn its record awards into a national institution akin in glamour and prestige to the movie industry's Oscar Awards.

The above is couched in the past tense because you will be reading this issue of High Fidelity in December, after NARAS' so-called Grammy Awards have been made. Actually their presentation was a month away when we went to press. We did not know at deadline time which specific records were to be honored. But we did know the slate from which the award-winning records were to be chosen. And we did know that this slate was by no means wholly representative of the record industry's best achievements in 1959.

Consider the category of "Best Classical Performance—Orchestra." The final choice for the 1959 Grammy Award was selected from these five, and only these five, recordings: Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony conducted by Monteux, Debussey's orchestral Images conducted by Munch, a collection of Rossini overtures conducted by Reiner, a pairing of the Capriccio Italian and Capriccio Espagnol conducted by Kondrashin, and a pairing of the 1812 Overture and Bolero conducted by Morton Gould. All five recordings were issued by RCA Victor. Bruno Walter's and Otto Klemperer's new stereo versions of the Beethoven symphonies, Sir Thomas Beecham's Franck Symphony and Delsin collection, Ernest Ansermet's Swan Lake, Leonard Bernstein's Italian Symphony were not even in the running.

Or consider the category of "Best Classical Performance—Opera Cast or Choral." The winner was to be chosen from these five: Mozart's Figaro conducted by Leinsdorf, Rossini's Barber of Seville also conducted by Leinsdorf, excerpts from Saint-Saëns's Samson et Dalila conducted by Fausto Cleva, Verdi's La Forza del destino conducted by Fernando Previtali, and a collection of "Beloved Choruses" performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. All but the last are RCA Victor recordings.

London's complete recording of Das Rheingold, Angel's of Richard Strauss's Capriccio, Capitol's of A Life for the Czar did not make the finals—neither, to focus on the "Choral" part of the category, did the Archive or Vanguard recordings of Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

Something is clearly amiss. We do not quarrel with the list of candidates as a whole. We do second most emphatically the contention of Goddard Lieberson, the president of Columbia Records, that these 1959 candidates "in no way reflect either the status, the quality, or the scope of the record industry."

This is the second time that NARAS has fumbled the ball. Its first awards, announced earlier this year, were—we felt—deplorable. The Academy saw fit to award the "Orchestral" prize to Felix Slatkin's recording of Gaîté Parisienne, the "Operatic or Choral" prize to a Roger Wagner Chorale miscellany entitled "Virtuoso." We held our tongue then, hoping for better things to come. Alas, they have not materialized, and the time has come to speak out. The public should not be gulled by poorly adjudicated record awards no matter how impressively they are publicized.

The recordings chosen for Grammy Awards are nominated and voted upon by members of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. Membership in this organization is open to anybody responsible in some capacity for the artistic or technical production of records. Artist-and-repertoire men, sound engineers, and musicians qualify as members. Merchandising and promotional personnel in record companies, dealers, disc jockeys, and critics do not qualify. NARAS is for the creative people in record making.

The question must immediately be raised whether the creators of records are necessarily the best judges of records. We doubt that they are. For one thing, creators are so busy creating that they do not have time really to keep up with the work of their confreres. For another, creators by their very nature are apt to take a highly partisan view of their art. As they survey a year's output of records, the image they receive may very possibly be partial and distorted. Paradoxically, some of the people who are specifically excluded from the Academy are in a far better position than those enfranchised by NARAS to evaluate the immense crop of records issued over the course of a given year. It is the job of critics and disc jockeys and dealers to keep fully and objectively abreast of every important new record. These people are certainly not infallible. But at least they don't start out with two strikes against them.

This year's sadly unbalanced nominations for Grammy Awards show beyond doubt the limitations of the present NARAS balloting procedures. Agreement on a workable alternative may not be easy to reach. But some new method of choosing the year's best records must certainly be devised. We urge that the board of NARAS take heroic measures towards overhauling its awards. Nothing is more difficult to restore than a tarnished reputation.

R. G.

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT
Otto Klemperer:

A Tall Man Against Adversity
Tyrants, fire, and ill-health have failed to fell the towering
Otto Klemperer or disturb the growth of his majestic style

Every generation of listeners has to come to terms with that great line of Viennese classics, stretching from Haydn to Brahms, which still provides the basis of our concert programs. For each generation the journey of discovery is different; each discovers qualities that preceding ones had missed and refuses to accept what its predecessor had taken for granted.

In this constant rediscovery of what remains our staple musical fare, great conductors play an essential part, for in their performances they advance a view of Mozart or of Beethoven that, if time and circumstances are propitious, comes to be accepted as authoritative—until there arises another great conductor whose view is different. Thus the established classics are always with us, but the manner in which we regard them varies, focusing now on certain characteristics, now on others, generally in accordance with the interpretations of the leading conductors of the day. Sometimes a generation produces two conductors of genius, whose interpretations are directly conflicting and who, like Furtwängler and Toscanini in the matter of Beethoven, divide the world between them. Today, in the minds of many, the new shaper of the classical repertoire is Otto Klemperer.

Does the hour fashion the man, or does the man await the hour? Who can tell? But only ten years ago this man on whom the mantle of Toscanini and Furtwängler fell was a half-forgotten semi-invalid. When able to work, he conducted—now in Australia, now in Hungary, now in Canada. Occasionally people who had lived in Berlin in the last years of the Weimar Republic would mention his name with a respect bordering on reverence, but after all everyone has his own private list of neglected artists. About 1948 this figure from the past turned up in London to conduct two or three concerts in a popular series organized by some impresario in a sports arena a good distance from the center of the city. That Klemperer was available for work of this nature suggests that his services were in small demand from the great orchestras of either the New or Old Worlds. Yet today he fills the largest European concert halls; and although there are, naturally enough, sharp differences about the merits of his interpretations of the classics in general and of Beethoven in particular, few will deny the extraordinary power and authority they carry. How has this astonishing reversal of fortune come about?

Otto Klemperer was born in Breslau in 1885 of Jewish parents. Four years later the family moved to Hamburg, and it was here that their son grew up. Klemperer’s father was not a noticeably keen businessman and the family were by no means well off. But both parents were musical, and Klemperer’s mother, who seems to have been a particularly strong-minded and forceful woman, accompanied her husband in Lieder and gave her son his first piano lessons. Gustav Mahler was still the young Generalmusikdirektor in Hamburg when the Klemperers arrived, but it was not until later that the great conductor was to cross their son’s path so fathfully.

Klemperer left the Gymnasium at sixteen and went to study first at the famous Hoch conservatory in Frankfurt and then in Berlin, where he worked at composition under Hans Pfitzner. Klemperer still composes a little, although I can find no record of any of his works having been performed. (Some years ago, however, the manager of the London branch of a famous publishing house was telephoned by an agitated secretary, who said that a Dr. Klemperer had called to inquire how his works were going. His initial assumption that this was a practical joke was abruptly ended by the unmistakable appearance of Dr. Klemperer himself.) But it soon became clear in Berlin that Klemperer’s future lay in conducting rather than in composition, and in 1905 he made his debut in a production by Max Reinhardt of Offenbach’s Orpheus in the Underworld. In the same year he conducted the off-stage choir in a performance of Mahler’s huge Resurrection Symphony. The composer was present and nodded his approval.

This brief meeting with Mahler was to prove auspicious. Klemperer was overwhelmed by the symphony and set about making a piano reduction of the vast score. (It is still one of the works of Mahler that lies closest to his heart, and it is also one of the few that he has recorded.) This piano reduction Klemperer took for

by Peter Heyworth
Mahler's inspection to Vienna, where the composer was at the time nearing the end of his historic ten-year rule of the Hofoper. They must have made a curious couple, for, like many composers, Mahler was a tiny man, and Klemperer's huge frame towered over him. But something must have struck the older man about the gangling youth before him (it is hard to think of Klemperer ever showing the conventional social graces); he took out his pen and wrote on a small correspondence card headed "K.u.K. Hofoper, Wien" a recommendation to Angelo Neumann, the famous intendant of the German Opera in Prague, expressing his belief that Herr Klemperer was "predestined to the career of a conductor." Klemperer's son still carries that card, and almost the only time I have seen Klemperer reveal pride was when he asked his son to show it to me.

For over half a century Klemperer has repaid that debt to Mahler by an unflagging advocacy of his music. The Mahler he presents is far removed from the sweet lyricism and rather self-conscious Viennese charm of Bruno Walter's approach. Perhaps typical of Klemperer's reading was his memorable performance of Das Lied von der Erde at the Edinburgh Festival in 1957—memorable because, if it missed the nostalgic tenderness that is surely a part of Mahler, it brought out all the anger and bitterness that is a no less essential element of Mahler. The conductor, Klemperer says quite simply that he was the greatest he has ever heard (even to this day Klemperer is frequently in the audience at other men's concerts). "Why do you say that?" I asked. There was a pause. Then Klemperer replied: "Because his tempos were always right."

Armed with Mahler's recommendation, Klemperer was able to get a job at the Prague Opera. From there he graduated to Hamburg, and thence to Cologne, where he met and later married a dramatic soprano named Johanna Geisler. (She died in Zurich about three years ago.) It was also in Cologne that Klemperer was converted to Roman Catholicism. It would be quite wrong to suppose that this was a mere matter of convenience. Klemperer's intellectual interests, unlike those of many musicians, are broad. Throughout his life he has sustained a deep interest in philosophy (on a recent visit to London he was immersed in Spinoza). In Cologne he moved a good deal in the circle of the philosopher Max Schlegel, and as this group advanced towards the Church, Klemperer traveled with them. That his faith is an essential part of his life was made startlingly clear during a lunchtime conversation some four years ago. I had made some observations about the tragedy of Erich Kleiber's sudden death. Klemperer looked at me across the table in rather an astonished manner and said very simply: "But God had called him." Klemperer's religious and philosophical preoccupations are a less publicized part of a character better known for its inexhaustible flow of highly bombastic.

His unique opportunity came in 1927 when he was appointed director of the Kroll Opera in Berlin. The city was already well provided with opera. In addition to the State Opera on Unter den Linden, under Kleiber's aegis, Berlin had in the western district of Charlottenburg its own municipal opera, with Bruno Walter as musical director. But under the inspiration of Leo Kerstenberg, the enterprising official responsible for music in the Prussian Ministry of Education and the Arts, it was decided to establish yet another opera house. The new organization was to devote itself not to maintaining a general repertory—a task already admirably fulfilled elsewhere—but to presenting experimental productions and new works. Kerstenberg found exactly the man he needed in Klemperer. At forty-two he was an experienced opera conductor, a fanatical perfectionist, with the wide intelligence and culture necessary if an opera director is to be something more than his own first conductor, and with a mind open to the new artistic forces that had emerged in the Twenties and found a fertile field in Berlin.

The four years during which Klemperer was at the head of the Kroll Opera sound today like a continuous festival. Certainly no opera house since then, even postwar Hamburg under Günther Rennert, has equaled its achievements. Stravinsky's great Oedipus Rex was there given its first stage performance, and so were, among others that are today part of musical history, such works as Schoenberg's Erwartung, Hindemith's Cardillac, and Janáček’s From a Prison Camp. But the significance of the
Kroll lay not only in what was done but in how it was done. Productions were strongly influenced by Stanislavsky's methods. Because the repertory was made up of a very small number of operas that were often repeated, rehearsals were almost without limit and continued until everyone was satisfied or until the whole production was abandoned as inadequate. In particular, scenic design marked an abrupt reaction from traditional naturalism: Madama Butterfly was confided to an artist from the Bauhaus (I'm not sure whether I would have liked that) and Ewald Dulberg designed abstract sets for Don Giovanni. The only opera house that today runs on anything like comparable lines is the East Berlin Komische Oper. But if in Feuereinheit the Komische Oper has a producer of extraordinary genius, its musical standards are far from remarkable and the political regime that supports it ensures that sharp limits are put on any "formalist" experimentation.

During the Weimar Republic, Berlin was a center of extraordinary artistic energy and experiment, and the Kroll Opera was a focal point of much that was vital and controversial in the city's cultural life. But there is always something about what is exceptional that attracts the hatred of the mediocre; and there was no lack of the exceptional at the Kroll Opera or of hatred in the Berlin of the early Thirties. Although Klemperer is a man quite without political interests, the mere fact that the Kroll had been established by the socialist government of Prussia, enjoyed the financial support of the trade unions, and was a center of experiment, was enough to make it a target for nationalist and Nazi abuse. Klemperer's evident joy in experiment and his revulsion from romantic espressivo seemed a deliberate slap in the face of the average German burgher's conception of "healthy" art in general and of "heilige deutsche Kunst" in particular. This, together with the fact that the director was a Jew, who had been seen sporting a blouse in the Russian style, was enough to prove that the Kroll was a nerve center of Kultur-Bolschewismus. By 1931 the Prussian government was probably quite glad of the excuse of growing financial crisis to shut a theatre that was causing so much trouble. Three years later the building was to shelter what remained of the German Parliament after the burning of the Reichstag. Today, like so much else in Berlin, it stands in ruins.

Years of Exile

For Klemperer, his four years as director of the Kroll are those that he looks back on with the greatest satisfaction. It is indeed sad that among all the organizations which now compete for his services scarcely an opera house is to be found. Before his recent illness this fall the Metropolitan had expected to welcome him as conductor of the Tristan revival there. It is still hoped that a long-planned Fidelio at Covent Garden will eventuallyize next spring, Klemperer brought an action against the Prussian government for closing the Kroll. Of course he lost it, but he seems to have entertained himself in court by shouting at one moment, "I consider the title of Generalmusikdirektor defamatory," and at another, "My case is like Dreyfus'. Only instead of being sent to Devil's Island I must go to Unter den Linden." As this action suggests, Klemperer enjoyed striking exaggerated attitudes, in scandalizing and shocking the public, rather as Beecham does.

In 1933 the Nazis came to power and Klemperer was dismissed from the Staatsoper in Unter den Linden. On this great interpreter of the German classics a Berlin newspaper made the supremely ironical comment that "his whole outlook ran counter to free German thought and feeling." Klemperer emigrated to the United States and for six years was director of the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. He makes no bones about the fact that he was not happy in America. He is the first to pay tribute to the high technical achievements of the great American orchestras, but he was not much drawn to American life, and his years in Los Angeles do not seem to have been markedly successful. But the real reason for his failure to settle happily in America probably lies in the fact that at this time his health had begun to give him serious trouble. In 1939 he was struck down with the terrible affliction of a brain tumor, Klemperer had always been an eccentric, unconventional character and he still is; but it is very possible that the increasing eccentricity of these years was due to his illness. An operation was what the doctors like to call successful, but Klemperer emerged stricken in mind and body.

It was not until 1946 that he appeared again in public, in Budapest, as director of the opera. This, of course, produced the usual charges of Communist sympathies, whereas in fact Klemperer was merely anxious to find what he considered adequate conditions of work. In 1948 he left Budapest owing to Communist interference and from this time he wandered from one continent to another filling casual engagements. Photographs of this period tell a terrible story. His huge frame is emaciated, great black eyes stare feebly out of Continued on page 174
As the diesel train honked its way across the salt marshes towards the Peter Grimes country, where Benjamin Britten and his friend Peter Pears make their home, I thought back over the composer's successes, frustrations, and personal mellowing since the day in April 1942 when he and Pears landed in England after their three "wander years" in the United States.

I remembered, among other things, their joint recitals in blacked-out provincial towns, with occasional raiders or flying bombs overhead. Britten, at the piano, had a beaky nose and crinkled hair. His keyboard touch was precise and lithe. Pears sang Purcell, Bach, Schubert, and new Britten song cycles—the Michelangelo sonnet settings and, rather later, the Holy Sonnets of John Donne—from beneath a prophet's pregnant forehead and rapt regard, his tenor a little chalky for some tastes. His phrasing and musicianship were agreed to be nonpareil.

Pacifist and peace pledger of prewar standing, Britten was granted, a few months after his return from the U. S., unconditional exemption from military service—a very rare concession. The exemption was made on the ground that in the cultural field (including musical broadcasts to America) he was already devoting his energies fully to the national advantage. Politically he was Leftist, with a lingering ambiance from choral
concerts and street demonstrations during the late Thirties on behalf of Republican Spain and the International Brigades. But Britten wore his Leftism with a difference. He was never taken in by its usual concomitant, “scientific humanism,” and scoffed mildly at “intuitive manipulation of memory” as accounting for aesthetic inspiration. He spoke of God with the unself-consciousness of people who believe as naturally as they breathe. At that time he didn’t know which attracted him the more, Quakerism or Roman Catholicism. Although “not much of a churchgoer,” he has since settled down as a Church of England man.

Another thing I remembered was the Peter Grimes first night, June 7, 1945, at Sadler’s Wells Opera, London. Packed house, shining eyes, jubilant smiles. Britten took clamorous curtain calls with a diffident smile. Next morning he read in a respected newspaper that melody was not the chiefest of his remarkable gifts. He screwed the paper into a ball and cast it furiously from him. But Peter Grimes was emphatically and widely adored.

The diesel train gave a final honk and fetched up in a small terminal station. The platform signs said Aldeburgh. For Aldeburgh read The Borough (vide the Grimes libretto). Much of this East Anglian fishing village looks as if built according to the Grimes stage directions. Moot Hall, “Auntie’s” public house, Parson Adams’ flint-gray church—all are there in snug proximity. The only thing missing is the sadistic populace of Peter Grimes which—if it ever existed outside librettist Slater’s imagination—has been refined out of existence by social evolution and the benign influence of Aldeburgh’s summer arts festival, now in its twelfth flourishing year under Britten’s personal direction.

A more recent change is the Britten-Pears abode. From 1947 on they shared pink-walled Crag House on the Aldeburgh seafront. Eventually holiday makers took to swinging their legs on the sea wall opposite in the hope of seeing the famed tenants take tea on the lawn. Crag House having thus become untenable, Britten and Pears moved to The Red House, a rambling mansion in vintage red brick, which stands on heathland a mile or two outside the village.

My purpose in calling was to talk with Britten, specifically about the years between 1930, when he entered the Royal...
College of Music, and 1942. About these twelve years there have been fugitive references in print; little or nothing straight from Britten's mouth.

- But first a word about his chrysalis stage.

Son of a prosperous Lowestoft (East Anglia) dentist and a voraciously musical mother, he began putting notes on ruled paper (mainly because they looked pretty) at five and composed a Schubertian setting of Burns's *O that I'd never been married* at nine. By fourteen the schoolboy's output included ten piano sonatas, six string quartets, three piano suites, one oratorio, and a tone poem, *Chaos and Cosmos*. His boyhood musical studies were guided by Frank Bridge (1874–1941), an English composer of wide-ranging craftsmanship who stood rather apart from the nationalistic main trends of early twentieth-century English music. Over now to our interview:

Reid: Please throw your mind back to 1930. You settled in London as a raw sixteen-year-old. Just where?

Britten: I took a bed-sitter up under the roof in a boardinghouse at Prince's Square, Bayswater. I hired a small upright piano and took care not to play it after ten at night. I hadn't much money. As the youngest of four children I lived on a smallish allowance from my father. I was a "scholar," of course, but that didn't amount to much; it merely meant that my tuition fees were paid.

Reid: I understand you weren't happy at the Royal College of Music. That true?

Britten: Let's put it this way: I was rather a failure as a student. The trouble was, I had been studying with Bridge since I was a young boy. Bridge's approach was that of the highly professional international musician. The attitude of most of the R.C.M. students was amateurish and folksy. That made me feel highly intolerant.

Reid: How did you get on with your two teachers—John Ireland [composer, born 1879] and Arthur Benjamin [composer, born 1893]?

Britten: Well enough. But they didn't wield anything like as much influence on their students as the great Vaughan Williams. For my own part I was frankly suspicious of V. W. My struggle all the time was to develop a consciously controlled professional technique. It was a struggle away from everything Vaughan Williams seemed to stand for.
Reid: But, like everybody else I suppose, you were swept off your feet by his Symphony No. 4?

Britten: The Fourth Symphony impressed me greatly. But an odd story went round the College after a rehearsal of it. Vaughan Williams was reported to have said of his own work, “If that’s modern music, all I can say is I don’t like it.” This story, I must say, shocked me profoundly. In those days I was very violent in my opinions, very ready to have grievances.

Reid: In a biographical essay he wrote about you several years ago, the Earl of Harewood said you won a traveling scholarship at the College and wanted to go to Vienna and study with Alban Berg but were stopped by the College “authorities.” What’s the background to this?

Britten: I had won the Arthur Sullivan scholarship, worth £100 and enough to keep a youngster on the Continent for six months in those days. I decided to spend my £100 studying with Berg. I put in an application to the College administration, because the £100 had strings attached. I heard nothing more until one day my mother said she had been told by someone important at the College (she didn’t say who it was, and I have never found out) that Berg was an “unsuitable person.” The insinuation seemed to be that he was unsuitable on more than just musical grounds. I was furious. But there was nothing I could do. Berg died the following year.

Reid: You were glad to see the end of your student days?

Britten: I only started enjoying myself as a human being after I left college and got down to real work.

Reid: Your first “real work,” I seem to recall, was writing documentary music for the G.P.O. [General Post Office] Film Unit?

Britten: And helping rig lights. And hold cameras. And cut films. And fix sound effects. All for £3 a week. The scores I wrote were for seven players at the outside. Exciting work. Exciting people to work with. W. H. Auden looked after the words side. [With Auden, Britten worked on a celebrated documentary, Night Mail. It was Auden also who, between 1936 and 1942, wrote the texts for several other pieces by Britten.]

Reid: By this time you had left your Bayswater attic?

Britten: I was sharing a flat with my sister in West Hampstead. It was a mews flat over a garage, the coldest in London, built on top of nothing, with nothing on either side of it. On the strength of my choral variations,
I was going to America on holiday and had fixed incidental singing dates there. He and I had been thrown together professionally a year or so before. I liked him enormously, admired his way of thinking, found him stimulating. So we made the voyage together, stopping off first in Canada for a few weeks' holiday in the Laurentian Mountains above Quebec. We rented a cabin there, very cheap. It was a combined walking and working holiday. I worked on Les Illuminations [a setting for voice and strings of poems by Rimbaud] and the Violin Concerto. Then to Toronto, where I wrote incidental music and one commissioned piece (orchestral) for the CBC. Next for a spell with Aaron Copland—I had met him in England and admired him a lot—at his holiday place in upstate New York.

Reid: It had been your intention to become an American citizen?

Britten: True. But the war changed all that. The change wasn’t an intellectual one primarily. I don’t think I ever consciously reasoned it out. Certainly I underwent a lot of personal tension. Practically all of 1940 I was ill. Outwardly the ailment was infected tonsils. But the real cause was my mental perplexities. It was a frantically difficult position. Gradually I realized that, for better or worse, I was a European.

Reid: Did you get any work done during your strep-tococcal phase?

Britten: Paul Bunyan and the Sinfonia da Requiem date from that time.

Reid: Tell me about Bunyan. As it isn’t in print, I’m vague about it.

Britten: Paul Bunyan as you know is the mythical giant of American folklore. Some of my music was good—I wouldn’t say very good. When the piece was produced by the Opera Department of Columbia University, Auden and myself weren’t at all popular. In fact, Bunyan caused quite a scandal, mainly because of Auden’s words. Auden thought fit to utter many home truths about America. It was as if an American living in England had written a derogatory piece about John Bull.

Reid: And the Sinfonia da Requiem?

Britten: That’s an odd story. While I was in America, the Japanese government approached various composers (Strauss for Germany, Milhaud for France, me for Britain) and asked us to write pieces in commemoration of the 2,600th anniversary of the foundation of the Mikado’s dynasty. The invitation came to me through the British Council. I cabled back to London accepting, subject to my not being expected to write anything jingoistic. On this point I got the necessary assurance. The Sinfonia as I had originally conceived it was in memory of my mother, but in scale and type it was well suited to a festival. Through the British Council I cabled to the Japanese a description of the work, with title and subtitles [Lacrymosa, Dies Irae, and Requiem Aeternam], all of which struck me as compatible with a creed that involves ancestor worship. Continued on page 178
Stereo Discs—1959

CULLING THE YEAR'S HARVEST

by John F. Indcox

RECORDS have long vied with books as perhaps the most popular and acceptable of all Christmas gifts. This year, with the advent of stereo, they are more appropriate than ever. In the course of the past twelve months the stereo disc has triumphantly come into its own; and for anyone who has recently converted to stereo, records make the gift par excellence.

Most of the gremlins that plagued the early stereo releases have vanished. The gimmicks, the Ping-pong effects, the hurtling railroad trains have given way to an industry-wide concern for realistic, rather than exaggerated, sound. The stereo catalogue itself has expanded vastly. It now runs the gamut from Adam to Zeller, and encompasses too a tremendous variety of popular and jazz titles.

In fact, the stereo convert is now offered such an embarrassment of riches that some culling of the year's harvest is in order. In my dual role of record critic and record dealer, I have had occasion to hear a large proportion of the 1959 crop, though a few important full releases had unfortunately not appeared before this issue went to the printers. From all this bounty I have chosen the following as the recordings most likely to enrich you and your friends' listening pleasure this Christmas season and for years to come.

Symphonic

Stereo has been particularly successful with symphonic music. You might well start with Bruno Walter's noble, lyrical, and uniquely genial reading of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony (Columbia MS 6012). Not since his renowned version with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, recorded almost twenty-five years ago, has Dr. Walter reached such heights. If you admire the Symphonie fantasque of Hector Berlioz, that powerful work of the composer's youth, Audio Fidelity provides the most satisfactory recording of it now available. Alfred Wallenstein directs a dramatic, bold, and meticulously articulated performance, and the engineers have clothed it in truly spectacular sound (FCS 50003). For Angel, Otto Klemperer has recorded the four Brahms Symphonies. I consider his version of the Third the most beautiful I have ever heard: a superb commingling of warmth and power (S 35545).

Those who know Dvořák only by way of his Fifth Symphony (New World) should by all means investigate his marvelous Fourth Symphony as performed under the sure hand of George Szell (Epic BC 1015). Szell made a memorable recording of the work some years ago, but this new issue is even better. Two Haydn symphonies, Nos. 100 (Military) and 101 (Clock), performed by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Mogens Wølkle are available from Vanguard at the bargain price of $2.98. Bargain is not a misapplied term here, for this wonderful disc contains the best performance of each symphony now available on records, and in particularly grateful stereo sound (SRV 109-SD).

I doubt that many people normally associate Leonard Bernstein with the music of Felix Mendelssohn. He seems, however, to have a remarkable affinity for that composer, to judge from his delicate, tasteful reading of Mendelssohn's Fourth (Italian) Symphony (Columbia...
MS 6050). There is more elegance and less frenzy here than in most Bernstein recordings, and this performance easily bears comparison with Koussevitzky's superb interpretation of some twenty years ago. Camille Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony, with organ, may not be the greatest music ever written, but from the early days of high fidelity it has been a score to gladden the hearts of audiophiles. In stereo its sounds seem more stupendous than ever, as you may readily discover if you listen to a performance of the work by the Detroit Symphony under Paul Paray, admirably assisted by veteran organist Marcel Dupré (Mercury SR 90012).

Schubert's Symphony No. 9 in C has been very well played by Josef Krips and the London Symphony (London CS 6061). I do not find myself seriously disturbed, as do some others, by the slackening of impetus in the finale, and I consider this easily the best Schubert Ninth on records, particularly as London's stereo sound is unusually compelling.

It would be an odd list that did not include a symphony by Tchaikovsky. My preference here goes to a thrilling version of the Fifth Symphony, magnificently played by the Boston Symphony under Pierre Monteux (RCA Victor LSC 2239). The taut understatement, even coolness, with which Monteux projects the composer's intention is far more telling than the hysterical treatment some conductors prefer.

It may seem a little early to call Vaughan Williams' Ninth Symphony a masterpiece, though it strikes me as one of the few great scores of the past fifty years. This remarkable composition can be heard in a sincere and dedicated performance under the leadership of Sir Adrian Boult (Everest SDBR 3006). It is just possible that there is more excitement, more drama in the music than Boult manages to convey; but until another stereo recording of the work comes along, this will serve well the memory of a great composer, Everest, a comparatively new company, deserves a special word of praise for its astonishing stereo sound.

Other Orchestral Music

Of miscellaneous orchestral music there is no lack either. At the head of the list I would place a collection of the misty, perfumed orchestral poems of Delius, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham with mastery and magic. The English baronet, long-time Delius champion, is in superb form, and EMI-Capitol's excellent sound helps to make this record a stereo triumph.

If your mind is set on things closer to home, I confidently recommend for consideration Gershwin's orchestration of a suite from his opera Porgy and Bess. Compared to the composer's spare, exciting orchestration of his own music, other arrangements sound overblown and dreary. Westminster has put out a splendid performance of this Gershwin suite by the Utah Symphony Orchestra, led with keen enthusiasm by Maurice Abravanel (WST 14063).

Jumping from the twentieth to the eighteenth century (not such a great feat as it may sound), attention should be directed to a charming recording of Handel's Water Music by the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra under the late Eduard van Beinum (Epic BC 1016). The al fresco quality of Epic's stereo sound is singularly appropriate.

Lovers of ballet music will discover new delights in Delibes's beautiful score for Sylvia. So many musical "bon-bons" appear in this work that one can readily understand why Tchaikovsky—no tyro himself in the field of ballet—despaired of ever matching them. The complete score is available in a top notch performance by the London Symphony Orchestra led by Anatole Fistoulari, and the stereo sound is unusually persuasive, suggesting more the atmosphere of a ballet performance than of a recording studio (Mercury OS 2-106).

Concertos

A great many of the early stereo concerto recordings suffered from drift. Pianos especially were wont to wander from one speaker to the other. This annoying defect has been fairly well eliminated now, and the following are suggested as outstanding recordings in the concerto category.

The most beautiful of all Beethoven's piano concertos, the Fourth, is given a melting performance by Leon Fleisher and the Cleveland Symphony under Szell (Epic BC 1025). As an interpretation it ranks alongside the recording made by Fleisher's teacher, Arthur Schnabel, and the Philharmonia Orchestra just after the war. Here we have the advantage of Epic's beautifully balanced stereo sound. There is magic in this disc.

Fabulous technique and unbounded temperament are not the only attributes of a comparative newcomer, violinist Henri Szeryng. A scintillating performance with the London Symphony of Brahms's Violin Concerto shows him to be a musician of keen insight and imagination. Here is playing of dazzling virtuosity such as one seldom encounters these days (RCA Victor LSC 2281). Spectacular sound allied to equally spectacular pianism is to be found on a London disc featuring Julius Katchen in the two piano concertos of Franz Liszt (CS 6013). These pieces may sound a trifle old-fashioned to some listeners these days, but such exciting performances as these should keep them from fading away.

Rudolf Serkin has turned his attention to two of Mozart's piano concertos, No. 11

Continued on page 170
by NATHAN BRODER

Handel’s Messiah Newly Recorded

For purist, traditionalist, or iconoclast—Handel’s oratorio appears again, in stereo versions conducted by Beecham, Ormandy, Sargent, and Scherchen.

**Handel: MESSIAH**

Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Monica Sinclair, contralto; Jon Vickers, tenor; Giorgio Tozzi, bass; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
- RCA Victor LDS 6409. Four SD. $25.98.

Elsie Morison, soprano; Marjorie Thomas, contralto; Richard Lewis, tenor; James Milligan, bass; Huddersfield Choral Society; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
- Angel 3598C. Three LP. $14.98.
- Angel 3598C. Three SD. $17.98.

Eileen Farrell, soprano; Martha Lipton, contralto; David Cunningham, tenor; William Warfield, bass; Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
- Columbia M21 263. Two LP. $9.98.
- Columbia M2S 607. Two SD. $11.98.

Pierrette Alarie, soprano; Nan Merriman, contralto; Leopold Simoneau, tenor; Richard Standen, bass; Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
- Westminster WST 401. Four SD. $17.95.

Handel’s Messiah is not only far and away the most popular oratorio in English-speaking countries, but also the most frequently performed large choral work of any kind. And this has been true practically since Handel’s own time. Yet it is also one of the most enigmatic compositions in the entire literature. Not only does it offer a great mass of performing problems to the conductor and his forces, but the very meaning of the work has been subject to different interpretations at different periods. Many studies of it were published in the nineteenth century, and in our own analytical age fresh examinations have been made from various points of view. Since the end of the Second World War no fewer than four monographs in English have been devoted to Messiah, two of them full-length books. No other single musical work of any sort has been so painstakingly examined in print. And still each performance differs in important respects from the others.

Why should this be? To understand the nature and extent of the puzzles that Messiah presents, it is necessary to glance at its history. Sometime during the late summer of 1741 Handel was invited by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to visit Dublin and perform some of his oratorios there. On August 22 Handel began to compose furiously, and he did not leave his house until he finished twenty-four days later, on September 14. He set off for Dublin early in November. Whether Messiah was composed specifically for performance there is not known; but it is definitely established that the work was first performed in Dublin, at a public rehearsal on April 8, 1742, followed by a public performance on April 13. Even before the first performance Handel had begun to make changes. It had turned out that some of the singers were not capable of doing justice to their parts, so some movements were omitted and others much modified.
Handel was an extremely practical composer. He never hesitated to change and rewrite to meet the needs of the moment. If anybody had suggested to him that in so doing he was creating headaches for unborn generations of editors and conductors, he would probably have considered the notion interesting and then shrugged it off as irrelevant. The point was to get the job at hand done in the most effective way with the forces available.

And that is what happened at subsequent performances Handel directed, of which there were many in England beginning in 1750 (after a few unsuccessful ones in the previous seven years). Almost all of the changes, cuts, restorations, and additions concern the solo parts; the choruses seem to have remained virtually untouched. Consequently we have, for example, two different versions for bass, and a third for soprano, of “But who may abide.” “Rejoice greatly” may be sung by a soprano or tenor, but there is another, rather different version for a soprano. One version of “I shall feed His flock” is begun by the alto and completed by the soprano, another is for the soprano throughout. “He was despised” was sung sometimes by an alto, sometimes (in a higher key) by a soprano. “How beautiful are the feet” and “Their sound is gone out” make an especially complicated pair: in the familiar version they are sung by the soprano and the chorus respectively, but other versions survive in which both are done by the soprano, or the first by an alto and the second by a tenor or soprano, and “I low beautiful” by a soprano and alto duet or by a pair of altos. Handel sanctioned all of these variants at one time or another. “We must conclude,” writes Jens Peter Larsen in his recent study, “that it will scarcely ever be possible to determine an absolutely standard form of Messiah as the one authentic version, though in the case of nearly every number we can say which form is to be preferred for inclusion in a performance aiming at as close a reproduction as possible of Handel’s own practice. In the great majority of cases we can settle on a particular version as the version, but in a few instances we must either regard each of two versions as valid or else leave the matter in doubt.”

If there is uncertainty about the music itself in some of the movements of Messiah, the question of the work’s orchestration is equally foggy. The original score calls for strings and continuo, to which are added one trumpet in “The trumpet shall sound, ’ a pair of trumpets in “Glory to God,” and trumpets and drums in the “Hallelujah Chorus” and in “Worthy is the Lamb.” And that is all. But we know from other reliable sources that in certain of the London performances Handel’s orchestra comprised four oboes, four bassoons, and two horns in addition to twenty strings and a pair of trumpets and of drums. The oboes played along with the violins in instrumental introductions and supported the sopranos in the choruses, the bassoons reinforced the basses, and the horns probably played from the same parts as the trumpets. In only one case, “Their sound is gone out,” do we have independent oboe parts that are authentic.

When Handel died, in 1759, the world of music was in the throes of a radical change of style. The baroque was already almost completely ousted by the new rococo, or galant, or “pre-Classic” style. By the 1780s, when Messiah was establishing a foothold in central Europe, the Handelian orchestra was disdained as old-fashioned, primitive, and wholly inadequate to convey the glories of his music. New orchestrations were prepared and performed. Among them was one done in 1786 by Johann Adam Hiller, a successor of Bach at Leipzig and one of the earliest composers of German comic opera. He not only altered and shortened some of the solo numbers but wrote, as he said, “a quite new score, such as Handel would have written if he were alive today.” This is the first appearance on record of an idea that spawned many monstrosities. The new version that was destined to become the most influential, however, was Mozart’s, made in 1789 for Baron van Swieten.

Mozart omitted only two numbers, the chorus “Let all the angels of God worship” and the aria “Thou art gone up on high” from Part II; he did not tamper with the vocal writing and he changed little in Handel’s string parts. The younger master wrote out parts for flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns. He added trumpets and drums in some places where Handel had not used them; he rewrote Handel’s high trumpet parts because the art of playing such parts was no longer known in Mozart’s time. He introduced trombones, and in the “Pastoral Symphony” added a piccolo. The added woodwind parts filled out the harmony and wove new counterpoints around the vocal melodies. All this, of course, was very deftly and effectively done, but in the Mozartean, not the Handelian, style. Why did a Mozart take such liberties with someone else’s masterpiece? For one thing, he was simply executing a commission for his friend, the Baron; he probably had no idea that his arrangement would ever be used again (it was not published until a decade after his death). More important, it was an age in which a composer’s own score was not regarded as anything sacred; in fact, performers often treated such a score as merely a basis for elaboration or manipulation for their own ends. Mozart himself suffered grievously, if posthumously, from this attitude: the scores of his great
opera were grotesquely distorted when they were first performed in France and England.

Mozart's version of Messiah remained the most popular, though by no means the only one used, for more than a century. Then, at the beginning of our century, it was challenged by a new one, at least in English-speaking countries. It must be remembered that during the nineteenth century, in England and America, many large choruses were newly established, or grew from smaller beginnings. Some conductors began to feel that Mozart's orchestration was not sufficiently powerful to support a chorus of a hundred or more. One of these musicians was Ebenezer Prout—teacher, composer of a sort, and author of successful books on musical theory. He brought out a new edition of Messiah, retaining many of Mozart's ideas but in general thickening the orchestral texture and adding a full organ part in many of the numbers. Because certain movements are "never performed," he relegated them to an appendix. These are, in addition to two snatches of recitative, the arias "Thou art gone up on high" and "If God be for us," the duet "O death, where is thy sting?," and the choruses "Let all the angels of God" and "But thanks be to God." It is this version or Mozart's, or some modification thereof, that is remembered by most of us who at one time or another have participated in amateur performances of Messiah with orchestra.

Today the tendency is to scrape off the barnacles. A large and growing number of music lovers has come to appreciate the characteristic textures and colors of the harque orchestra. These listeners want to hear what Handel did, not what numerous editors and arrangers thought he should have done. Although it will never be possible, for various reasons, to hear a performance exactly like one conducted by Handel, enough authentic material is available and has been thoroughly enough studied to make possible performances that are reasonably close to Handel's—that in any case render it no longer necessary to look at his harque masterwork through classically or romantically colored glasses.

There are consequently two main types of performance now. One is the "traditional" sort, for large chorus and large orchestra of un-Handelian constitution, performing a version that is more or less heavily cut to fit the long work into an ordinary evening's playing time. The other type might be called, though in no pejorative sense, the "purist" sort, for forces nearer the size and constitution of Handel's (who is known to have had available for the first performance a chorus of fewer than thirty, including the soloists) performing the complete work in a manner that reveals it as it may have sounded in Handel's time. Both types seem to me to have value, though of very different kinds. The traditional type, with all its faults, has for some of us a sentimental worth: it is the form in which we first came to know and love this wonderful music, and it evokes memories of younger days. But the true flavor of this "divine entertainment" can be fully appreciated only when its clean lines are unencumbered by foreign accretions and its continuity is undisturbed by drastic excisions.

The cause of authenticity is aided by the microphone. No doubt large halls require large forces, but records do not. On discs the conductor using a purist version can make a splendid sound on, say, "Wonderful, Counsellor" in "For unto us a Child is born" without Mozart's horns and trumpets, to which Prout adds trombones. And he can convey the full effect of Handel's careful use of the trumpets. Handel does not let them play at all until the chorus "Glory to God," where he specifically instructs them to sound "from a distance and un poco piano." He then keeps them silent until they peal forth in their brassy glory, together with the drums, for the first time in the "Hallelujah Chorus." Mozart and Prout, however, introduce them as early as "For unto us" and spoil Handel's subtly calculated effects.

Of the four new recordings of Messiah, the Ormandy and Sargent belong to the traditional type, the Scherchen to the purist, and the Beecham to neither. Let us examine this last version first.

Sir Thomas has gone off on a musical spree. Like other conductors before him, starting, as we have seen, with J. A. Hiller, he decided that the Messiah accompaniments ought to be done over "as Handel would have scored them if he had been living today." Now this is of course an illogical idea to begin with. If Handel were alive today, he would shape his music entirely differently. With a composer of genius the accompaniment is not an independent thing, detachable at will and replaceable, like the tires on a car. It is an integral part of the musical thought; if you color the accompaniment in one style and leave the accompanied material in another, you have a mishmash. Beecham gave the assignment to Sir Eugene Goossens. (Incidentally, nothing is said about this in the notes for the album, High Fidelity readers will remember, however, that the whole story was told in the November issue in Charles Reid's London "Notes from Abroad"). Goossens, very able composer and excellent conductor, apparently continued on page 176
To the incipient stereophile, few things are more alluring than the shining row of components, stretched across a dealer’s counter, which may soon constitute his stereo system. There will be at least a turntable or changer, with diamond-studded cartridge; a stereo FM-AM tuner; a preamp-control unit with myriad clutched, ganged, and concentric knobs; a dual power amplifier; and, over on the floor, the two or more units of the speaker system. This is indeed a happy moment; months may have been spent preparing for it.

Yet, for some, this moment of bliss may be shattered by a simple question that must be asked sooner or later: “How do you hook it up?” Now everyone in the world has a certain amount of bravery in his soul. Many, many people have had the courage to connect a monophonic high-fidelity system. “You start with a wire from here to there; then one from here to here; plug this in here and run the other end over there; connect a piece of zip cord from these screws over to those on the speaker.”

And many people have had the courage to connect a stereo system; but, unfortunately, there are those who, at the last moment, have quailed. We don’t blame them, particularly; there can be an awful lot of wires snarled around the back of a stereo system. (Our approach to the problem is timid: we pretend we’re hitching up two separate monophonic systems, and do one ear at a time. Left channel all the way through, then the right-ear channel.) If the problem is approached slowly and carefully, there should be no trouble. But there may be some hum; this is the second bugaboo of the process.

Component equipment manufacturers have made a major advance towards solving both problems by intro-
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<td>Inputs: Mag Ph; Tape output. Ganged bass and treble controls. Separate volume controls, co-axially mounted.</td>
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<td>259.95</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Inputs: Mag Ph; Tape Head; MPX; Aux (hi-level). AM sharp-broad control. Loudness switch. Lo and Hi filters. 5 input level controls. Tape output connection; tape monitor switch. 2 tuning indicators. 3 equalization settings. Center channel output.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison Fielding</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>325.00</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Inputs: 4 pairs; dual phono, switched; microphone; 2 tape outputs. Rumble and scratch filters. Contour selector. Phono record and tape head equalization. 2 tuning indicators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>399.95</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Inputs: 2 Mag Ph, selected by front-panel switch; tape head; MPX; Aux. Equalization tape head and phono. Rumble and scratch filters. Continuously variable and detachable loudness control. Tape monitor control. 2 tuning indicators. Front panel phase reverse switch. Center channel output. 4 separate tone controls.</td>
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producing the integrated units described in this article. Almost any degree of integration is available; we show only the stereo tuner + preamp-control + power amplifier version, which is as far towards integration as most component manufacturers have gone so far. Of course, very many models are available that exhibit slightly less integration: stereo tuner + preamp-control. (The preamp-control + power amplifier arrangement is so common now that we devoted our October feature to it.)

These receivers, as several but not all manufacturers are calling them, have their advantages and disadvantages. The advantages have been suggested in the opening paragraphs. They are very easy to install; connecting a pair of speakers is all that is necessary to complete a stereo (radio) system. One more unit—turntable or changer—will be the final addition until a tape recorder rounds out the whole. So, wiring and hum problems are 95% solved. Installation in a cabinet, or on a shelf or table, is simplicity itself.

Some units have as many features as the most knobbed of preamp-control units. Their quality will be just as good as the manufacturer wants to build into them. There is no sound technical reason why their fidelity should not be the equivalent of individual components, though they may cost a bit more to manufacture (because, for example, the manufacturer becomes responsible for eliminating hum caused by the interconnection of components). Their single outstanding disadvantage is the buyer's inability to replace a section of the system without making the complete receiver obsolete. This, of course, is a major and often-emphasized advantage of individual components. If some improvement or change takes place in broadcasting, the tuning section can be replaced without affecting other components. If more power is needed in the power amplifier section, that can be achieved, again without throwing out the rest of the system. The new breed of receivers does not have this advantage. Therefore you should be as certain as possible that the unit you choose has all the features you may need in the foreseeable future, and that the quality is good enough for high-fidelity sound reproduction and for long life. It may cost more to buy the best all in one gulp, but it will be an economy in the end.

The receivers are complete radio units. Many people will do no more than add speakers. But many others will want to expand the system; some likely additions are listed below, to help you check receiver features.

Phonograph: every receiver provides for the addition of a cartridge. Is there any need to handle two cartridges?

Television: will you run your TV set through the hi-fi system? Then the receiver should have an Aux input, and a corresponding position of the selector switch.

Tape recorder: with the increasing emphasis on stereo tapes, both reel-to-reel and cartridge, many stereophiles will want to add a tape recorder. They may want to use it for recording as well as playback. For playback only, an Aux input arrangement, as described under television, is desirable. This is not the same as a tape head connection; such a connection will probably not be needed except for the more rudimentary tape machines. (This connection is useful if an old tape recorder is to be converted to stereo; saves buying a tape preamp.)

For recording, the receiver should have tape output connections; these are usually taken off ahead of tone and volume controls.

Microphones: these can always be connected direct to the tape recorder; but if you have or plan on having a permanent installation, look for a receiver that enables you to connect the microphone to the preamp-control section.

Third channel: this is too complex a subject to cover in a thumbnail paragraph: we'd like to point out, however, that some third-channel (for center fill) arrangements take off at the preamp-control output, some at the power amplifier output. The former require a separate power amplifier; the latter do not.

Other features: there are dozens of other features which appear on stereo receivers. All of them duplicate facilities provided on unintegrated components and have been discussed in preceding articles in this series.
SIR THOMAS BEECHAM’S new recording of Messiah is certain to become one of the most controversial albums of this or any year. Let the controversy start right here. On page 79 of this issue Nathan Broder takes a decidedly dim view of the “late romantic” accompaniments employed by Beecham, and his dislike of these accretions to Handel’s own orchestration rather colors his view of the whole undertaking. I, on the other hand, confess to having found the performance a delight from beginning to end: the accompaniments ravishing and (to my admittedly non-purist ears) usually in good taste, the chorus precise and mellifluous, the soloists (Jennifer Vyvyan, in particular) as fine as any I’ve heard, and the over-all spirit of the conducting quite irresistible. I urge everybody at least to listen to this fascinating recording. Whatever else may be said of it, it’s not a bore.

COLUMBIA’S classical artist-and-repertoire department is under new management. Its former chief, David Oppenheim, has switched allegiance from records to TV and is now musical director of Robert Suuldk Associates (producers of the Leonard Bernstein shows, among others). In his place, Goddard Lieberson has appointed two men to share the running of the department: John McClure and Schuyler Chapin.

McClure has worked his way up from the bottom. He landed a job with Columbia seven years ago as a tape editor, later became one of Oppenheim’s assistants, and in the last two or three years has been responsible for a good many of the company’s important recordings; most of Bruno Walter’s sessions in California, for example, have been under McClure’s supervision. Chapin comes to Columbia Artists Management (no relation), where he managed the careers of thirty-odd instrumentalists.

The division of authority between them runs something like this. McClure will be responsible for the creation of The Product, from recording session to finished album. Chapin will be responsible for the administration of the department and for all business negotiations with artists. The actual selection of artists and repertoire is intended to be a matter for joint decision. This sort of split personality provides, we can see, a fine opportunity for passing the buck when disgruntled artists pose awkward questions.

We asked the Messrs. McClure and Chapin about their future plans. “Our general aim,” Chapin began, “is to run a department which has the adventure-someness and mobility of a small company plus the resources and follow-through of a large company. We don’t want just to play it safe with standard pieces and already established artists. As a matter of fact, we intend to establish our own artists. The old-time concert managers who devoted themselves to shaping the careers and creating an indelible public image of one or two artists have just about disappeared from the scene. We hope to fill this vacuum somewhat—as Columbia already has, for instance, in the case of Glenn Gould.”

“As for details,” McClure continued, “it’s a little early to be very specific. However, I can tell you that Columbia is going back into the field of opera. As you know, the operas that have appeared on the Columbia label recently have been produced mostly by Philips. Now we shall begin again to make opera recordings ourselves. Artists? Well, we start off with our own Eileen Farrell and Richard Tucker, two of the greatest singers before the public. With these as a nucleus it won’t be too hard to assemble good casts. The tendency these days is for record companies to sign exclusive contracts with only a very few top artists. You’d be surprised at the number of well-known singers who are available now to make recordings on a free-lance basis. I should emphasize, though, that we don’t intend to make operas simply for the sake of making operas. The catalogues are too full of ‘me too’ productions as it is. We shall confine ourselves to repertoire with which we can do something really superior and first-class.”

Also on the Columbia schedule are more recordings by Bruno Walter—the Brahms symphonies, the Bruckner Ninth, Mahler’s Das Lied von der Erde—and more by Igor Stravinsky. The Stravinsky sessions will be the outgrowth of three New York concerts, one in Carnegie Hall and two in Town Hall, which are being presented this winter by Columbia Records. At these concerts the podium will be shared by Stravinsky and Robert Craft, and immediately following the concerts the Stravinsky compositions will be recorded under the composer’s direction. They will include Le Sacre, Les Noces (with composers Barber, Copland, Foss, and Sessions at the four pianos), and two new works—Movements for Piano and Orchestra and Epitaphium. Latter on, Columbia hopes to have Stravinsky re-record Fire Bird and Pétrouchka, for which an orchestra will be assembled on the West Coast.

Of course, McClure and Chapin will continue to keep the New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestras busy. This season the Philadelphia agenda includes some sessions under the direction of Leopold Stokowski, who will return in February after an absence of twenty years to conduct the orchestra he made famous.
CHRISTMAS LIMITED

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Brass Counter Brass—Brass Ensemble of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra; Sayard Stone, cond.

The Saints Come Marching In—Rick Lundy and the Saints

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Handel: Beloved Choruses from Messiah

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Handel: Highlights from Messiah

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Bach: St. Matthew Passion—Soloists; Chorus; Fritz Werner, conductor

stereo WST 402

Bach: St. Matthew Passion—Soloists; Chorus; Hermann Scherchen, conductor

monophonic WXX 4402

Bach: B Minor Mass—Soloists; Chorus; Hermann Scherchen, conductor

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WP 6035 monophonic; stereo WST 15017

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XWN 18880 monophonic; stereo WST 14040

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Capland: Billy the Kid; Rodeo—Utah Symphony Orchestra; Maurice Abravanel, cond.

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Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 2, 3, 6; Mazeppa—Vienna State Opera Orch., Hermann Scherchen, cond.

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Grieg: Piano Concerto/Peer Gynt Suites 1 & 2—Reid Habel, piano; Utah Symphony Orch.; Maurice Abravanel, cond.

XWN 18825 monophonic; stereo WST 14057

Sousa: Marches—The Deutschermeister Band, Julius Herrmann, cond.

WP 6117 monophonic; stereo WST 15045

Strauss: Waltzes—Vienna State Opera Orch.; Julius Rudel, cond.

stereo WST 14096

Brass Counter Brass—Brass Ensemble of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra; Sayard Stone, cond.

XWN 18887 monophonic; stereo WST 14081

Langhier Goes Cha-Cha—Ralph Font and his Orchestra

WP 6118 monophonic; stereo WST 15049

The Saints Come Marching In—Rick Lundy and the Saints

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In London’s Expert
Stereo Mefistofele Makes
a Fine Effect

by CONRAD L. OSBORNE

I think that if I were called upon to select a particular case that would best illustrate the basic injustice of artistic life, I would decide on that of Arrigo Boito, who wrote Mefistofele. Here is a work laden with stunning dramatic effects, blessed by a libretto of real poetic strength, informed throughout with an intellectual honesty that will not compromise with the philosophical content of its source. Yet it is almost never performed, largely because it has come out second in a popularity contest with an opera by Gounod which purports to treat the same subject.

I have heard it argued that although the French opera possesses not one of the admirable qualities listed above, it is nevertheless a better opera because it is invested by a greater wealth of melody. But nowhere does Gounod’s melody carry his Marguerite to such tragic heights as “L’altra notte in fondo al mare” or “Spunta l’aurora pallida.”

While Boito’s Faust is singing the lovely, contemplative “Dai campi, dai prati,” Gounod’s is musing over his cup of poison; while the Italian tenor is pouring forth the passionate “Calma il tuo cor,” the Frenchman is mincing his way into “Eternelle!” And what is Gounod’s vrai gentilhomme to Boito’s cosmic devil? I say all this not to disparage Faust, which is a charming and touching work, but to bemoan the absence from the repertoire of one of the greatest of nineteenth-century Italian operas.

There can be no doubt that Mefistofele is a better opera than, say, La Gioconda, in which Boito also participated, though a bit shamefacedly. Boito was a sophisticated fellow, and would probably find a wry amusement in seeing La Gioconda—libretto by “Tobia Gorrio”—revived with deadly regularity while his own masterpiece sits on the shelf.

It may be that the recording industry has been of a mind to restore the balance somewhat, for Gounod has been very shabbily treated on LP, whereas devotees of the Boito score have had at least the aged Columbia-Fastré set, a magnificent creation of bygone days, featuring expert conducting by Lorenzo Molajoli and inspired singing by Nazzareno de Angelis, Mafalda Favero, and Antonino Melendi. This album is now all but impossible to obtain, and with the withdrawal of the Victor performance (which was, in any event, unevenly sung and cut almost beyond recognition), the field has been left to the Cetra and Urania sets, both starring Giuseppe Neri, both of passing interest only. The new London performance, therefore, has been eagerly awaited by admirers of this opera, among whom I count myself.

So far as I am concerned, the unknown quantity in this production was Serafin. Mefistofele is a tricky, not to say devilish,
opera to put together, and is just the sort of score with which the unpredictable Maestro Serafin is likely either to score a triumph or experiment himself to death with unorthodox tempos. I am relieved to report that he has done the former. There are times when he builds much more slowly than Molajoli, and I, who have lived with the older recording for a number of years, feel momentarily let down by the more deliberate pace. But Serafin knows just where he is going each time, and there can be no question of eccentricity. He gives sharp definition to the rapidly changing rhythms of the *Domenico di Pasqua* scene and leads firmly into the great climaxes of the Prologue, the Witches’ Sabbath, and the Epilogue. In all this he is given staunch service by the Santa Cecilia forces, especially the Academy’s matchless chorus under Bonaventura Sumna, which is here given extended opportunity to display its rich body of tone, accurate attack, and lucid articulation.

What we might call the conservative stereo policy of London’s engineers is very much in effect on this recording: that is, directionality is deemphasized, and depth and clarity of sound given the greatest care. A few listeners will doubtless feel cheated, and I should have thought that the opening of the opera, with its trombone calls reverberating through the ether, would have been a logical place for boldness. In the massive choruses, however, the London approach is a wise one; it would have been a mistake to place the Cherubim here, the Penitents there, and the Celestial Host somewhere else. As it is, the stereo spread makes its own effect, and the gigantic choral climaxes are enormously impressive.

Finally, there is the matter of the soloists. While this is, on balance, the best-sung *Mefistofele* since the days of the Molajoli album, I cannot endorse unreservedly any one of the leading singers. Sipei is a true *basso cantante*, meaning that his voice is smooth in texture, voluptuous in quality, and plaint in its handling. These attributes make him an outstanding singer of music soft in contour, demanding a legato approach. But a born Mefistofele—such as De Angelis—is a man with a huge black voice which rolls and peals, plus a flair for the demoniacal histrionics of the role. Sipei adjusts himself to the part like the intelligent artist he is, and comes up with fine work in the *Whistling Ballad*; indeed, it is impossible to fault anything that he does. But his voice is not a wide-open, declamatory one, and at times I almost wished he would allow himself more liberty from the printed page.

Del Monaco deserves respect for his Faust, for he does his best to rein in the leads. He does not, of course, sound very metaphysical, and his muscular renditions of “Da cumpi” and the haunting *Lontano* duet are best passed over. His Faust is, however, at least virile, and he brings more line to the Garden Scene than I had expected. Tebaldi has not the bright, naïve sound which is needed for this same scene, but her opulent, soaring tone is most welcome in the Prison Scene, and Margherita’s final heart-rending plea for grace is superbly brought off. Cavalli sounds like a singer with fine potential, but the role of Elena poses some cruel difficulties, and she is insecure. Piero di Palma is an excellent Wagner. (In Boito’s version, by the way, Wagner is a genuine character, with a dramatically useful relationship to Faust, and not a mere chorus leader.)

Together with the usual essay and synopsis, London’s accompanying booklet has some Delacroix lithographs, unpleasant close-ups of the La Scala production, and a libretto designed to show us which lines are sung simultaneously. Unhappily, they cannot be read simultaneously, and the resultant chaos is of discouraging proportions.

Those who know and love Mefistofele will find this album a good investment; those who do not know it have a fine opportunity to make acquaintance with one of the masterworks of Italian opera.

**BOITO: Mefistofele**

Renata Tebaldi (s), Margherita: Floriana Cavalli (s), Elena: Lucia Danieli (c), Maria and Pantaleis: Mario del Monaco (t), Faust: Piero di Palma (t), Wagner and Nero: Cesare Sipei (b), Mefistofele, Orchestra and Chorus of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Tullio Serafin, cond.  
*••* LONDON OSA 1387, Three SD. $17.94.

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**From Carnegie Twenty Years Ago,**

**A Jazz Landmark — Spirituals to Swing**

by JOHN S. WILSON

Impresario John Hammond.

Blackstone Studios

Back in the late 1930s, when jazz concerts were still a novelty, three such concerts were held at Carnegie Hall, memorable today not only because of the artists who took part in them but because of their careful planning and preparation, qualities that have pretty well gone by the board since jazz concerts became everyday (or every-night) occurrences. One of the three was the Benny Goodman concert, held in January 1938, which was released on LP discs (Columbia OSL160) several years ago amid much—and deserved—fanfare. The other two were the *Spirituals to Swing* concerts of December 1938 and December 1939, presented by John Hammond (who, needless to say, also had a hand in the Goodman concert).

Hammond’s concerts were the first attempt, with live musicians at distinct from records, to show jazz in perspective, and in the succeeding twenty years no one else has managed this feat as well. Hammond has now gathered material recorded at both these concerts (we are happily learning that a surprising amount of the publicly played jazz of the late Thirties and early Forties has been preserved) for a magnificent two-disc set with copious annotation by himself and Charles Edward Smith.

The idea of a concert that would bring together representatives of the root, trunk, and branch of jazz not only provided the...
Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic

In Happy Reunion on Discs

Taped by a London-Decca crew in the Salz不同 last spring, these five discs reunite for an international audience Herbert von Karajan and the orchestra he conducts as director of the Vienna State Opera. It has been some years since Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic were together on records, and the reunion is a happy one for all parties.

Four of the records appear in this country on the RCA Victor label, a fact testifying to the potential of the overseas alliance between RCA and London-Decca. Moreover, as a beautifully produced album (entitled Vienna Philharmonic Festival), they serve as one of the first fruits of the new RCA Soria series, providing more than a hint that the RCA-London-Soria triumvirate is going to prove an important source of distinguished productions. The fifth disc, Richard Strauss's Also Sprach Zarathustra, has been issued in a special package under London's own auspice.

Taken as a whole, these performances not only commemorate the American concerts of the orchestra's current world tour but are a sort of mutually inspired love song in which artists, record manufacturers, and the public can join in a chorus of "Wien, Wien, nur du allein.

At their best, they are among the finest recordings stereo has given us. Even when there are comparable editions, these must be counted among our assets.

The music is all associated with the orchestra and its 117-year history. The Beethoven Seventh opened its first concert in March of 1842. The great Mozart G minor was a part of its second program in November of that year. The Haydn belongs to its heritage, while the Brahms, and the music of the Strauasses, Johann Jr., Josef, and (although no relative) Richard, all became a part of the orchestra's familiar musical speech soon after completion. Familiar here implies intimate rather than commonplace knowledge, for the Vienna Philharmonic not only has over the content of these works a mastery probably unexcelled anywhere, but it knows how to play them as an ensemble, with each man blending his individual contribution into the scale of the whole. The Vienna Philharmonic, indeed, is really a chamber orchestra of 124 players. It is this fact, more than the skill of any individual conductor, that accounts for its unique qualities. A conductor can take rehearsal time to ask for only so much by way of polish and nuance; the Philharmonic, working with someone it respects as much as it does Karajan, invariably gives more than is required of it.

The resulting performances are always as much the orchestra's interpretative responsibility as the conductor's. Compare, for example, the Beethoven Seventh in this Soria set with Karajan's earlier version. Rhythmic drive here is subordinated to ensemble playing with a beauty of finish few orchestras in the world could challenge. The thematic line sings at its own comfortable pace. A cadence can be fully—and firmly—accented, with even a little pause inserted for additional stress. I doubt if Karajan would play the score this way with London's Philharmonia, despite its excellence as a group (nor am I sure that the music is not better served by a more vigorous statement). But this is Vienna's way, and it is good to hear it.
as an antidote to those who out-Toscanini Toscanini in this music.

The rest of the Victor album is another matter. Haydn's No. 104, whether you take its tunes to be Croatian or English in their genesis, has rarely been given us in a performance at once so powerful and gemütlich. Together with the Mozart Fortichet, with which it shares a record, it constitutes a performance unique among those in the catalogue. If the Mozart is to be further characterized, let me suggest that one play the opening and listen to the rhythmic phrase in the violas that begins the work. Most orchestras and conductors treat it as if it were of little importance, but it is important—since it establishes both rhythm and tonality before the entrance of the principal theme in the violins. Here it is given full measure, with all the time and care necessary to discover Mozart's architectural genius in operation.

Brahms requires something quite different in sonority and style, but he benefits equally from the orchestra's sensitivity to detail as well as to larger outlines. This is, if we must use such a term, a romantic performance of the score, extraordinarily rich and grand in sound, and lightly flattering. For many, it will probably become the unexcelled version of the Brahms First.

As for the collections of les frères Strauss, one may argue at length about the merits of Mr. Y's "Viennese style" over Mr. Y's "Viennese style," but here is Vienna's Viennese style, with a pleasing collection of works you know well and works you probably don't know so well, the latter intergrades a nostalgic liebestrauim, and the total a moving evocation of the city of the waltz.

The German Strauss, Richard, is equally favored with magnificent ensemble playing that brings to the level of direct awareness details in the scoring too frequently lost. Karajan's performance of Also Sprach Zarathustra is not the traditional one; nonetheless, I am attracted to what he does with the score, as well as by the extremely wide dynamic range of the recording. (Karajan provides a surprise, too, by underplaying the "sunrise" climax at the beginning of the work and saving his greatest sonorities for later pages.)

Controversial and provocative are words that best characterize these beautifully engineered discs, and for just evaluation more than one hearing is in order.

The Soria album, incidentally, adds a very handsome booklet of pictures and commentary to its sonic entertainments.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN: "Vienna Philharmonic Festival"


Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

RICHARD STRAUSS: Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

Wanda Landowska, harpsichord.

BACH: Two-Part Inventions, Nos. 1, 2, 5, 11, 13-15

High Fidelity Magazine

BACH: St. Matthew Passion, S. 244

Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano; Hilde Röö-Maidan, contralto; Waldeuar Knell, tenor; Uno Ebrell. tenor; Hans Braun, bass; Walter Berry, bass; Vienna Chamber Choirs; Boys' Choir of the Sclavoraust; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Mogens Waldkilde, cond.

Vanguard BG 594/7. Four LP. $11.90.

Vanguard BCS 5022/25. Four LD. 197.85.

Hard on the heels of the first stereo recording of the St. Matthew Passion, from Archive, comes this Vanguard release, which also has many fine qualities. Avoiding strong contrasts, Waldkilde seems intent on maintaining a kind of sobriety that shuns any trace of the theatrical. In so doing, he sometimes comes close to that detachment which seemed to me the weakest aspect of the Archive performance. For example, all the choruses except the last one are sung at the same dynamic level (between mezzo forte and forte), regardless of the situation they comment upon or the sentiment they express. On the other hand, Waldkilde's approach sometimes achieves great eloquence: the marvelous final chorus, for instance, is overwhelming here. Another virtue of this performance, though a negative one, is that Waldkilde never lapses into the bouncy dogmatist notion that some German conductors are fond of in certain choral movements, such as "Sind Blitze, sind Donner."

His soloists all reflect—some more than others—the conductor's attitude. Ebrellius, the Evangelist, is a remarkably skillful singer with a most agreeable timbre, but he makes little attempt to convey nuances of feeling in the text. In this respect his opposite number in the Archive set, Ernst Häßiger, is more effective. As Jesus, he is competent, and steadier than Archive's Keith Engen, but not especially distinguished. (Nobody on records, I think, sings this role as magnificently as Heinz Rlehmann, in the Scherchen-Westminster set.) Stich-Randall sings with a pure but disembodied tone, as though she were performing Gregorian chant. Seefried in Archive is much more moving. The experienced Knell does well with the music allotted to him, though his negotiation of high passages, as in Ich will bei meinem Jesus wachen, is not entirely effortless. Röö-Maidan is at the top of her form here. Her lovely alto has character and firmness throughout its range. This is consequently a better performance than she turned in on the Scherchen set, and much superior to that of the alto in the Archive. The bass here, however, the veteran Walter Berry, very able as he is, has to face the powerful competition of Fischer-Dieskau on Archive. The chorus is nicely balanced and does not seem large; the texture is, accordingly, fairly transparent.

From the standpoint of stereo recording, this set seems to me considerably superior to the Archive. Here the familiar virtues of two-channel recording enormously enhance the effectiveness of the sound. In the big double choruses, the two choral lines are clearly separated, yet there is no gaping hole in the middle. In the wonderful duet with chorus, So lat mein Jesus nun gefangen, the extraordinary clarity of the recording throws into bright relief the different colors that Bach mixes: the leggato violins and violas playing in unison, the carefully articulated phrases of the flutes and oboes, the solo soprano and alto singing their long, curved melodies, and the short, sharp interjections of the chorus. And so on in the rest of the work: we are in a first-class recording more than anything else that you want, this is the set for you. N.B.
find Landowska at the unparalleled top of her form—profound, eloquent, imaginative yet utterly convincing. As a final, touching memento of this great lady, we hear her speak, urging performance of the Inventions by mature artists, not merely by beginners. It takes not only a mature but a great artist to play them as they are played here.

**NB.**

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15; Sonata for Piano, No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 (**"Pathétique"**) Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schnidt-Isserstedt, cond.

* • LONDON CS 6099. SD. $4.98.

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schnidt-Isserstedt, cond.

* • LONDON CS 6094. SD. $4.98.

With this dual release, pianist, orchestra, and conductor have made three of the five Beethoven piano concertos available on London stereo. Numbers two and five will probably follow without great delay. In my opinion these most recent additions to the series are more impressive than the initial Fourth Concerto, which I reviewed in these pages last February. In the present releases one actually hears illustrated what John M. Conly observed in writing about the Vienna Philharmonic in High Fidelity's November issue: "It is almost false to identify the pianist as the soloist; it's rather as if he were playing duets with the symphony orchestral instruments, in musical repartee almost incredibly articulate."

Backhaus, for all his three quarters of a century, plays with agile and accurate fingers, projecting the quasi-Mozartian clarity of the First Concerto and the more solidly Beethovenian strength of the Third with a remarkable blending of authority and grace. The orchestra matches him note for note.

In short, these are ensemble performances with such a unity of spirit that they go beyond mere musical satisfaction to provide a lesson in what can be achieved in the vintage years of a great musical tradition. No other stereo recording projects anything quite as magical as this: nor, indeed, do more than a couple of the older monophonic sets.

Backhaus' playing of the Pathétique sonata is quite as fine as his concerto performances and incomparably better in its only stereo competition.

In the Third Concerto a cadenza by Carl Reinecke is used. I find it inferior to the Beethoven cadenza commonly played (and available in stereo in the Badura-Skoda-Scherchen set), but this does not outweigh the assets of the performance. In the First Concerto the second of the three cadenzas given in the Kinsky Beethoven Verzeichnis is performed.

**R.C.M.**

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Violin, in D, Op. 61

Henryk Szeryng, violin; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Jacques Thibaud, cond. OXON XOC 111. LP. $4.98.

Inasmuch as Thibaud was killed in an airplane crash in September 1953, this set must be more than six years old—a fact worth noting only because the engineering is of such quality that one might think the session was held last month.

My first impressions are that this is one of the great recordings of the concerto. Szeryng is, in my opinion, a violinist of monumental talent, and Thibaud here gives him the kind of support that only another violinist of greatness could provide. The result is an edition that deserves wide circulation. We are very fortunate to have it available, at last, in the United States. Equalization, incidentally, is the AES curve.

**R.C.M.**


Rudolf Firkusny, piano.

* • CAPITOL P 8493. LP. $4.98.

* • CAPITOL SP 8493. SD. $5.98.

These are reserved, well-considered, and musically performances, characteristic of the best we have heard in Firkusny's recent work on records. This release also offers the first stereo Waldstein. I found the two-channel version slightly more agreeable than the mono, but the increase in presence or sonic elegance was hardly worth a dollar surcharge.

If you want excitement stressed, particularly in Op. 53, other editions are preferable to this one. If refinement in artistic values counts heavily, these performances are you will probably come very quickly to respect.

**R.C.M.**

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; Coriolan Overture, Op. 62

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

* • LONDON CS 6670. SD. $4.98.

This is one of the few Beethoven Fourth which rivals the qualities of the great Toscanini-BBC edition, long deleted from the American catalogue. It suggests, moreover, that Ansermet deserves more recognition as a Beethoven conductor than he customarily receives. Predominantly relaxed and warmly lyric, his performance nonetheless has a firm pulse to provide consistent rhythmic foundation. There are also the sharp attacks and electrifying energy needed to give the final movement its full propulsive power and provide the needed contrasts in the remainder of the work. The same qualities make Ansermet's Coriolan plainly the best on stereo, and one of the finest we have had in the long-play era.

Indeed, the only possible complaint against this disc is that, although in general extremely well engineered, the registration of the winds in the symphony is sometimes overbalanced by the strings—not, however, to a degree that makes the recording in any appreciable way less than desirable.

**R.C.M.**

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67

Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra, Joseph Kellibeth, cond.

* • TELEFUNKEN TCS 18005. SD. $2.98.

There are nine stereophonic Fifths in the current Schwann, none of them so good as to exclude from consideration two or three of its competition or to diminish one's regard for the best of the twenty-two monophonic editions.

Kellibeth's performance is echt Deutch in its solid metrical patterns and big resonant sound. Either of these characteristics-in excess could produce an uninteresting record, but fortunately neither gets out of hand. The firm pulse is governed by musical rather than metronomic considerations and through it the performance gains strength—emerging as a powerful and satisfying reading in the Central European tradition.

Similarly the sonics, although something too resonant for my taste, are a good example of what European engineers and record purchasers want as "big sound." Stereo effects are not especially pronounced, proving more apparent in the agreeable, uncramped quality of the reproduction than in the precise indication of instrument locations.

For the price, this is, consequently, a remarkably better value than some of the more expensive versions.

**R.C.M.**

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; Coriolan Overture, Op. 62

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

* • RCA VICTOR LM 2343. LP. $4.98.

* • RCA VICTOR LSC 2343. SD. $5.98.

The line of this music, never completely strong or propelling as achieved by Reiner, is here sustained somewhat better than has sometimes been the case, but all the excitement appears to be calculated rather than spontaneous. The result is a craftsmenlike reading of the notes, but in neither way does the true power of either the conductor or orchestra emerge.

**Continued on page 94**
MERCURY TAKES PRIDE

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A few of the latest albums by these musicians are shown below. You may get a complete Mercury catalogue at your favorite record shop or by writing Mercury Record Corporation, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

SR indicates the stereo album number; MG, the monaural number.
As Mercury proved some years ago, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, despite its empty-barrel acoustics when no audience is seated, offers engineers brilliant possibilities. Victor's recent work there has tended to exaggerate rather than minimize the long reverberation period of the room. The present release is coarse, booming, and vulgar in its sonics, and false both to the tone of the orchestra and the experience the hall actually provides, seeing, are all but lost.

R.C.M.

BOITO: Mefistofele
Renata Tebaldi (s), Margherita; Floriana Cavalli (s), Elena; Lucia Danieli (ms), Marta, Pantalis; Mario del Monaco (t), Faust; Piero di Palma (t), Wagner, Nero; Cesare Siepi (b), Mefistofele. Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome). Tuillio Sereni, cond.

BRAHMS: Concerto No. 2, in B flat, Op. 83
Hans Richter-Haaser, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

BRUCH: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26
iMendelssohn: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64
Julian Olefsky, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Julius Itudel, cond.

DVORAK: Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")
Smetana: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in F minor ("From My Life")
Clarenmont Quartet.

FRANCK: Symphony in D minor; Psyché: No. 4, Psyché et Eros
Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.

Some may prefer this latest recording, drawn out but superbly beautiful in tone all the way. Others will be happier with the greater color and thrust of the Rubinstein-Krips version and with its tempos closer to those marked in the score. For myself, I would not part with either.

R.E.

BRAHMS: Symphony No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98; Rhapsodie, Op. 53 ("Alto Rhapsody")

Aafie Heynig, contralto; Royal Male Choir "Apollo" (in the Rhapsodie). Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

The late Eduard van Beinum directs the symphony in an orthodox fashion, though he is a trifle heavy in portions of the opening movement. His view of the Rhapsodie is reverent and subdued. The alto soloist has a warm, refined voice, but here it sounds rather expressionless; and there are spots in the recording where it is not sharply focused--probably the fault of microphone placement rather than voice placement. The assisting male choir is well balanced and blends into this performance of a most moving work fails to move.

P.A.

BRUCHI: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26
iMendelssohn: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64
Julian Olefsky, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Julius Itudel, cond.

In this age of jet flights and jet-propelled virtuoso performances, it is gratifying to find a violinist and conductor who are still willing to allow two nineteenth-century concertos to have their proper horse-and-buggy pace. This sensible approach bears its greatest fruit in the Mendelssohn, where the gorgeous melodies are allowed plenty of time to sing and expand in an interpretation notable for its poise and beauty. All in all, the Bruch is treated with somewhat more inescivenseness, but never at the expense of its lyrical contours. Lustrous recording adds to the merits of this most welcome disc.

P.A.

CHOPIN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in F minor, Op. 21; Polonaise No. 7, in A flat, Op. 61 ("Polonaise-fantaisie")
Alexander Uninsky, piano; Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willen van Otterloo, cond.

Alexander Uninsky's performance of the concerto deserves respect for its many good points--strong clean fingering; ringing tone; firmly individual treatment of inner voices and rubatos, sometimes effective, sometimes merely mannered. But pianistic color is limited in use, and as a whole this work sounds more prosaic than it should. The tone solidity of attack and virility of style can be noted in the Polonaise, where it makes a slightly better effect. The stereo engineering, spacious though it is, gives the piano an insistent, overly resonant sound that is subordinated in the better-balanced monophonic version.

R.E.

CHOPIN: Scherzos (complete)
Ann Schein, piano.

* KAPP KCL 9040. LP. $3.98.

* KAPP KC 9040 S. SD. $4.98.

Miss Schein, only nineteen, is an astounding pianist with a technique almost frightening in its speed, power, and control. She usually makes all the notes sound, too, even when she is playing so fast that a series of left-hand octaves, for example, is reduced to a mere figuration. This dazzling facility serves the fast sections of the Scherzos well; and in the calmer ones there is a singing tone and some deftly spun phrasing. If there is a flaw in the performances, it lies in a restlessness or overanxious drive that urges the pianist into too great, or too abrupt, contrasts of tempo between fast and slow sections and into neglecting variety within the fast sections themselves. This young American is clearly someone to watch in the future and to enjoy, with reservations, now.

But the first side of my stereo disc was coarse in sound, blasting a good deal, but all was well on the reverse side, as it was on the whole of the monophonic disc. The piano sounded equally satisfactory in both versions.

R.E.

Continued on page 96

High Fidelity Magazine
READ WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE TO SAY!

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HI FI REVIEW: "The most amazing thing about Audio Fidelity's Fantastique is the excellence of its performance ... a great job of production and organization. Sonically, Wallenstein et al sail past all competitors."

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A complete listing of all AUDIO FIDELITY RECORDS is available from: Dept. H 12, 770 11th Ave., New York 19, N. Y.
proportion, resulting in performances of great nobility and depth of feeling, plus a sense of excitement. Beautifully balanced stereo sound helps to put this disc up with the leading versions of both the symphony and the Psyché excerpt. P.A.


†Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies: No. 1; No. 2

Banbarg Symphony Orchestra, Richard Kraus, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGM 12014. LP. $4.98.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON DGS 710214. SD. $5.98.

Kraus's handling of these popular favorites is fairly straightforward, yet tasteful and highly polished. The big feature of this release is the clarity and complete naturalness of its sound and, in the stereo edition, its fine directionality. P.A.

HANDEL: Messiah

Solosists: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

• RCA Victor LS 6406. Four SD. $25.98.

Solosists: Huddersfield Choral Society; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.

• ANGEL S 3598C. Three LP. $14.98.
• ANGEL S 3598C. Three SD. $17.98.

Solosists: Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA M2L 263. Two LP. $9.98.
• COLUMBIA M2S 607. Two SD. $11.98.

Solosists: Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

• WESTMINSTER WST 401. Four SD. $17.95.

For an article on these albums, see "Handel's Messiah Newly Recorded," p. 79.

HAYDN: Mass No. 10, in B flat ("Theresien")

Catherine Rowe, soprano; Margaret Tobias, contralto; Donald Sullivan, tenor; Paul Mattehn, bass; M.I.T. Choral Society; Granirke Orchestra, Klaus Liepmann, cond.

• MUSIC AT M.I.T. CS 58. LP.

The M.I.T. Choral Society, according to the liner notes, comprises members of the faculty and staff as well as students of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The present recording was made last summer on a tour of Europe. Professional American soloists and a Munich orchestra were employed. Under the circumstances (there could hardly have been many rehearsals with orchestra), this is a laudable performance, showing that the choir had been long and carefully trained. Professor Liepmann keeps everything together and moving briskly, and there are moments when something of the greatness of this very fine work comes through.

It is not, unfortunately, assisted to do so by the recording, which contains rather more distortion than is customary nowadays. The review disc also had some cracking. Whether this is as far as recording is concerned the M.I.T. people are more advanced musically than technologically. N.B.

HOLST: The Planets, Op. 32

Vienna Academy Chorus and State Opera Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

• WESTMINSTER WST 14067. SD. $5.98.

Boult's near-monopoly on this pre-Sputnik musical exploration of outer space (consolidated in 1954 with his Westminster LP) was effectively challenged only last year with the appearance of Stokowski's Capitol stereo tape and disc. Many Holstians resisted the superior sonic attractions of the Stokowski version, however, in the hope that Boult would soon remake his undeniably more authentically attuned interpretation. Unhappily, their wait has been in vain; the anticipated new Boult version is indeed even more sensitively recorded, but the performance has been entrusted to obviously unmindful Viennese musicians, and the conductor himself seems inexplicably to have lost most of his Holstian insights. Most unfortunately of all, the engineers have chosen to exploit their augmented technical resources less to re-create the sound than to distort it. As a result of their unnatural spotlighting the woodwind and percussion choirs, abetted by the overintensity of the Viennese strings and the conductor's failures of integration, the Planets no longer swim luminously and mysteriously in infinite space; instead, they are cruelly "spread out against the sky/Like a patient etherized upon a table."

Granted that Stokowski misses or subverts a good deal of the inner spirit of the work, he does bring it to vital life; and Capital's recording is superbly dramatic yet beautifully proportioned and auditorium-authentic. In strong contrast the new Boult version is often awkwardly limping and harsh, and even its wide dynamic range, brazen brass outbursts, and overpowering percussion seem wholly synthetic. I can almost hear Holst's ghost repeating the dry remark he once made at a Boston Symphony rehearsal when the trombones in Uranus made an off-key entrance: "Now, gentlemen, that really doesn't sound very nice, does it?"

R.D.D.


MAHLER: Das klagende Lied

Margaret Howsell, soprano; Lili Chookasian, contralto; Rudolph Petrik, tenor; Hartford Symphony and Chorale, Fritz Mahler, cond.

• VANGUARD VBS 1048. LP. $4.98.
• VANGUARD VSD 2044. SD. $5.98.

The composer and condutor are first cousins; once removed; and whether it's genes or common musical heritage, Fritz understands what Gustav is about. Das klagende Lied was written when Mahler was just beginning to get his career launched, and for a man of twenty it is an enormously fresh and promising score, filled with anticipations of the composer's later powers and already rooted in the style which became characteristic.

The only previous recording is a Vienna product, now on Lyricor (LL 69 (after an earlier appearance on Mercury)), and for all its age and uneven sonics, it preserves a forceful performance. Stereo is the primary advantage of this new set, making Mahler's vocal and instrumental lines considerably more persuasive as distributed through two channels. Monophonically, those who have the older record could profitably stand by it. And even the stereo recording could have been improved by stronger (and presumably closer) pick-up of the orchestra and more dramatic treatment of the vocal parts. R.C.M.

MAHLER: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen; Kindertotenlieder

Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano; Philharmonia Orchestra; Sir Adrian Boult, cond. (in Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen); André Vandernoot, cond. (in Kindertotenlieder).

• ANGEL S 35776. SD. $5.98.

After having heard Miss Ludwig as soloist with the Chicago Symphony in Das Lied von der Erde, I was prepared for better than this. Her approach to the music is consistently justifiable, and she

Continued on page 98
Give RCA Victor Albums for Christmas!

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 and Coriolan Overture - Fritz Reiner conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

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produces some lovely sounds and phrases. That, however, is about it. The Kindertotenlieder drag with an atrocious accompaniment (surely she didn't want it to go that way?), while in the earlier cycle the extreme demands of range and volume prove too much for her to handle with comfort, and the orchestra tends to occupy a dominant role. Fischer-Dieskau and Flagstad continue to be my choice.

R.C.M.


MESSAGER: Les P'tites Michu
Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra Raymond Saint-Paul, Jules Gressier, cond.
Pathe DTX 157. LP. $5.95.

Although there is some very charming music in the score for this operetta, produced with enormous success in Paris in 1894, it is on the whole several degrees below Messager's best work. The libretto, as involved as most operetta librettos are, concerns itself with the love affairs of two supposed sisters, daughters of the General d'Irs. Once you know that they are named Blanche-Marie and Marie-Blanche, you can almost write the plot and work out its denouement. In Messager's music there is the prettiness, the gentility common to all his operettas, but this time the melodies are in rather short supply. A charming and very famous duet for the two sisters, "Blanche-Marie et Marie-Blanche," shares honors with a graceful romance in waltz time, "À l'oeuvrette" for Blanche-Marie. There is also an amusing Gilbertian-type patter song for the General, in which Messager uses a rhythm quite out of his usual field. I hesitate to call the balance of the score padding, for the composer was far too careful a craftsman to indulge in that, but it certainly does not sparkle.

The cast of French singers do a splendid job, with some especially fine work from Liliane Bertron and Nadine Benaux in the roles of the two sisters. The orchestral performance under the firm direction of Jules Gressier is bright and well paced, and the sound is quite acceptable.

J.F.I.

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.
Westminster XWN 18864. LP. $4.98.

The latest volume in Westminster's series, this disc completes Leinsdorf's traversal of the symphonies of Mozart (not exactly "completes," however, since two or three works added by Einstein to the list of authentic symphonies are not included). It is an excellent series on the whole, even though one may prefer some of the works in other performances. The four compositions presented here, written when Mozart was fifteen and sixteen, are not very important, yet each has its moments—the mysterious second theme of the opening movement of K. 114 and the delicate, poetic trio of its Vivace; the dissonances and traces of drama in the development section of the first movement of K. 124; the grace of the Andante in K. 128, and its charming, if simple, counterpoint; the playfulness in the first Allegro of K. 129, and the songful melody of its lovely Andante. A good case could be made against Leinsdorf's interpretation of some of the appoggaturas, and the sound of the horns is rather dry; otherwise performance and recording are satisfactory, though those who own the Concert Hall versions of K. 114, 124, and 128 need not, I think, rush to replace them with these.

J.B.

MOZART: Symphonies: No. 38, in D, K. 504 ("Prague"); No. 32, in G, K. 318
London Symphony Orchestra, Peter Maag, cond.
London CS 6107. SD. $4.98.

There are recorded performances of the Prague equal to this one (for example Kleiber's on Angel), if not better, but I have never heard finer recordings of a Mozart symphony than of the two presented here. Even though a large orchestra seems to be used, every nuance of Mozart's sparkling orchestration is perceptible. It is not only that the wind parts

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are clearly audible when they should be, but that each instrument retains its own timbre—which is not, alas, always the case even in stereo. High oboes don’t sound like flutes, or bassoons like horns; and when bassoons double the cellos or bases, one hears both the rich reedy sound and the warm stringy one. Timpani strokes are not dull thuds; they have the sharp, imperious character of real, well-tuned kettledrums. In contrapuntal sections, of which the Prage is full, the utmost clarity reigns. Put this record on and your favorite chair will be transformed into the best seat in Carnegie Hall.

N.A. NAUMANN: Andante and Grazioso for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Viola, and Cello, in G

Schnyder zu Wartensee: Der durch Musik überwundene Wüterich, Duet for Glass Harmonica and Lute, in G

Johann Tomaschek: Fantasia for Glass Harmonica, in E minor

Bruno Hoffmann, glass harmonica; Instrumentalists.

ARCHIVE ARC 3111. LP. $5.98.

The glass harmonica, invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1762, has a limited but happy life of some seventy years and then disappeared. Its thin, delicate, hazy sound, something like that of a celesta with sustainable tones, is approximated here on an instrument built on similar principles by the soloist, Bruno Hoffmann. Of the three composers represented, only Johann Tomaschek (1774-1850) was not content to coast along on the novel sound and went to the trouble of thinking up some worthwhile musical ideas.

PACHELBEL: Chorale Partitas (complete)

Robert Owen, organ and harpsichord.

WESTMINSTER XWN 18829. LP. $4.98.

In these sets of variations on Protestant chorales the tunes are usually handled in one of two ways: they are either stated unaltered in one voice while one or two other voices weave over or under or around them, or they are stated in embellished form. The variety which Pachelbel’s lively imagination achieves within these rather severe formal restrictions is striking. There are daring chromatic progressions, as in the seventh variation of Alle Menschen meinen sterben or the fourth of Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgeltan, or surprisingly “modern”-sounding counterpoint, as in the final variation of Herzlich tut mich erlügen, the same melody that is so important in Bach’s St. Matthew Passion.

Owen, playing on the Aeolian-Skinner organ of Christ Church in Bronxville, New York, favors thin, clean registrations that are richly varied in color. In one partita he plays some variations on a harpsichord. This is not liturgical music, and the distinction between organ and clavier music was hazy in Pachelbel’s day; but it would be interesting to know

DECEMBER 1959

Dorati: a real affinity for Respighi.

Mr. Owen’s authority for the curious, though not disturbing, practice of switching from one instrument to the other within the same piece.

RESPIGHI: Antiche Danze ed Arte: Suites: No. 1, Il Conte Orlando; No. 2, Cagliarida; No. 3, Villanella

Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati, cond.

MERCURY MG 50199. LP. $3.98.

Although excellence marks the whole of this refugee Hungarian ensemble, based in Vienna and touring the United States this fall, its strings make a particularly sensuous effect in these tellingly dressed-up versions of old lute pieces. Dorati seems to have a real affinity for them, informing the lovely music with gaiety, vigor, or tenderness as the mood demands. The engineering gives the most faithful kind of reproduction, with wide dynamic range and depth of aural perspective. Victor also puts out a one-disc recording of these three suites; it might be the equal but not the superior of this set.

ROSSINI: Overtures

Guillaume Tell; La Cenerentola; La Gazza ladra; Semiramide

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Peter Maag, cond.

LONDON CS 6089. SD. $4.98.

These are somewhat deliberate performances. Maag is most convincing in the larger-scaled works—William Tell and Semiramide—and then mainly in the less tempestuous pages, such as Sections I and III of the Tell Overture. The Cenerentola is too measured and a bit heavy, and so, to a lesser extent, is Gazza ladra. London’s stereo is nothing short of triumphant—as good as any I’ve heard, and it goes far to compensate for whatever shortcomings one may find in Maag’s readings.

C.L.O.

SAINT-SAENS: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in F, Op. 103; Septet for Piano, Trumpet, String Quartet, and Double Bass, in E flat, Op. 65

Jeanne-Marie Darre, piano; R. Delmotte, trumpet; G. Logerot, double bass; Pauillac Quartet; Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française, Louis Fourestier, cond.

PATHÉ DX 252. LP. $5.95.

For a piano concerto that is rarely played in public in this country, Saint-Saëns’s Fifth, sometimes called Egyptian for its quasi-Eastern middle movement, has been well represented on discs. This is the only available recording, as well as the third of the Septet, with its prominent role for the trumpet. Miss Darré has the right equipment for these decorative and good-humored works—cool, bell-like tones, beautifully matched in scales and arpeggios, and elegantly precise timing. Not many sounds are as entrancing as her feather-light, glinting pianissimo runs. In the concerto, the orchestra plays satisfactorily, if a little staidly, it is not recorded with the utmost clarity. In the Septet, Miss Darré’s distinguished colleagues make accurate, cheerful, brightly harmonious noises—particularly the trumpet—and the engineering is first-rate. Some surfaces catch on each disc. These are the superior performances to be had of these works, but not so much so as to warrant the higher price. Program notes are in French.

SAINT-SAENS: Samson et Dalila

Hélène Bouvier (ms), Dalila; José Lecocq (1), Samson; Paul Cabanel (hs), Le Grand Prêtre; Charles Cambon (bs), Abimelech; Henri Medus (vb), Un vieillard Hébreu. Chœur et Orchestre du Théâtre National de L’Opéra de Paris, Louis Fourestier, cond.

PATHÉ PCX 5007/5009. Three LP. $17.85.

This 1940 performance by Paris Opéra personnel is the same one, still doing service, issued in this country a dozen years ago by Columbia on a heap of 78-rpm discs. Even at the time of original publication the set was regarded widely as technically backward. Reheard today, Pathé’s Samson et Dalila sounds bony—orchestra thin and nasal, chorally congested and, throughout, confined by four studio walls. Even so, it has managed to survive as the only available complete recording of a period score popular in many quarters.

At the time Louis Fourestier hadn’t the fire, or at hand the firepower, to set Samson alaave, but this careful and orderly performance is noted rather than most of his subsequent efforts on behalf of the New York Metropolitan. Hélène Bouvier’s Dalila was respected when new, and must continue to be, for the musical intelligence at work, if not for the voice. The Samson of Lecocq, sounding aged even in ‘46, nevertheless was something of an act of heroism in the face of in-superable odds. Paul Cabanel, singing the role of Priest of Dagon, summoned a vocal power and musical suavity matched only in my experience by a younger Martial Singer than we hear today.

Those with versatile amplifiers (and an appetite for Samson unabridged) are
advised to use a “European 78” control setting (or its equivalent) rather than RIAA. A presentation pamphlet, in French, is included, but not one word of the libretto, or so much as a single note of musical illustration. ROGER DEETMER

SCHMITT: Quartet for Strings, Op. 112
Quatuor Clampeil.
- PATHÉ DTX 232. LP. $5.95.

Written in 1947, when Florent Schmitt had reached the advanced age of seventy-seven, this long and involved work is in four movements—Rêve, Jeu, In Memoriam, and Élan. Of these, the middle two sections are more interesting and more unified than their two companion movements. In Memoriam is particularly moving, lyrical, and expressive. The entire quartet contains many echoes of Debussy and Ravel, though there is an individuality of style that would never permit the listener to believe that it had been written by either of these men. On the whole I find the work interesting, often rewarding, but far from great. The music is not easy to play, and the performance here shows a great deal of devotion on the part of the musicians, whose efforts have been accorded satisfactory reproduction. P.A.

SCHNEDER ZU WARTENSEE: Der durch Musik überwundene Wüterich, Duet for Glass Harmonica and Forte Piano, in C—See Naumann: Andante and Grazioso for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Viola, and Cello, in C.

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Joerg Demus, piano.
- WESTMINSTER XWN 18845. LP. $4.98.

A proper Viennese, Joerg Demus is also a proper Schubert interpreter—in more than one sense of that word. In these sonatas he is serious-minded, expressive—contained, formally coherent. He does not reveal all the emotional facets of the music, and the tone gets slightly edgy at its loudest, but the music is presented for its own sake, without fuss. Friedrich Wührer, on Vox Records, gives equally faithful, equally self-effacing, but stronger interpretations of this same pair of sonatas. After all these years, Westminister still seems to capture piano playing with less distortion than most record makers.

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, in A minor, Op. 143
Schumann: Sonata for Piano, in F sharp minor, Op. 11
Stewart Gordon, piano.
- WASHINGTON WR 425. LP. $4.98.

Stewart Gordon, a former Gieseking pupil now teaching at Wilmington College in Ohio, has been extravagantly praised in some quarters, and this first disc of his suggests that much of it is deserved. None of his admirers that I know of, however, has mentioned the artist he most calls to mind—Guinonar Novaes. He shares with her a concern for the luminous, clinging tone that makes possible a true legato on the piano, plus the desire to orchestrate the different voices of the music.

To a large extent Mr. Gordon achieves these two difficult aims, and the rich piano tones, varicolored from top to bottom, bathe the Schumann with warmly vibrant sounds. The tone is a little oversize for the Schubert, where a drier, more delicate texture seems warranted. What is problematic in the playing here is the treatment of rhythm and tempo. In repeated hearings of the Schubert sonata, I could never become reconciled to the sudden changes of tempo for small phrases or to the premature plunging into a new phrase when an old one was scarcely ended. The fluctuations in tempo are not so disturbing in the anormous Schumann sonata, and the listener can revel in the total color lavished on its inspired melodies and harmonies. The piano is too close to the microphone for my taste, but otherwise it has been cleanly recorded.

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Riccardo Cas-tagnone, piano.
- ERC LC 3609. LP. $4.98.

Continued on page 102

VANGUARD recordings for the connoisseur
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- DEBUSSY: Afternoon of a Faun; La Mer—RAVEL: Daphnis and Chloe Suite No. 2—ML 5397 MS 6077

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Here, on a single record, are all the sonatas for violin and piano that Schubert wrote. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the Rondo Brillant, Op. 70, and Fantasia in C, Op. 159, it contains all his chamber music for these two instruments. In this respect, it is quite a bargain, for Johanna Martzy and Jean Antonietti took two full Angel records for their performances of the sonatas. That matter taken care of, it remains a question as to which is the preferable interpretation.

As usual, Grumiaux's tone is both sweet and rich, but there is a bit too much reverberation in the piano tone (the recording seems to have been made in a room that was acoustically a trifle too live). Martzy's tone is a good deal less ravishing than Grumiaux's, though it is very fine indeed, but there is a more felicitous chamber music balance between the two instruments on the Angel discs. After racing through the charming Sonatina No. 1 and dismissing it almost as a trifle, Grumiaux and Castagnone proceed to treat the remaining two sonatinas and the slightly more ambitious A Major Sonata with tenderness and care. Martzy and Antonietti, on the other hand, are less hurried and less cavalier about the first sonatina and considerably more intense about their approach to the other three works. Therefore, though I revel in Grumiaux's tone and the economy of Epic's package, I believe that the Angel discs give a more faithful picture of the music.

P.A.

SCHUMANN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54

Franck: Variations symphoniques

Peter Katin, piano, London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.

- Everest LPBR 6036. LP. $4.98.
- Everest SDBR 3036. SD. $5.98.

It is possible to admire the unblurred extraresonant empty-hall sound captured here and to enjoy the widespread separation of the stereo version, but in fact these engineering achievements detract noticeably from the warmth and intimacy of Schumann's and Franck's music. Again, Mr. Katin's playing of the Schumann is faithful to the letter but a shade cool and rational in spirit. Surprisingly, the Franck is touched with sentimentalty. Goossens and the orchestra collaborate efficiently but with occasional excesses of zeal. The LP disc, with the same spacious acoustical effect, is better than the stereo because the ensemble has greater unity.

R.E.


Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

- Epic BC 1039. SD. $5.98.

Szell and his orchestra bring their familiar virtues of logic and vitality to this reading of the symphony. The lyricism of the Larghetto movement is projected within a welcome rhythmic discipline; too insistently accents, with resultant monotony, are avoided in the Scherzo; and the final Allegro has the gracious spirit marked on the score—indeed, the playing might even he called playful. On the other hand, the Manfred Overture is full of a fine passionate energy. With its well-balanced stereo engineering, this recording can be recommended for its special, admirable, and unspectacular qualities.

R.E.

SMETANA: My Country ("Ma Vlast")

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik, cond.


Ma Vlast is a cycle of six symphonic poems, of which Vltava (The Moldau) is extremely popular in this country and From Bohemian Meadows and Forests gets an occasional hearing. The cycle as a whole is almost never given. In its native Czechoslovakia, however, Ma Vlast is frequently performed in its entirety.

This is as Smetana wished it, for he designed the cycle to be played as a unit. There is an underlying theme representing Vysehrad, the ruined castle on the Moldau, that is heard in two of the symphonic poems in addition to the one so titled; and Tábor and Blaník complement each other, and rightfully should never be played separately. Then there

Continued on page 104

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is Sárka, which contains some of the most beautiful passages Smetana ever penned. In other words, Ma Vlast presents a rounded picture of Smetana’s impressions of his native country and its legends, and the two symphonic poems that are more familiar to us take on new meaning when heard in context.

Being Czech-born himself, Kubelík has an intense feeling for this music which he communicates to the listener in a series of forceful and altogether convincing readings. The Vienna Philharmonic, too, is in fine fettle, and the sound engineers have provided luminous, evenly spread stereo reproduction. P.A.


* • LONDON CS 6139. SD. $5.98.
For review of this record, see p. 89.

* • EVEREST LPR 6038. LP. $3.98.
* • EVEREST SDBR 3038. SD. $4.98.

The first stereo disc of Heldenleben is going to be difficult to surpass. The performance is an excellent one, and the engineering is extraordinarily fine. The arrival of this record coincided with my installation of a new speaker system for stereo which allows me to handle the largest sound intensities with ease. Blasting away with this performance at a much higher volume level than most are likely to use, I found no distortion in the recording, once I had adjusted the playback curve to the characteristics of my fairly bright listening room. The effect was just about that of a live performance, a performance, moreover, that avoids the excessive brevity and quality of some German conductors and presents a hero who is youthful, muscular, and full of vitality.

Monophonically the set is up to all its competition, with the older Reiner edition the only serious challenger. Stereo, however, adds so much for this music that there is no real comparison between the effect of this recording in the two forms.

The album cover, incidentally, is as fine a piece of pictorial satire as I have seen in a long time. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Swan Lake, Op. 20 (excerpts)
Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, cond.
* • CAPITOL SC 7188. SD. $5.98.

Mr. Menuhin gets featured billing on this recording and more prominence from the engineers than his share in the proceedings deserves. He plays the solo violin passages for the Pas de deux in Act I (usually found in Act III), the Pas de deux in Act II, and a supplemental Russian Dance (not usually performed today). Beautiful and important though these solos are, they should not sound, as they do here, as if the violinist had stepped onstage to take over from the dancers. Furthermore, Mr. Menuhin’s first solo is not always precise in pitch and is replete with large-scale rhythmic liberties. The second solo goes better and on its own terms has extremely lovely moments; the last goes best of all and enjoys a flashy cadenza and finale. In all other ways this is an expert recording, for Mr. Kurtz is an old hand at ballet conducting; and, of course, it contains many more of the standard excerpts than those mentioned above. In any case, Mr. Menuhin’s presence gives the disc curiosity value.

R.E.

TOMASCHEK: Fantasia for Glass Harmonica, in E minor — See Naumann: Andante and Gracioso for Glass Harmonica, in C.

WEBER: Overtures
Euryanthe, Der Beheschers der Geister, Abra; Mosers, and Voltaire, etc. — See Overtures: Leopold Minkus (Overture), Roch; Bellman; Franck, Arthur; and others.

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Ansermet for London, Scherchen for Westminster, and various conductors for Decca. And for sonic excellence, the extremely wide dynamic range, natural but grandly broad sonorities here would be hard to match, let alone surpass. My only real criticism is that Sawallisch seems determined to out-Toscanini Toscanini: he comes quite close to doing so, but too often exaggerates his pace and dynamic contrasts, and is generally so vehement that the scores’ more brilliant effects overplay their romantic lyricism. Nevertheless, the program as a whole is impressively dramatic. R.D.D.

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Maria Callas, soprano; Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Nicola Rescigno, cond.

If Maria Callas was heard in tense, tremendous, even equally voice at least half of the time in her recent collection of “Verdi Heroines,” it is cause for all the more rejoicing now to report, as one of the lady’s earlier and temperate admirers, that she sings these “Mad Scenes,” each and all, splendidly. On prior discs La Callas has characterized for posteriory no fewer than seven of opera’s more spectacular victims of lunacy, and three more driven beyond the pur- lius of sweet reason. It strikes me forcibly, however, listening to this new collection of unhappy ladies, that none before has been so nobly deranged as (or for that matter better vocalized than) Anna Bolena. None, surely, has suffered affliction more prettily embroidered than Ophélie in Ambroise Thomas’s elsewhere tepid Hamlet. And none has lost her senses—Boito’s Margherita possibly excepted—more limbily than gentle Imono of Bellini’s Pirata.

The final scene of Anna Bolena, scored for mad soprano, concerned chorus, and conducting comprimarie, follows a scheme of recitative, aria, quartet, and caba- letta. Its harmonic vocabulary is unusually more inventive than our generation has come to expect from Donizetti, with musical paths proportionately intensified. Notwithstanding, “Coppia iniqua” is a virtuosa’s test course through a series of ascending full-voice trills to thickets of hemidemisemiquavers up and down three octaves. The IlHamlet music, in con- trast, merely polishes a borrowed ex- pressive device without involving so wide a range of dramatic inflections. A killer it can be technically, however—happily not once the case here. Most lyrical is the Bellini cavatina, followed by a poign- ant outcry, this introduced by a twucked tam-tam and solemn chorus.

To discuss in detail the Callas sound, vocal method, expressive agility, and theatrical intuition would be, at this late date, pedantic. Suffice it to say that all the familiar beauties, and the few familiar lapses from classroom grace, are to be heard in pristine estate, at the full service of interpretative penetration. Nicola Rescigno, who appeared content merely to accompany Madame’s Verdi scenes, here conducts—in repertory more congenial to his temperamental equip- ment—with force, spirit, and much sty- listic awareness. The Philharmonia Or- chestra, as a collaborative entity, is keenly responsive, especially solo flute and oboe. A chorus, unspecified but assumed to be Walter Legge’s Philharmonia, as- sists as ably. And if the four additional solo recruits heard in Anna Bolena are uniformly substandard, at least there is uniformity of a kind.

Angel’s stereo in this instance is of greater depth than lateral spread, but otherwise quite the most satisfactory re- cording to date of Maria Callas. Surfaces on my copy were generally quiet with

**Continued on page 109**

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GIUSEPPE DI STEFANO: Operatic Recital

Giuseppe di Stefano, tenor, Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Franco Patané, cond.

• • LONDON OS 25081. SD. $5.98.

The tenor is certainly in better voice on this recording than on the recent Forza, and the program has been carefully chosen to show him at his best. All the same, his work here does nothing to alter my impression that he is getting deeper and deeper into serious vocal trouble. The high voice is touch-and-go—he clamps himself to the note, holds on for dear life . . . and the longer he holds, the more trouble it becomes, since it is a dead sound to start with. Above E, all vowels become variants of a flat “ah” or “eh”; he seems unable to sing the sound “o” in the upper register.

All this is very much too bad, for it is an extraordinary natural gift, and every selection on this disc contains moments of unusual beauty. Surprisingly, the French side makes better listening than the Italian. The Manon excerpt offers a melting half-voice, and “Pourquoi me réveiller?” is feelingly sung. Of the Italian numbers I like best the “E lucevan le stelle” and, from Turandot, “Non piangere, Liu!” and “Nessun dorma!”—though Di Stefano’s final “Vincero” in the latter is a clatter hanger. The accompaniments are appropriately red-blooded or delicate, as the case may be, and the sound lush. C.L.O.

MARCEL GRANDJANY: “Introduction and Allegro”


• CAPITOL P 8492. LP. $4.98.

• • CAPITOL SP 8492. SD. $5.98.

Ravel’s lovely work receives an elegant, handsome performance at the hands of Mr. Grandjany and his colleagues, and it sounds almost breathtakingly sensuous as the stereo version gives a specific place to the individual and beautiful timbres of each instrument. An equally good performance of the Debussy dances cannot hide their essential dullness. The other works, all harp solos, give Mr. Grandjany’s artistic and technical resources a workout. The artist wrote his six-part, Faure-like Children’s Hour suite for his pupils, his Rhapsodie to exploit the coloristic capacities of his instrument; with the former he creates delight, with the latter virtuosic brilliance. Even for a solo harp, stereo pays a dividend here by

no audible distortion except on the widest range equipment. ROGER DEFTMEE
Records are better than you think

With the New Dynaco Stereodyne II Your Records (Both Stereophonic and Monophonic) Will Sound Better Than Ever

Much of the criticism which has been aimed at disc recordings, and especially stereophonic discs, has blamed the records for buzzing, breakup, shattering, and similar unpleasant effects. However, the recording art is far ahead of the reproducing techniques. Records are far better than most people realize—the limitation in quality has been in the phonograph cartridge which gouges and scrapes the record while producing music mixed with aggravating distortion.

Fortunately, there are now new design techniques for cartridges which minimize the distortion produced in playing records. The Dynaco Stereodyne II, made by Bang & Olufsen of Denmark, is a unique push pull design (with 8 poles and 4 coils) which permits the lowest distortion and the most natural and translucent sound.

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We suggest that you ask your hi-fi dealer to demonstrate the Stereodyne against any other. Listen to loud passages, to soprano vocalist, to massed string sound. All of these are tests of tracking ability. Listen to percussive instruments like cymbal and triangle—a test of transient response. Listen to your old recordings—you will find them better than ever. Listen to a stereo disc—you will hear the full separation of which the record is capable. (The Stereodyne has separation not only at 1000 cycles but over the entire audio band.) After you have listened, we think that you will agree that the Stereodyne is the cartridge for you—the cartridge that helps your records sound better and last longer.

The Stereodyne II is available from your dealer for $29.95 net. You can also get the same basic cartridge combined with a dynamically balanced, gimbal-pivoted, modernly styled tone arm. This is the unitized giving the instrument more depth of tone than is usual. On its own terms, the LP version has ideal clarity and balance, too.

R.E.

FRANCESCO MARCONI: Recital
Francesco Marconi, tenor; orchestra, pianos.
- Rococo R 22, LP. $5.95.

I'm not sure how many collectors can tolerate the steady din made by these old records for the sake of listening to the eminent nineteenth-century tenor, but those who persevere will hear some stunning singing, as well as some liberal rewriting of the music in the best (or worst) Golden-Age fashion.

The voice has a silken quality and a wonderfully free ring at the crown. Marconi could apparently do just about anything he wished with it, and his version of most of the pieces here will stand beside any. The aria from Rubinstein's seldom-heard Nerone is a superb one, and Marconi's partners in the duets from I Puritani, Forza, etc. are all of interest on their own merits. Verdi would be edited by the improvements made upon his "Questa o quella, and Donizetti by the corrections made in the temps of his "Tu che a Dio." A novelty is the recording of Masini's I Mulattieri with the legendary baritone Corelli; what it sounded like in the studio (or, more likely, the warehouse) is impossible to judge, but the noise that emerges is a remarkably sustained catarwauling, punctuated by cries of what seems to be "Harry!"

C.L.O.

MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR: "The Spirit of Christmas"
Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Richard P. Condie, cond.
- Columbia ML 5493. LP. $4.98.
- Columbia MS 6100. SD. $5.98.

Easily the most impressive of the new Christmas recordings I have yet heard this season is this superb concert of carols by the Salt Lake City choristers, a well-balanced program incorporating a few of the old favorites (Silent Night, Ave Maria, etc.) plus a larger number of lesser-known carols, some of them extremely obscure. It is the latter that are the real delights of the record. The beautiful Pergolesi anthem Glory to God in the Highest, the haunting Catalan song of the Nativity The Three Kings, the unusual Bethlehem Night of Arthur Warrill, and Gustav Holst's superbly constructed vocal fantasia Christmas Day are particularly noteworthy. The intricacies of the vocal lines in some of these works are handled with assurance and understanding, and the singing throughout is both stimulating and moving. In every way this is a very beautiful record.

Columbia has achieved an extremely wide spread of sound in the stereo version, but one that also tends to overbrighten the quality of the female choir, particularly the sopranos. This is much less noticeable in the monophonic version, which I find preferable.

J.F.P.I.

High Fidelity Magazine
NEOLITICAN SONGS BY THE IMMORTALS


**E T E R N A** 728. LP. $5.95.

There is enough high-grade vocalism on this release to justify its existence for those interested in the songs as tenor vehicles, and not as romantic dinner music. The best singing comes from de Lucia and Caruso, the former demonstrating what perfect vocal control and aristocratic bearing one can do with the simplest material, and the latter bringing an exuberant splendor to both his songs. Bonci and de Muro Lamontano also handle their material perfectly. Lauri-Volpi is shown to advantage in La Serenata (this is not the more familiar song beginning 'Vola, o serenata . . .'), but his L'ultima d'estate is a poor example of his work, and both Schipa and Zenatello have been heard to better effect. The others are all worthy representatives of the tradition, Pattiera making an especially engaging contribution.

C.L.O.

NETHERLANDS CHAMBER CHOIR: "The Birth of Christ"

Netheanders Chamber Choir, Felix de Nobel, cond.

- Epic LC 3614. LP. $4.98.
- Epic BC 1041. SD. $5.98.

This disc provides a beautiful selection of seventeen Renaissance motets for the Christmas season. They are grouped under four heads—"Advent," "The Birth of Christ," "The Gospel Tidings to the Shepherds," and "Rejoicing"—and eleven composers are represented: Lassus (three pieces); Palestrina, Sweelinck, Handl or Gallus; and Praetorius (two each); and Victoria, Croce, Willaert, G. Gabrieli, Hasier, and Clemens non Papa (one each). There is considerable variety in texture, from the two-part Puer natus in Bethlehem of Praetorius to the eight-part O Jesus mi dulcissimo of Gabrieli, but the predominant mood is naturally one of rejoicing. The listener is therefore likely to find more enjoyment in playing two or three of these pieces at a time than the whole thing at one sitting, but wherever he digs into this disc he will strike gold.

The expert Netherlands Chamber Choir sings with its accustomed verve, fine tone, excellent balance, and generally good intonation. The recording in both versions is first-rate, though more advantage, it seems to me, could have been taken of stereo, as in the Gabrieli piece for double chorus, where the obvious separation is not made. N.B.

EZIO PINZA: "Ezio Pinza Sings Italian Songs"


Ezio Pinza, bass; Fritz Kitzinger, piano.
- RCA Camden CAL 530. LP. $1.98.

Unlike Camden's previous Pinza disc of operatic excerpts, this release does not bring us the singer's voice in vintage condition, and aria antiche were not the strongest part of his repertory. Here his voice betrays hints of the hootiness on top and throatiness below that set in during the last years of his career, and despite the rich tone he summons, he seems to be reaching for effect. Lungi dal caro bene and Bellissimi capelli turn out well, and Pinza's dark, relaxed sound is sensitively suited to a Baroque source, which in any case a supremely beautiful piece of musical sculpture; but many of these songs sound rather silly if not sung by a voice and in a style appropriate to them. Kitzinger's accompaniments are sufficient, but only fairly well recorded.

C.L.O.

HANS RICHTER-HAUSER: "The Romance of the Piano"

Hans Richter-Hauser, piano.
- Epic LC 3620. LP. $4.98.

Coincident with Mr. Richter-Hauser's first American concert appearances this fall, Epic has issued this curious disc devoted to popular "encores" pieces and the Beethoven Sonata No. 24, Op. 78. Whether or not the report is true that this miscellany was assembled from European recordings of another day, the image emerges therefrom of an intelligent, technically adroit, musically pianist, consistent with, but not as remarkable as the Richter-Hauser who is so- loist in Angel's current release of Brahms's II flat Piano Concerto. Warmth and poetry have little place in these clearheaded interpretations of nineteenth-century works; for this reason the reading of the brisk little Beethoven Sonata gives the most satisfaction. The pianist also elects considerable charm in Grieg's Vanishing Days (Op. 57, No. 1) and Wedding Day at Troldhagen. Clean natural recording of the piano tone. R.E.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN: "Vienna Philharmonic Festival"


Continued on page 115

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High Fidelity Magazine

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

• • RCA Victor Four SD. $25.98.

For a feature review of this album, see p. 80.

LOVRO VON MATACIC: "Russian Program"

Borodin: Prince Igor: Overture; Prelude; Preludia, Act III (Poleotski March); Polovtsian Dances, Act II. Mussorgsky: Fantasia: Night on the Bare Mountain. Rimsky-Korsakov: Easter Overture, Op. 36 ("Grande Pique Russe").

Philharmonia Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond.

• • Angel S 35768. SD. $5.98.

For sonic liveness and spaciousness, extremely wide dynamic range, darkly rich tonal coloring, and the most naturally balanced, differentiated, and blended of stereo recording, this record is one of the finest symphonic SDs available today. But its appeal extends far beyond the sound fancier's somewhat circumscribed domain. I myself was quite unprepared to encounter such mastery of both Slavic insight and orchestral virtuosity as Von Matacic displays here. Perhaps some of his contrasts, in both tempo and volume level, are a bit extreme, but his immense gusto and precise control persuade one that they are just what the composers themselves desired. In any case, every one of these works seems born anew, blazing with the barbaric ferocity which first made them distinctive. An extraordinary disc, and one which I trust will soon be followed by other revelations of Von Matacic's—and the EMI engineers'—superb talents.

R.D.D.

JOHN WILLIAMS: Guitar Recital


John Williams, guitar.

• Washington WR 424. LP. $4.98.

Nineteen-year-old, Australian-born John Williams would deserve attention if only because of the accolade he has earned from one of his teachers—Segovia. With Latin eloquence, the master has written of his young pupil: "A prince of the guitar has arrived in the musical world..."

...God has laid a finger on his brow, and it will not be long before his name becomes a byword in England and abroad." The recording bears Segovia out to the extent that we hear a completely schooled technician, with a generous command of instrumental color, and a tidy phrase turner. Nothing Mr. Williams does can be faulted, but he has yet to make the guitar the personal, seductive instrument it is in the hands of more mature artists.

Some of this impersonal effect can be traced to insufficient dynamic and rhythmic variety, some to insufficient subtlety in phrasing. Still, the young guitarist's musical and technical exactitude is rare and has its own value. The Bach suite is correctly handled in terms of accent and line, although it tends to plod along, and the rest of the music is appealing and unhackneyed. The variations by John W. Duarte, another of Mr. Williams' teachers, were written for the younger man. Colorful and brilliant, they elicit the best playing on this disc, and quite striking that best is. The exceptionally intimate recording emphasizes the extra little clicking sounds that go with guitar playing, but they do not become really disturbing.

R.E.

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Reviews continued on page 121

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
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It is far more difficult to design a kit than to produce a completely manufactured product. In the plant the engineer can control his design from the moment of inception until the final packaging. The kit builder has only his tools, his ingenuity and little, if any, test equipment.

Therefore, the complex process of in-plant production and control which guarantees the fine finished product must somehow be embedded in the kit design. The Citation engineering group at Harman-Kardon, headed by Stewart Hegeman, has succeeded in doing just this in the design of the new Citation I, Stereophonic Preamplifier Control Center and Citation II, 120 Volt Stereophonic Power Amplifier.

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NEW YORK 20, N.Y.
It's Christmas shopping time again," Papa announced to the assembled small fry one chill Saturday morning. "Bundle up and we'll see what we can find at the music store." What they found was too numerous to describe here, but very special were the records actually purchased just especially for the lollipop and post-lollipop group.

Among a good many fine releases, the two outstanding issues of the year are probably Music for Children by Carl Orff and Comid Keetman (Angel 3582 B) and a remake by Vox of their Music Masters Series. The former, providing songs, speaking choruses, rhythm exercises, and instrumental pieces in three speed recordings, was reviewed at length in Hinton Fidelity's June issue, where Carl Michael Steinberg found it of "overwhelming importance" in giving children a real understanding of music. The Vox series, first brought out at 78 rpm, is a set of records introducing children to the lives and music of great composers. Each record is devoted to one or two men. Excerpts from the composer's works (very well played) alternate with spoken commentary telling the story of the composer's life. The narration, by Arthur Hannes, is simple and straightforward. The music is carefully chosen with young listeners in mind—melodious and lively sections of a symphony or sonata rather than slower, more contemplative ones. And when, in the Mozart disc (MM 3510), for instance, the text calls for the composer, at age six or seven, to play for his father, the piano playing was found as if a young but gifted child was performing. And for those interested in historical background the back cover of each jacket lists salient dates in the composer's life along with important public events and contemporary happenings in the world of music and letters. Fifteen of these records have been issued; and though they are primarily intended for pre-teens, they are in fact a charming way to introduce anybody of any age to the classics.

The above releases and those I will discuss below are, of course, LPs, but children's records continue to be made in three speeds. I myself staunchly maintain that for a child up to, say, seven years, 78-rpm is an ideal length. In this category, for example, the Children's Record Guild and Young People's Records still issue their "Almanac" series (historical facts interspersed with old songs), which are both informative and musical. Not every month is equally good, but try May (YPR 419A) or January (CRG 430), or—it's an appropriate time—December (CRG 424).

For those with longer listening ears there is a bigger list to choose from. Enrichment Records (10-inch, 33 1/3 rpm) is still adding to its historical series—famous scenes in history acted out with songs of the era. It is impossible to list them all here, but I suggest that you write for their catalogue (246 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N.Y.). In the meantime several releases of records worthy of mention are still coming in. And for those young ones interested in birthdays. Speaking of the latter there are two good versions of Alice in Wonderland out this year, and here's a case of 'where's your money and takes your choice.' The Caedmon version (TC 1097) has Stanley Holloway as narrator and Joan Greenwood as Alice. Though Miss Greenwood doesn't have a little girl's voice, she does have a child's sense of wonder and fun. Mr. Holloway and the supporting cast are excellent. The second Caedmon record (TC 1098) takes Alice through the Looking Glass. London's version (OSA 1206), a stereo album, devotes two records to Alice in Wonderland alone, which means that each episode is almost uncut. I prefer Stanley Holloway's reading, but the London Alice sounds more like a little girl.

For contrast to Lewis Carroll's world there is a sort of junior "Sing Along with Mitch" record issued by Kapp (KL 1146, LP and KS 3029, SD) called C'mon You Campers: all the familiar songs—Alouette, John Peel, I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover (laugh and run the gamut)—are here. The songs are sung by children and adults, and you'll want to join in too. An odd disc that appeared this year has Jean Ritchie and the Manhattan Recorder Consort in an unusual and interesting program. Titled A Day in the Park (Classic Editions CE 1043), Side 1 includes music by William Byrd and Giles Farnaby, along with some German dances, all played by recorders only. Side 2 contains American folk songs sung in Miss Ritchie's clear, untrained voice. This record was especially produced for children, but it very well may not be for the average child.

RCA Victor has a whole roster of children's records, varying considerably in quality. Our Wild West is represented in an LP of themes from the current TV shows. They are good tunes, well played (LBY 1028). Tales from the Arabian Nights (LBY 1028), with Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade music, are well told with nice speaking voices throughout (very important, I think). For Bible stories there are Tales from the Great Book, Vol. 2 (LBY 1029): the story of Joseph, read by Brian Aherne, and the story of Abraham read by Ronald Reagan. Both are straightforward narrations, but I could do without the electric organ in the background. For more secular stories there is a record of Aesop's Fables (LBY 1019), told by the Hanky Panky players with accompanying sound effects. Except that some of the voices are harsh and the music dull, the record is worth the listen.

This year RCA seems to have added something new—a sort of "music minus one" for young actors. The Bluebird Home Playhouse (LBY 1026) relates the story of Cinderella and Pinocchio. The story is acted out three times: the first time all the parts are taken by the RCA company; the next time the part of Cinderella is left out and the listener fills in, reading from a script enclosed with the record; the third time around two parts are left for listeners to read. I found it quite amusing to try to act out the missing roles. Face it: for $1.98 it's worth the fun.

Other labels offer stories and songs of the frontiers—Cowboy Songs for Little Buckaroo (don't let the title discourage you), Top L 1658, and Songs and Stories of the Wild West, Lion 70103.

For the three-to-eight group Weston Woods Studios has issued several records, among them PBP 101, which tells the stories of "Millions of Cats," "Hercules," etc. against a background of exceptionally effective and interesting music.

On the premise, I suppose, that one cannot introduce a child to the sound of a foreign language too young, Capitol has recorded an hour of Spanish children's tales in story and song. Both singers have very adequate voices, and the familiar Latin rhythms here have the ring of authenticity (Capitol T 10200). And that seems to be about the crop that Papa selected at the local diskery. But just as he was about to leave, wishing that he had just one extra specially good record for Christmas, his eye fell on The Ugly Duckling and Other Tales read by his favorite narrator, Boris Karloff (Caedmon TC 1100). Since there seemed to be no very Christmasy record among this year's harvest, he planned to play Bing Crosby's An Axe, an Apple, and a Buckskin (Golden Masterpiece Recordings A39621) on the Great Day again this year and save the Ugly Duckling to spark up December 26, when everyone would be sitting around like wilted balloons.

MIRIAM D. MANNING

Reviews continued on page 125

DECEMBER 1959

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www.americanradiohistory.com
who am I?

My birthday is January 1st. I'll be thirty-five. I'm married, have two terrific youngsters. I own a lovely home, but then I can afford it. My legal practice is going swell. I'm earning well over $10,000 a year. Come on, now. You know me. **Who am I?** Okay, here are a few hotter clues... I'm loaded. I'm really a millionaire. Why, next year I'm going to spend $40,000,000 for just the things I love best. No, not mink coats and diamond rings and things and things. But for component high fidelity equipment, and records, records, records! I'm a *musical* millionaire, you see. Gad! That's a sure give-away. **Who am I?**
One more clue. Just one more, no fooling . . .

I am a man of considerable influence
in my community. Ha! How influential? During
the past 12 months I'll bet I have
fervently recommended component high fidelity
to ten other people. What's more,
I happen to know that at least two of them
actually bought complete systems. In
fact, by rough but reasonable calculation . . .
I'd say that in the five years I've
been enamored of high fidelity, I've created
seven new and equally faithful fans.
That gives me away for sure. Who am I?
Shame! Here's your very last chance . . .
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in our recent 1959-1960 Audience Study
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Here at Home

“Gold on Silk.” Bay Wright Orchestra. Everest LPBR 5048, $4.98 (LP); Everest SDBR 1048, $5.98 (SD).
This is a difficult record to classify, but one simple to describe. Fabulous is the word for it. Already it’s been placed on my turntable at least half a dozen times, and undoubtedly will be played many times more. Each hearing has revealed further enchantments. Over the skillful arrangements for the string section, some of the finest brass instrumentalists play solos that are little short of magical. From the soaring line of Doc Severinsen’s trumpet in Lonesome Horn and the glowing warmth of the French horn in Jim Chambers’ version of My Man’s Gone Now to the purity of Will Bradley’s trombone sound in Why Was I Born and the mellowness Don Butterfield extracts from his tuba in Yesterdays, everything is perfect. Add the impeccable Everest sound, particularly in the stereo version, and you’ll have some idea of why I call this disc inspired. Mood music? Well, perhaps, but actually more than that . . . a great deal more.

“The Fabulous Eartha Kitt.” Eartha Kitt; Orchestra, Maurice Levine, cond. Kapp KL 1162, $3.98 (LP); Kapp KS 3046, $4.98 (SD).
Not since the day when Eartha Kitt first burst into prominence in New Faces of 1952 has she sounded as sultry and exciting as she does here. In spite of its pronounced vibrato, her voice has a certain fascinating color and almost as interesting is her style, which seems now to be a knowing mixture of Edith Piaf’s earthiness and Lena Horne’s sophistication. In Love Is a Gambler, I even detect traces of Ella Logan, surely an unlikely artist to influence this singer. But Miss Kitt’s feline personality is uniquely her own, and it’s particularly well suited to nearly all the songs in this program. These range pretty far afield, from Israeli to South American, from Kurt Weill’s Mack, the Knife to a very effective version of Lamplight. The only miss, or near-miss, is a blues number, which is lacking in real understanding. The sound on the LP is good, but the stereo version is much superior.

This is a far livelier sing-along recording than most of those to which I have listened, especially in that it avoids the standard Sweet Adeline—When You Were a Tulip—Let the Rest of the World Go By repertoire, and offers you an opportunity to exercise your vocal chords on songs from Broadway shows, movies, and Tin Pan Alley. Here is your chance to be another Harry Richman in Puttin’ on the Ritz, an Astaire in Cheek to Cheek, an Eddie Cantor in Makin’ Whoopee, or a Ruth Fitting in Love Me or Leave Me. With the Marty Ames Orchestra and Chorus providing you with strong support, you can have yourself a thoroughly enjoyable time.

“At the Drop of a Hat.” Michael Flanders and Donald Swann. Angel 35797, $4.98 (LP).
For the American production of their urbane and witty revue At the Drop of a Hat, the two-man team of Michael Flanders and Donald Swann have wisely retained most of the material that convinced London audiences for 759 performances. The French and Greek songs that Donald Swann sang on Angel 65042 have been dropped, along with the hilarious finale based on the Lord Chamberlain’s London theatre regulations. Presumably the honors of that number were considered too local in character for Broadway audiences. I’m sorry it’s gone, for it made a rousing finish to a delightful record. On the whole, however, the changes seem to me to strengthen the listening appeal of this entertaining farce. To replace some of the casualties, there is a duet extolling the virtues (personal, national, and international) of the bath, Flanders’ anguished tale of the trials of an umpire at Wimbledon, and a wacky hymn of praise to “The Wong Pong,” an “animal-machine” capable of producing almost anything for the comfort of the human race, from clothing material to liquor. All three are delightful.

Quite as amusing as the songs are Flanders’ introductory remarks to each number. These little gems of timing and inflection have been suitably changed for American audiences. The rapport between the artists is as strong as ever, even though Swann has now become the conventional butt of some of Flanders’ jests. According to Flanders, the record was made “For Posity,” which may possibly account for a performance that strikes me as lacking the subtlety of the earlier disc. I have not heard the stereo version, but the monophonic is not one of Flanders’ happiest efforts. The sound lacks clarity, suffers from occasional fading, and is diffuse.

“With These Hands.” Roger Williams, piano; Orchestra, Marty Gold, Frank Hunter, Gene Von Hallberg, cond. Kapp KL 1147, $3.98 (LP); Kapp KS 3030, $4.98 (SD).
Now that Roger Williams has practically exhausted the repertoire of songs from the Fabulous 40s, 50s, and the Century, he has returned to the type of music better suited to display his considerable talents. These graceful, even distinguished performances of a dozen concertolike arrangements of light music are highly welcome. I particularly enjoyed O Mio Babbino Caro (Puccini), Strange Music (Grieg), and the two delightful Leroy Anderson pieces, The Syncopated Clock and Forgotten Dreams. But the whole program is pleasurable, not only for Williams’ pianism, but also for the excellent orchestral arrangements that support it. Both versions offer excellent sound, in which the piano tone is unusually lifelike. I myself prefer the stereo version, even though my review copy suffered from a high level of tape hiss.

Earth Kitt: fabulous and feline.
The “Do It Yourself” Psychoanalysis Kit. Del Close. Hanover M 5002, $4.98 (LP).

Want to learn more about schizophrenia, the Iod, Oedipus complex, manic depression, or some other aspect of the involved science of psychoanalysis? Fine, but this record isn’t going to be of any assistance whatever, in spite of its title. It will help you discover, if you didn’t already know, that your risible resistance is quite low. It will also prove that when Del Close, the Dr. Adler-Jung-Freud of this session, gets to kidding the couch consultant and his patient, the result can be a very funny matter. I noticed that Del Close (properly equipped with the degrees of B.A.T., L.T., and M.D.) receives all the proceeds from the sale of this record. He deserves them.

“Sixty Years of ‘Music America Loves Best.”’ RCA Victor LM 6074, $3.98 (Two LP).

At the low price of $3.98 (for a limited time only) this two-record album of thirty performances by top RCA Victor artists is likely to be one of the most commercially successful sets ever issued. The recordings have obviously been chosen on the strength of their past sales figures. Each, in its original 78-rpm format, sold over a million copies, and one hardly needs to be a wizard at mathematics to compute what they would have cost a buyer, when originally issued at prices ranging from 90¢ to $2.00 a copy.

Although the intermingling of classical and popular music seems to me regrettable, there are enough good performances in both categories to make this a very attractive release. Perhaps the classical music enthusiast is the more fortunate, since he is offered recordings long absent from the catalogue, by Caruso, Rachmaninoff, Paderewski, Heifetz, Kreisler, Stokowski, and others. For me, the gem of the entire album is Horowitz’s fantastic performance of his Variations on Themes from “Carmen,” which in itself is well worth the current price of the entire album. Since there is no longer any deadener than yesterday’s pop hit, that field comes off well less. Historically interesting to some listeners will be the Goodman, Dorsey (with Sinatra), Ellington, and Shaw sides, but the balance are strictly space fillers. The sound, in view of the respective age of each recording, is surprisingly good. Oddly enough, the Whiteman of 1920 sounds more ancient than the Caruso of 1904, although obviously the former has been heavily doc- tored. Ellington’s Take the “A” Train appears to have been made from a master that has sadly deteriorated, but the remainder are all sonically acceptable or better.


This is a bright, fast-moving, intimate revue that has been running off, as well as on, Broadway for the last five months. It seems to be patterned along the lines of Leonard Sillman’s New Faces re- vues, though it is more the professional daze of the most successful of that series, New Faces of 1952. Every member of the talented cast appears to be having such a wonderful time that I can’t help thinking there may be a good deal more to the show than what one hears on the record. If the lyrics and the music are not exactly memorable, neither can they be called banal. The Beatniks come in for an almost inevitable roasting in Listen to the Beat, and Where Are Your Children effective, though taken out of the juvenile delinquency problem. In The Fights there is a gentle poke at the family problems television raises in the average household, and, rather unfortunately in a revue that originated on the West Coast, Los Angeles is gently deflated in the amusing City of the Angels. If the distasteful side of the cast seems to be more successful than the male, I think this is mainly because it has been handed the best ma- terial. The musical support from two pianos sounds a little undernourished, and I am sure that this would all have sounded more professional with orchestral backing. But budgets are budgets, and I assume this one was extremely limited.


These three records played by one of London’s top society orchestras suggest the atmosphere of a diller dance at Lon- don’s Groovehouse most realistically. Against a background of subdued conversation and the clatter of crockery, cutlery, and tinking glass, the Sydney Lipton orchestra plays six sides of continuous dance music, which for the most part looks back to the great songs of the Thirties. To judge from the suitably discreet sound, this is not a very large orchestra, nor is it one given to strong or frantic rhythm. Compared to similar groups in this country, it sounds unusually relaxed. This quality is most pro- nounced in the few waltzes included, in which the treatment, solo violin against main orchestra, is sleepy and downbeat old-fashioned. The dance, easy, comfortable rhythm, and most danc- ers will find them hard to resist. Under hardly ideal conditions, London engin- eers have captured very good stereo sound.

“The Lawrence Welk Glee Club.” Pete Lane, cond. Dot DLP 25218, $4.98 (SD).

Since members of the Lawrence Welk Glee Club must also double as musicians in the Welk orchestra, generally in- different quality of the singing here is understandable. Had the group more time for rehearsals, doubtless the slipshod attacks and lack of vocal nuance would be rectified, and some rather unusual ideas about rhythm and light. As for the program itself, it is a curious mixture of selections, chosen apparently because certain people like certain songs. Thus we get Come In Thru the Rye because the president of Welk’s TV sponsor, Dodge, is Scratch (sic), and feature with the Light Brown Hair simply because the
director's wife is named Jeannie. The most curious entrant in this hodgepodge is Franz Lehár's "Vilia," originally written as a soprano solo and no more appropriate for a male chorus than the "Bell Song" from Lakmé. Welk admirers will doubtless find pleasure in this record, however, and Dot has invested it with fine stereo sound, admirable both in depth and direction.

"Smash Flops." The Characters. PIP Pip 1900, $3.98 (LP). How funny you will find these "Smash Flops"—songs of what might have been—will depend entirely on your personal sense of humor. Most of them have a touch of the macabre; they are decidedly not for the squeamish. If you can stand the most outrageous of them, When the Hindenburg Lands Today ("There'll be a hot, hot time in Lakehurst, New Jersey") or Bon Voyage, Titanic ("I'm so lucky to be sailing with you"), you'll probably be able to take the rest. They are served up in barroom quartet style, with an appropriate tinny piano accompaniment. The sound is fair.

"Teddy Tyle Styles Glenn Miller Favorites." Teddy Tyle Orchestra. Golden Crest CR 3059, $3.98 (LP). Miller fans will probably raise an eyebrow when they discover that Tyle has taken a dozen of the Maestro's old favorites and replaced the swing with rock and roll. These pieces are strong enough to withstand the onslaught, but they're hardly improved by it. The younger set will likely find this record attractive; those with longer memories will undoubtedly be aghast at the old Miller recordings, to remind themselves how these fine tunes should sound.

"Song of Norway." Brenda Lewis, John Reardon, Sig Arno, Helena Scott, William Olvis; Orchestra, Lehman Engel; Columbia Cl. 1328, $3.98 (LP). Fifteen years old and still going strong, Song of Norway was the last successful New York operetta in the romantic tradition of Blossom Time and The Student Prince. A musical dramatization of incidents in the life of Edvard Grieg, it is plagued by an absurd libretto, but blessed with a superb score, compounded of snippets of Grieg's always charming music. The original cast recording (Decca DL 9019), issued in 1945, offered some unusually attractive vocal performances in sound that is now, unfortunately, badly dated. Even so, I am not certain that it is superseded by this new version. Naturally the Columbia sound is infinitely superior, but the rough and ready performance by the cast of the production at the Jones Beach Marine Theatre is no match, vocally, for its predecessor. The singing may be loud, but it is not always good, and it invariably lacks subtlety and charm. Perhaps the performers all feel that the competition from fishing fleets, icebergs, and waterfalls—scenic effects of the current presentation—can only be surmounted by this broad approach.

JOHN F. INDOX

DECEMBER 1959
BUY IT!...I can't even pronounce it!

"Piano Pasha." Ergolcan Capli, piano. Dot DLP 3215, $3.98 (LP).

The Turkish Information Office in the United States thought so well of Capli's interpretations of indigenous Turkish melodies that it sent to its mailing list an outside four-color view of Istanbul with one band of "Piano Pasha" pressed thereon. Pleasant though this combination may be, its fidelity poses no threat to the velvety surfaces and superclear sound of Dot's original. Capli plays with the superb assurance of a top Impulse artist and has beautified the melodies—all of them strikingly attractive in their own right—with his imaginative arrangements. Different, arresting, brilliant. Don't miss it.


Young Bridie Gallagher has attained a solid popularity with record buyers in the British Isles. In this, her American bow, she shows why. Her voice is sweet, with a distinctive nasal quality, and she approaches her songs—all folk-derived but presented with a dance-band sheen—with a relaxed surety that relaxes the listener as well. An attractive offering, with London's usual superior stereo sound.

"Chansons Populaires de France." Yves Montand: Bob Castella and His Rhythms, Odeon OSX 110, $5.95 (LP).

"Die Chansons pour 1-1-Ei." Yves Montand: Bob Castella and His Rhythms, Odeon OSX 136, $5.95 (LP).

Yves Montand, as New York audiences have recently discovered, is almost quintessentially French. His individual talents—none particularly unique—form a whole much greater than the sum of its parts. An artist of deep proletarian sympathies, Montand is effectively at home with Chansons Populaires de France. All but four of these well-known solutions are folk songs, and some date from before the Revolution of 1789. Virility and tenderness, patriotism and rebellion play like light and shadow here, and Montand's baritone reflects every facet. These are complex songs replete with obscure allusions, however, and the album contains not one word of annotation.

In "Ten Songs for Summer," Montand transforms himself into the cabaret entertainer par excellence: polished, nonchalant, with the characteristic wry, self-effacing manner that can become almost a vocal shrug. The songs, all current French favorites, are thoroughly enjoyable, the sound is full and clear, and Montand is marvelous.


Innovative engineering has given new sonic life to the thirty-year-old 78 rpm records here served up in LP format. The ritual songs are emotionally profound and while the style of the former Cantor of Legnano is more florid than that of other great cantors, his voice is ineffably sweet, conveying an underlying ardor that approaches ecstasy. There is, perhaps, an excess of vibrato; but Pinchik's brilliant entrance in Mah Nomer and his lyrical Razo D'Shabban—song, incidentally, in Aramaic, the everyday language of Palestine at the dawn of the Christian era—redeem any minor blemishes.

"Chants d'Israel." Emile Kagan; Berthie Kal: Chorus and Instrumental Ensemble, Léon Algazi, cond. Pathé DTX 291, $5.95 (LP).

This anthology, "dedicated to the State of Israel on the occasion of its tenth anniversary," is, by a wide margin, the finest disc of Israeli music I have yet heard. The program includes sacred chants, wordless Hassidic songs, folk tunes, Biblical lyrics, two surpassingly lovely Sephardic airs, and a stirring choral treatment of the national anthem Hatikva. The breadth of the material, the beauty of its rendition, and the sure controlling hand of director Léon Algazi, a noted Israeli musician, shape a stunning album that is stunningly recorded. The copious annotation (also by Algazi) and translations from the Hebrew, Yiddish, and Spanish—all contained in an accompanying booklet—are in French.

"Erich Kunz Sings German University Songs, Volume 4." Erich Kunz: Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Anton Ponik, cond. Vanguard VHS 1045, $4.98 (LP); VSD 2040, $5.95 (SD).

There is little left to say concerning the art of Erich Kunz in the field of German folk song. In this, his fourth such album for Vanguard, he displays again the robust baritone and sensitive interpretative faculties that have always illuminated his work. As might be expected at this point, Kunz's renderings of obscure academic halls to seek out fresh songs. He succeeds splendidly: Die Maursdutaten, Ich hatt' einen Kameraden, and Die Gedanken sind frei have immediate appeal. Fine, bright, mono sound, the orchestration—crisply separated—quite literally adds a third dimension to the choral backgrounds.

"Bavarian Polka Party." Theo Fersel and His Orchestra. Epic LN 3618, $3.98 (LP); BN 548, $3.98 (SD).

Rustic exuberance informs every measure of this charming release, but Theo Fersel and his toddlers never allow the proceedings to degenerate into rhythmic frenzy. The Fersel treatment is rather in the vein of a Sunday afternoon outing where solid Herrn und Frauen—comfortably stuffed with sausage and beer—stomp out a polka more for relaxation than exercise. It's fun to hear and even more fun to dance to. The stereo version, with its dazzling depth, separation, and clarity, carries the sonic day.


Continued on page 130

High Fidelity Magazine

Foreign Flavor

"Eh, you're not buying AC at retail prices!"
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According to a correspondent who accompanied Vice-President Nixon on his summer from curtain tour, proceeding from Moscow to Warsaw was "like passing from shadow into sunshine." One shares this impression after contrasting Bruno's two volumes of Polish pops with other fare from beyond the iron. Fogg, a mellow baritone, strays far-and fearlessly-from F-shirts' songs of field and factory. Fox trots and tangos are his musical stock in trade, and he even throws in a few delightful dialects such as "Ariettes d'Alma, Fascination, and Around the World in 80 Days." Bruno's sound falters occasionally, but the general level is acceptable.

"Fiji (Isa Lei)," Adi Cakobau Girls' School Choir; Via Ni Tebara Choir; Alf Bentley and His Islanders; Seni Devuga Damu (The Red Ginger Boys). Capitd T 10216, $3.98 (LP).

Actually recorded in the Fiji Islands, this release comprises a group of authentic Fijian songs in somewhat Europeanized vocal and instrumental frames. All the artists are islanders, but all have been brushed and well-brushed—by Western ways. Of the songs, several—such as Seri Ni Manu Manu and Bul Bul—are genuinely amusing, and several more—notably the haunting Isa Lei—are quite moving. The recorded sound varies in quality from band to hand, but is never less than satisfactory. Capitol provides summaries of each selection.

"La Voce D'Italia." Giuseppe di Stefano: Orchestra, Dino Olivieri, cond. London OS 25065, $5.98 (SD).

Di Stefano has the good sense to meet these popular songs on their own terms. He makes no attempt to transform them into Puccini arias nor does he patronize their innate simplicity. The result is a vocally opulent, emotionally gratifying recital of Italian favorites such as Parti di amore Marta ("Tell Me That You Love Me Tonight") and Firenze Sogna ("Flor- ence Dreams"). London's engineers place Di Stefano smack between the speakers and afford Olivieri's orchestral accompaniment reasonable separation if not great depth.

"Bravo Bikel." Theodore Bikel: Elektra 175, $4.98 (LP).

This is Bikel's eighth disc for Elektra; and while it is the most lavish in format, it is also the least well recorded. (Perhaps this is to be expected, since the singer was taped in the course of two actual Carnegie Hall concerts.) But even though Bikel has been milked distantly and sounds as though he were singing through gauze, his overwhelming personality shines through and his multilingual songs are as electrifying as ever. Complete texts and translations are included.

"The Girl From Paris." Cécile Deville: Orchestra, Russ Morgan, cond. Everest LPBR 5043, $3.98 (LP); SDBR 1043, $4.98 (SD).

Mlle. Deville, possessed of a warm, clear soprano and a delicious accent, shows tremendous promise—as well as a degree

of fulfillment—in her Everest debut. At twenty-five, however, she has not quite developed a firm style of her own. Her interpretations too often and too obviously derive from those of other French vocalists. But when she gives a Gallic twine—both linguistic and interpretative—to The Lady Is a Tramp and My Heart Belongs to Daddy she is an unmitigated delight. The stereo edition lacks the sharp focus and general brightness of the mono entry.


Given the renown of Welsh choral singing, it is odd that up to now no Welsh choirs have been represented in the Schaum catalogue. Washington Records has corrected the deficiency with Music from the Welsh Mines, originally taped in London by the British label Delysé. The Rhos Male Voice Choir is a splendidly disciplined, muscular unit—right to my ear—is at its best with traditional songs like "Arrivederci Roma" and "Ad Doriad Dyyd." Delysè's recording, however, besides being cursed with an omnipresent tape hiss, is so turgid as to rob the choral sound of virtually all texture.


It would be idle to pretend that these Chinese classics, played on the stringed pipa and chin by Lui Tsun-Yuen, weave an immediate spell. To the average Western ear they are harsh, dissonant, bereft of melody. It is only after exposure to the idiom that one perceives its beauties—in their way as delicate and understated as a Sung Dynasty painting. Lui plays with a lyric command of his instruments, all the while firmly controlling the multecedent material. While Moonlight Over the Spring River, Plum Blossoms, and The Lament of Empress Chen are extremally appealing, I found Lui's own Chinese Soldiers' March the most striking item on the disc. A superlative recording for anyone willing to give it time and attention, and the sound is crystalline.


The brothers Warner have proceeded one of their Hollywood properties into musical—or antimusical, depending upon your point of view—action for this abysmal release. Bill Holden not only grins toothily from the cover, but also serves as a genial guide (by way of what seem to be obviously ghosted notes) to the contents. These consist of orchestral vignettes of Far Eastern locales that slop over with every cheap cliché and tired gimmick in existence. A plethora of gongs, disembodied female voices mouthing syllables rather than words, tinkling bells, etc. make this about as authentic—and palatable—as chop suey with ketchup.

O. B. BRUMMELL

Reviews continued on page 132
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“White Goddess.” Frank Hunter and His Orchestra. Kapp KL 1136, $3.98 (LP); KS 3019, $4.98 (SD).

My preliminary glance at the prospect of listening to another example of so-called exotica were immediately silenced when Hunter proved himself to be the most imaginative and tasteful arranger-conductor who has yet explored this recently popular genre. He too employs worthless voices and such off-beat tonalities as those of the Ondioline, Bazinha, alto flute, Chinese Bell Tree, and the like—but always with a sure sense of their coloristic and atmospheric point. Furthermore, he brings an individual and often surprising ly poetic touch, together with unflagging rhythmic lift, to his performances. The pure and bright recording is excellent in monophony, yet stereo reveals not only the expected expansiveness but an even wider dynamic range and many delicious cross-channel antiphonies, which make this an uncommonly effective stereo demonstrator as well as the most musically attractive demonstration of “exotic” sonic potentialities to date.

Strauss Waltzes. Bansberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Kellibeth, cond. Telefunken TC 8018, $1.98 (LP); TCS 18018, $2.98 (SD).

This bargain-price Telefunken program offers performances romantic yet unsentimentalized, distinguished by irresistible gusto and rhythmic animation, by beautifully nuanced phrasing and coloring. The lower-level monophonic recording is rather thin, but the stereo version is more expansive, smoothly spread, and sonically attractive: than any other release in this series I have yet heard. At any price it would be a desirable acquisition; at $2.98 it is not to be missed.

“Rhapsody Under the Stars.” Leonard Pennario, piano; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Miklos Rozsa, cond. Capitol P 8494, $4.98 (LP); SP 8494, $5.98 (SD).

Purists can only be shocked by the Hollywood notion of inflating into “concertos” not only Stinling’s Rustle of Spring and Liszt’s Second Hungarian Rhapsody but such works as the first movement of Mozart’s K. 545, and the Adagio of Beethoven’s Pathétique Sonata. But add a completely straight, if richly romantic, performance and authenticity, to the 18th Variation from Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Williams’ Dream of Oilean, and Rozsa’s own elaborate Concerto on themes from his score for Spellbound; play everything with Pennario’s and Rozsa’s assured skill; provide supremely natural, wide-range, and broadspread recording—and there’s a best seller in the making which may well seduce, if only by its sonic luxuriance, the most puritanical cars. The LP version is scarce ly less glowing than the stereo disc, but the latter’s radiant tonal qualities are quite incomparable.

“Age of the Tars.” Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. Angel S 35752, $5.98 (SD).

It’s extremely interesting to compare the interpretative and engineering styles of this British “Promo” concert with those of a typical Russian program by, say, our own Arthur Fiedler or Carmen Dragon. Mackerras is considerably more refined; his men play with less precision and virtuosity, but also with more warmth and evident enjoyment of what they are doing. The recording too is less high-powered, less ultrabrilliant, less obviously stereoscopic than many American releases; yet the EMI coaxially mounted microphone technique provides an even more smoothly spread and auditorium-authentic curtain of orchestral sound. These British virtues, and Mackerras’ own gracefully romantic touch, show up best in a seductive Tchaikovsky waltz sequence and in Glazunov’s Concert Waltz No. 1 and the “Procession of the Sardar” from Ippolitov-Ivanov’s Caucasian Sketches. The Glinka Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture is a bit too splashy; Rimsky’s Dance of the Tumblers and Chere’s Rustlers’ Dance lack dramatic weight and drive; yet even here the Britons’ warm and glistening tonal colors are sheer delight to one’s ears.

“The Harmonicists in the Land of Hi-Fi.” Mercury SR 60028, $4.98 (SD).

Starring Jerry Murad’s solo chromatic harmonica, with Don Len’s bass, doublebass, and single-reed bass, and Al Flori’s chord-rhythm harmonicas (plus guitar, flute, reeds, and string bass), this novelty program strikes me as much more effective and sonically interesting than those of most harmonica-dominated ensembles I’ve heard. The characteristic slapping and buzzing qualities can become a bit tiresome; but the arrangements are ingeniously contrived to make the most of channel-antiphonal possibilities and the performances are distinctly appealing in the strongly stereoscopic recording they are given here.


Hailed as a recording masterpiece when first issued in England (under the Envoy label) a year and a half ago, this typical British band miscellany is impressive for its energy, color, and authenticity; but to my ears the harmonicas are quite too harsh, clean, uncolored, and dry—faults which probably are considerably mitigated in the stereo version, not yet released in this country. The ensemble seems somewhat small-sized for its more ambitious pieces; Thirle’s performances of some pieces are rather mannered; and his overfancy arrangements of the Schubert Marehe mili tante and a British tear-jerking finale combining Abide with Me and The Lost
Post seem all the more naïve for their obvious earnestness. The conductor does best with the broad "Nimrod" section from Elgar's Enigma Variations, a piquant if sentimental Scottish medley, and a number of novelty pieces—including the Knipper-Charrazin Cavalry of the Steppes, in which the familiar Russian patrol is atmospherically augmented by the subdued-in-clatter of the Royal Horse Guards' own mounted squadron.

"Seated One Day at the Organ," Ethel Smith, Decca DL 8902, $3.98 (LP); DL 74002, $4.98 (SD). Miss Smith, one of the most popular electronic organ virtuosos, either owns an uncommonly elaborate instrument or knows better than most players how to make the most of Hammond registration possibilities. Certainly she leaves no stops (organological or emotional) undrawn in this miscellany ranging from Aldinsell's Wargau Concerto and Leonna's Mala- zugia, through heart-throbbing versions of Liebestraum, Clair de lune, Largo from the New World Symphony, Brahms and Hinsink Cradle Songs, to such showpieces as the Flight of the Bumblebee and Ritual Fire Dance—and even Bach's Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring and Fugue in G minor (the latter patterned more closely on Stokowski's transcription than on the Gesellschaft score).

The recording is excellent, both in LP and stereo, though the latter's advantages of greater expansiveness are somewhat counteracted by the many registration changes "jumping" themes from one markedly differentiated channel to the other. I daresay that there is a public which will avidly relish Miss Smith's (as they are described on the disc jacket), and even to more sophisticated listeners her "realistic" schmalz may not be lacking in a certain horrid fascination.

"March Time in Germany," Band of the Berlin Guard. Telefunken TP 2508, $1.98 (LP). The conductor is unnamed, the performances are by turns slum-bang and pedes- trian, and the closely miked, brilliant but edgy high-level recording seems somewhat top-heavy. Nevertheless, the whole program is probably more typical of average German marching-band playing and materials than those of more famous or- ganizations, especially in the rotating Hoch- und Deutschmeister and the jazzy zestful Solinger Schützen-Marsch and KÄTTERER LIEDERMARSCH, with their bright glockenspiel parts glittering gaily above the relentlessly plugging drums and oom-pah tuba.

Straus Concert, Vienna State Opera Or- chestra, Eduard Strauss, cond. Vox ST/VX 426030, $4.98 (SD). The primary interest of this program is that it is conducted by the Waltz King's grandson, further identified in the jacket's genealogical table as Johann I's great-grandson, Johann II's great nephew, and the nephew of the Johann III who made

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a number of Strauss waltz recordings in 78-rpm days. Apparently the blood has thinned out a bit in the course of the years, for the present Eduard (a comparatively younger, to judge from his photograph) seems extremely nervous and self-conscious throughout. He knows the traditions, obviously, and provides a good, if occasionally overstressed, rhythmic pulse; but he tends to nit-pick important details—which are further spotlighted in well-spread, brilliantly clean, but somewhat harsh and too closely miked stereo recording.

"Opera Without Words." Rome Symphony Orchestra, Domenico Savino, cond. Rigoletto: Kapp KCL 9032, $3.98 (LP); KC 9032 S, $4.98 (SD). Carmen: Kapp KCL 9035, $3.98 (LP).

To judge by these two examples of the Savino series, which already runs to a dozen releases, Kostelanetz still has this field to himself—and even begins to seem admirable in comparison. The Rome Orchestra is notable only for the coarseness and nasality of its soloists' tonal qualities and the extraordinary vivacity and lack of true sonority of its tuttis. How much of this is the mannered and careless conductor's responsibility and how much of that of the hardly brilliant recording would be hard to determine, but curiously enough stereo (at least in the case of the Rigoletto SD) doesn't seem to help matters at all. Indeed the excessive channel separation accentuates the sonic shrillness and acoustical dryness.

"The Enchanting Organ of Bob Kanes." King 630, $3.98 (LP).

"Enchanting" is not my word for either the "pop-op"-tinging, me-experiencing tonal qualities of Kanes's electronic instrument or his interpretative oscillations between extraverted briskness and throbbing schmaltz. And the high-level, open recording and excessively dry acoustics expose only too candidly both the unpapping sonics and performances.

"Overture!" and "Popular Overtures." Virtuoso Symphony Orchestra of London, Arthur Winograd, cond. Audio Fidelity FCS 50011/12, $6.95 each (Two SD).

Winograd and Audio Fidelity have given us so many musical delights and technical triumphs that this disc is particularly distressing. The conductor is perhaps only pedestrian in his "Popular Overtures" (by Beethoven, Wagner, Liszt, Schumann, Weber, and Berlioz). But his weighty program (The Marriage of Figaro, Egmont, La Forza del destino. Die Meistersinger, and Academic Festival overtures) is intolerably laborious, inept, and deficient in elementary stylistic insight. And the recording of both discs, while not lacking in the expected ultrablack cymbal crashes and bass-drum thunders, can be reproduced only with a tonal shrillness and lack of choir or channel blend that surely cannot be ascribable to the British orchestra alone.

R. D. Darrell

High Fidelity Magazine
The Australian Jazz Quintet: “Three Penny Opera.” Bethlehem 6030, $4.98 (LP).

Since the Australian Jazz Quintet has acquired the guidance of Teddy Charles’s arrangements, it has made tremendous strides towards gaining a viable jazz feeling. And tunes from The Three Penny Opera, in Charles’s hands, provide the sort of best material they have yet recorded. Kurt Weill’s sardonic music translates readily into highly rhythmic modern jazz. Its suitability is most evident in Dick Healey’s alto saxophone, with a timbre that for reasons unclear to me is suggestive of the decadent “jazz” of Germany in the Twenties which had its effect on Weill. Most of these pieces are played with a light, leaping swing that complements the tunes admirably.

Count Basie, Billy Eckstine: “Basie/Eckstine, Inc.” Roulette 52029, $3.98 (LP); S 52029, $4.98 (SD).

After more than a decade of going nowhere as a ballad singer, Eckstine returns to his musical origins, the blues (some, like Stormy Monday Blues and Jelly Jelly, going back to his days with Earl Hines’s band), and he’s accompanied by the best big-band backing any blues singer could ask for. He is, if anything, an even better blues singer than he used to be, having acquired polish without losing any of the depth of feeling that polish so often destroys. Even his familiar open-throated gargoyle on a couple of ballads is not as ridiculously wobbly as it once was. The set is climaxd by a brilliant collaboration between Eckstine and Basie’s piano, Piano Man—not the old Earl Hines Piano Man but a slow, intense, moody blues, set in motion by the singer and carried out to perfection in Basie’s solo.

Sidney Bechet: “The Sidney Bechet Story.” Brunswick 54048, $3.98 (LP). This disc contains two episodes in the Sidney Bechet story but it is scarcely the story, as the title suggests. Three selections are 1938 recordings made with members of Noble Sissle’s band. The rest are products of his French residence during the 1950s, accompanied by the orchestras of Claude Luter and Andre Rieu. None of this is top-drawer Bechet; the accompaniments are pedestrian and the material played is generally uninspired. But Bechet is always himself no matter what’s going on around him.

Ruby Braff Quintet: “Blowing Around the World.” United Artists 3045, $3.98 (LP); 6045, $4.98 (SD).

It would be hard to think of a programming book less imaginative than the selection of a group of tunes solely on the basis of geographical references in their titles. But Ruby Braff, Bob Brookmeyer (playing piano), Barry Galbraith, Joe Benjamin, and Buzzy Drootin make a delightful, unhaunted disc of such matter as Loch Lomond, Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Doo-Ra, South of the Border, Song of India, etc. Braff and Brookmeyer make an excellent team. Both are warm-hearted, witty performers with a strong feeling for melody and rhythm and a very personal inventive bent. Brookmeyer’s down-to-earth piano work is decorated with entertainingly sly, off-beat ideas (he mimes into his solos on Chimalone like a hot Monk), and Braff’s trumpet sings with gruff beauty no matter what country they throw him into. This disc is a triumph for the musicians over potentially dreadful circumstances.

Billy Butterfield: “Conniff Meets Butterfield.” Columbia CL 1346, $3.98 (LP); CS 8155, $4.98 (SD).

Billy Butterfield herewith joins the Jonah Jones parade, pumping out a set of pop tunes on muted and open trumpet over a persistent slum rhythm. Butterfield is excellent at this sort of thing—his open trumpet, particularly, can be glowingly exultant—but Ray Conniff’s rhythm section gives him solid accompaniment.

Benny Carter: “Swingin’ the 20s.” Contemporary 3561, $4.98 (LP); S 7561, $5.98 (SD).

In the thirty-odd years during which they have been major figures in jazz, Benny Carter and Earl Hines never found themselves together until November 1958, when these recordings were made. They are joined here by Leroy Vinnegar, bass, and Shelly Manne, drums. Carter and Hines are among the most polished and consistent of jazz musicians, and their performances on this disc are an unashamedly joy from beginning to end. Hines’s piano playing is economical and beautifully organized, with occasional sudden splashy splurges reminiscent of his earlier, more glittering style. Carter plays trumpet on three selections, alto saxophone on the rest. He is as smoothly lyrical as one would expect on alto, but his trumpet work, which has sometimes been relatively thin, is unusually attractive, coming out in gentle, clean singing lines that always parallel his alto approach. The selections are studly standards of the 20s (Sweet Lorraine, Mary Lou, If I Could Be With You and other worthy pieces) plus Hines’s A Monday Date.

The Dixie Rebels: “Strike Back with True Dixieland Sound.” Command RS 33801, $4.98 (LP); RS 801 SD, $5.98 (SD).

These are lusty and spirited Dixieland performances gaining their interest from the constantly impressive clarinet playing of Kenny Davern and the broad, unquenchably high spirits of Lou McCar- lity’s trombone. The program, however, is made up of war horses of the Dixieland repertory including, inevitably, The Saints.


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Continued on page 138

Edmond Hall: "Rumpus on Rampart Street." Rae-Cox 1120, $3.98 (LP).

Through most of this disc Hall plays his lithe, lusty, hot-footed clarinet accompanied only by an excellent rhythm section (Dick Cary, Jimmy Rancy, Al Hall, Jimmy Crawford), romping and rhapsodizing around themes of relative inconsequence which glow and sparkle on his own record. On three tunes the group is joined by two more clarinetists, the late Omer Simeon and Ed's brother, Herb Hall, to play arrangements written by the onetime Lunceford pianist, Eddie Wilcox. Two of these have an appealing if minor charm, but the
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"SMARTER" IN THE TOPICAL NEWSWEEK:
"...On stage the liveliest jazz, and like Charles Mingus: "Mingus Ah Um." Columbia CL 1370, $3.98 (LP); S 1314, $5.98 (SD). A gentle and persuasive set of performances by a well-grounded pianist who has a light, swinging attack which, on this disc, shows some of the prodigious characteristics of John Lewis' playing. The suggestion of Lewis' pulse is augmented by the presence of the Modern Jazz Quartet's drummer, Connie Kay, who joins with bassist Joe Benjamin to form an admirable rhythm team. Guitarist Chuck Wayne provides an interesting second lead voice on four numbers, but the usually dependable Jimmy Raney, who replaces Wayne on the remaining four selections, is surprisingly routine.

Charles Mingus: "Mingus Ah Um." Columbia CL 1370, $3.98 (LP). Slowly but surely Mingus is coming into focus as the most thoroughgoing individualist in jazz in the 1950s. Lately his control over a style which, by its very nature, tends to spread out exuberantly in all directions, has become much more certain. On this disc we hear his various faces as well disciplined as they have yet been on a record. He leads what might be classified as a super-Minus group--his most recent quintet augmented by three ex-Mingusites, Jimmy Knepper, Willie Dennis, and Shafi Hadi—a troupe that is thoroughly indoctrinated to the Mingus techniques. The program is direct and communicative and Mingus' ideas are realized with unusual consistency. He opens with a bowing, rocking bit of gospel, moves on to a lovely, touching lament for Lester Young ("Goodbye Pork Pie Hat—Mingus' talents include an unusual knack for titling"); a hard, riding riff-based piece, a slow and misty Self Portrait in Three Colors, his hauntingly insistant Fables of Faubus, and a setting for a soaring Knepper trumpet solo on Pussycat Dues. Mingus uses irony and a lethal wit very effectively at times, but I think he misses the point in his overdone caricature of third effort, Later, is a glorious excursion both in Wilcox's ensemble sketching and in the beautifully shaded playing of the three clarinetists. It's a brilliantly inventive and disciplined jazz performance.

Buddy Johnson and His Orchestra: "Go Ahead and Rock." Roulette 25085, $3.98 (LP); S 25085, $4.98 (SD). Johnson's band, once one of the most successful rhythm and blues groups before that style was corrupted and overwhmed by rock 'n' roll, still remains basically a rhythm and blues band. On this disc it makes an occasional concession to the rock 'n' roll audience but at the same time it is a much more polished and musically sophisticated group than the relatively simple R & B bands were. It has a pair of very good soloists (a trumpeter and a trombonist who can do wah-wah tricks in the Tricky Sam Nanton manner) and, although its rhythm is always incisive and definite, it has the relaxed, assured attack of the well-adjusted band.
early jazz on *Jelly Roll*. All in all, however, this is a remarkably adventurous and provocative disc.

George Rene: "Romewville." Class 5003, $3.98 (LP).

This is a strange, fascinating, and entertaining holluahahie of jazz, cha cha, TV backgrounds, and Hollywood ostentation spiced at times with satire and, at other times, would-be satire. Rene, a pianist with a simple, heavily rhythmic style, has assembled an excellent big West Coast band (the saxes include Willie Smith and Buddy Collette; Gerald Wilson and Conrad Cazoo are among the trumpets; and Jack Costanzo, Larry Bunker, and Red Callender are also present) to play a group of serviceable originals and two standards (*Come Back to Sorrento* and *Serenade in the Night*) in a variety of styles from driving big-band jazz to the syrupy Billy Vaughn saxophones, plus intermediate blasts from Prado-like trumpets and the Hawaiian tinkle of a pair of mandolins. A vocal group also looms in the background from time to time. It's a big, slick, exuberant variety show that touches an awful lot of bases, none of which seem to have anything to do with Rome.

George Romanis and His Orchestra:

"Modern Sketches in Jazz." Coral 57273, $3.98 (LP); 757273, $4.98 (SD).

Romanis is a young arranger and bassist who has a fondness for using a tuba as both a bottom and a driving force and for giving his percussionists kicking, melodic passages. The over-all effect of his writing is somewhat like that of Eddie Sauter in the early days of the Sauter-Finegan band although Romanis' arrangements are apt to be more robustly jazz-oriented than Sauter's were. On this disc he has used tunes by George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter, and Duke Ellington and, strangely enough, he is least effective in handling Ellington. He does his best work in bright, brisk interpretations of Rodgers and Porter. These pieces are played with a crisp, exultant drive by an eleven-piece band which is much more ear-filling than most groups twice that size.


This is Charlie Shavers' attempt to cash in on the popular vein set up by Jonah Jones. Shavers is a bit more adventurous than Jones but, within his own format, just as stereotyped.

*Spirituals to Swing*


For review of this album, see p. 88.

*Joe Viola:* "Plays Manny Albam." Berklee 3, $3.95 (LP).

Viola, who is supervisor of woodwind instruction at the Berklee School in Boston, has pulled off a double-edged tour de force on this disc. On one side he...
performs a group of short pieces for four saxophones and rhythm, playing all four saxophone parts through multitracking. In the other side, also multitracked, he does Six Pieces for Eight Reeds, adding oboe, English horn, clarinet, and bass clarinet to his arsenal. The first group is made up of tightly organized pieces which run from a cogent blues to a brisk little swinger—all low-keyed, provocative jazz performances. The second set, done without the rhythm section, is not jazz in any sense but a series of pleasant “straight” pieces, warmly and skillfully played. Both sides are unusually well recorded, showing none of the seams and stitches that are almost inevitable in such overdubbing jobs. The selections, all composed by Manny Albam, are challenging without being pretentious.

Ben Webster and Associates. Verve 8318, $4.98 (LP). Webster’s “Associates” are Coleman Hawkins, Budd Johnson, Roy Eldridge, Jimmy Jones, Leslie Spann, Ray Brown, and Jo Jones—an unusually impressive company. Impressive, too, is an easygoing, supple and insinuating version of In a Mellow Tone which covers one side of the disc, drawing suitable, if not inspired, solos from every member of the trompe except Webster. Also impressive, on the other side, is the unexpectedly fiery, hard-toned playing of Johnson and the neatly organized, flowing guitar work of Spann. Impressive in another way is the single ballad in the set, Time After Time, which brings out all the worst aspects of Webster’s ballad playing.

Jimmy Wisner Trio: “Blues for Harvey.” Felsted 7509, $3.98 (LP). Wisner, a Philadelphia pianist, shows on this disc a wiry, two-handed, buoyantly rhythmic attack which swings in a forthright manner and, when he turns to the blues, a warm, reflective style that suggests an unusually good basic jazz foundation. Considering that all eight tunes on the disc are his originals and that he is accompanied only by bass and drums (Ace Tesone and Chick Keeney, a strong and helpful rhythm team), Wisner is a remarkably consistent and compelling performer.

**John S. Wilson**

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**High Fidelity Magazine**

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The STEREO 960 fits into family life in literally dozens of ways, contributing many tangible benefits in musical, educational and recreational fun. You'll use it to keep up the family correspondence by sending “letters in sound”, to tape programs off the air, to preserve your best monaural and stereo discs on tape, and to acquire new musical and language skills. You’ll have endless fun exploring the 960's many fascinating recording capabilities, including sound-on-sound, echo chamber effects, and other advanced techniques.
RECORDER/REPRODUCER

SPECIFICATIONS

The true values of a recorder are best assessed through careful evaluation of its performance specifications and operating features. It is worthwhile noting here that these specifications are based not on theoretical design parameters but on actual performance tests. They are specifications which the recorder not only meets or exceeds today, but which years from now will still hold true.

The Ampex Model 960 Stereophonic Recorder/Reproducer is capable of essentially distortionless frequency response from 30 to 20,000 cycles per second at the operating speed of 7½ inches per second, and from 30 to 15,000 cycles per second at 3½ inches per second. Its precision-engineered timing accuracy is such that it offers perfection of pitch held to tolerances of less than one-third of a half-tone. Playing times, using standard (.002") long play (.001") and extra-long play (.001") tapes are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>4-Track Stereo Tapes</th>
<th>2-Track Stereo Tapes</th>
<th>Monaural Tapes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1200 foot reel</td>
<td>3½ ips - 2 hrs. 8 min.</td>
<td>3½ ips - 1 hr. 4 min.</td>
<td>3½ ips - 2 hrs. 8 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800 foot reel</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 3 hrs. 12 min.</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 1 hr. 36 min.</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 3 hrs. 12 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2400 foot reel</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 4 hrs. 16 min.</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 2 hrs. 8 min.</td>
<td>3¼ ips - 4 hrs. 16 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RECORD INPUTS: High impedance line inputs (radio/Tv/phono/auxiliary) 0.3V rms for program level; high impedance microphone inputs

PLAYBACK OUTPUTS: Approximately 0.5V rms from cathode follower when playing program level tapes

PLAYBACK FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 30-20,000 cps at 7½ ips; 30-15,000 cps at 3½ ips

Within ± 3 db: 50-15,000 cps at 7½ ips; 55 db dynamic range

Within ± 3 db: 50-10,000 cps at 3½ ips; 50 db dynamic range

FLATTER AND WOW: Under 0.2% rms at 7½ ips; under 0.25% rms at 3½ ips

HEADS: Manufactured to the same standards of precision that exist in Ampex broadcast and recording studio equipment. Surfaces are lapped to an optical flatness so precise that they reflect specific wavelengths of light, resulting in uniform performance characteristics and greatly minimizing the effects of head wear. Azimuth alignment of stereo head gaps in the same stack is held within 20 seconds of arc, equivalent to less than 10 millimeters of an inch - a degree of precision achieved through use of a unique process involving micro-accurate optical measurements within a controlled environment. Head gap width is 90 millimeters of an inch ± 0.05 millimeters of an inch.

KEY TO THE EXCITING FUN FEATURES OF THE 960...

THE AMPLEX STEREO-GRAF

Here's the simplest, quickest answer to almost every question about how to perform the operations illustrated at right and numerous other recording functions. The Ampex Stereo-Graf shows you, quickly and clearly, the proper dial settings to make for more than a dozen of the most popular uses for the 960... including sound-on-sound, language and music instruction, and other special effects. A convenient tape footage/playing time indicator is included on the reverse side.

MODEL 2010

MATCHING AMPLIFIER-SPEAKER

The Ampex Model 2010's ten-watt (20 watts peak) amplifier section provides operating characteristics (unequalized) flat within ±0.1 db, with total harmonic distortion less than 0.5 of 1%, throughout the maximum range of human hearing ability, at rated output. Noise and hum are 80 db below rated output, and input sensitivity is 0.18V to develop rated power.

The specially designed 8" speaker provides smooth, peak-free response throughout a remarkably wide audio range. Such superior design features as its massive die-cast frame and edge-wise-wound ribbon coil contribute effectively to higher levels of performance than ever before achieved with a speaker this size.

MODEL 960 DIMENSIONS: Portable cases 9" x 15" x 17½". Unmounted recorder 13" x 15" x 6½" depth below top plate, 1¾" above. Recorder weight 36 lbs., speaker amplifier 31 lbs.

AMPEX AUDIO, INC. * SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA 94084
because you get authentic high fidelity stereo and monophonic reproduction plus all these extraordinary features

SINGLE PLAY TURNTABLE — For unrestricted manual play, you can place the tonearm anywhere on the record while turntable is either motionless or rotating. For fully automatic play, just press START button. In both cases, the tonearm can be moved about at will, returns to rest after play...and the motor shuts off.

AUTOMATIC RECORD CHANGER — Simply change spindles — nothing else to do. Only three buttons let you start, stop, reject, or repeat. Further, you can always rearrange a stack of records even while a record is playing!

TRACKS AND TRIPS AT AS LOW AS 1/2 GRAMS — That's why you can use the most sensitive turntable cartridges with high compliance stylus not ordinarily recommended for automatic equipment. This ensures extra long life for all your records.

FOOLPROOF RECORD INDEXING — The roller feeler guides in the tonearm measure each record individually, letting you intermix any size record (even under and oversized "standard" records) in any sequence. Eliminates need for troublesome mechanical linkages and arbitrary set-screw adjustments. Can't mislead!

THE DUAL 1006 combination turntable/changer

IS YOUR ONE LOGICAL CHOICE

Tested and acclaimed by technical and consumer reporting organizations, the United Audio Dual-1006 is unquestionably your best value at only $69.95

CONSTANT SPEED CHANGE CYCLE — You get fast record change regardless of playback speed, because the Dual has an independent auxiliary transmission used only for cycling.

ONE-PIECE PROFESSIONAL TONEARM—Avoids distortion of cartridge output and multiple resonances common to two-piece arms. A double set of ballbearings in each axis provides the perfect arm motion — lateral and vertical — vital for stereo tracking.

PERFECT TRACKING

Always perfect vertical and lateral stereo tracking because arm pivot axis remains 90° to cartridge axis.

AUTOMATIC GEAR DISENGAGEMENT—No need to remember "neutral," no worry about flat spot thump...because all of the individual speed gears and the idler disengage after every play.

JAMPROOF TONEARM SLIP-CLUTCH — Even if the tonearm is restrained while cycling, no damage will result, because it’s engaged only by an ingenious slip-clutch which provides the further advantage of totally disengaging the arm during play. This allows the arm to track freely, with no drag and no variation in tracking force at any time.

INTERRUPT PLAY AT ANY TIME — You can stop and start again, any record exactly where you want—even during automatic changer operation — without affecting the cycling action.

BUILT-IN STYLUS FORCE MEASURING GAUGE Direct reading, easy to use, and conveniently located for instant check. No guesswork. And you have fingertip accessibility for a wide-range of adjustment.

LOCK-IN CARTRIDGE HOLDER — Lets you interchange cartridges instantly, effortlessly; takes all standard-size cartridges.

MULTI-PURPOSE STEREO/mono switch — Adapts your stereo cartridge for mono output, at the same time completely eliminating random noises from unused grooves — very convenient too for balancing stereo speaker systems.

1. When START button is pressed, tone arm moves toward center. 2. With wheels down, arm glides lightly over top unused surface until outer wheel locates exact outer edge. 3. Arm sizes and wheels retract. 4. Arm gently descends to play.

ELEVATOR ACTION CHANGER SPINDLE — There’s no pusher arm to chip record edges, no spindle offsets to enlarge center holes. The entire stack is lifted off the bottom record to let it descend gently to the turntable. Records can be removed from the turntable without need to remove the spindle itself.

1. Record stack ready to play. 2. Stack separates from bottom record. 3. Bottom record descends. 4. Stack gently lowers for next play.

POWERFUL RUMBLE-FREE MOTOR — So powerful, in fact, that the Dual’s heavy turntable can reach full RPM in less than 1/4 turn from a dead start! And, because of its exceptionally high quality and exclusive rigid-equipoise suspension, rumble is eliminated at the source.

LAMINATED AND CONCENTRICALLY GIRDED TURNTABLE — Can’t go out of round, can’t warp, can’t wobble. Dynamically balanced and rotates on heavy duty ballbearing. Result: professional performance.

CHOICE OF REPEAT — Now you can either repeat the same record indefinitely, or just once with the self-cancelling REPEAT button.

December 1959

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... available in a special Audiotape bonus package

DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM
"High Spirits" includes these bright selections:

- Strauss . . . Frisch ins Feld
- Strauss . . . from Fledermaus Waltz
- Beethoven . . . from Symphony No. 1 in C
- Tchaikovsky . . . from Capriccio Italien
- Bizet . . . from Carmen Suite
- Berlioz . . . Rakoczy March

DETAILS OF THE OFFER
This exciting recording is available in a special bonus package at all Audiotape dealers. The package contains one 7-inch reel of Audiotape (on 1½-mil acetate base) and the valuable "High Spirits" program (professionally recorded on standard Audiotape). For the entire package, you pay only the price of two boxes of Audiotape, plus $1. And you have your choice of the half-hour two-track stereo program or the full-hour monaural or four-track stereo versions. Don't wait. See your Audiotape dealer now.

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"High Spirits" is available RIGHT NOW from Audiotape dealers everywhere. (And only from Audiotape dealers.) Ask to hear a portion of the program, if you like. Then, take your choice of a half-hour of two-track stereo, a full hour of four-track stereo, or an hour of dual-track monaural sound—all at 7½ ips. Don't pass up this unusual opportunity to put yourself in high spirits.


AUDIOTAPE
"It speaks for itself"

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In Hollywood: 840 N. Fairfax Ave. • In Chicago: 5428 N. Milwaukee Ave.
The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5 ips tapes, on reels.


Belle of the Ball, Horse and Buggy, The Waltzing Cat, Blue Tango, Song of the Bella, The Typesetter, The Syncopated Clock, Girl in Satin, China Doll, Summer Skies, Fiddle-Faddle.

Eastman-Rochester Pops Orchestra, Frederick Fennell, cond. ● ● MERCURY STB 90043. 33 min. $6.95.

I could greet the spirited performances and gleamingly transparent, natural stereo recording here with livelier enthusiasm if this were not a sequel to Vol. 1. Technically it is every bit as good as the earlier release, but unfortunately the music itself, except perhaps for the long-familiar Syncopated Clock and Fiddle-Faddle, is just not as delectable. If, however, you haven’t heard to match Anderson recordings before, you will relish this one; if you have, you’ll join me in begging for a prompt four-track version of both Vol. 1 and the hitherto untaped Irish Suite.

SCHUBERT: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in A, Op. 114 ("The Trout")

Leonard Sorkin, violin; Irving Ilner, viola; George Sepkin, cello; Harold Siegel, double bass; Frank Glazer, piano. ● ● Concertapes 4T 4004. 36 min. $7.95.

We’ve already had one stereo taping of the Trout Quintet (Period, two-track, PST 8), a somewhat colorless, if pleasant version, which is outclassed by the notably clean, well-balanced, and natural recording here—from a technical point of view alone probably the most successful example of chamber music in stereo I have yet encountered. Besides this, the present performance is admirable, perhaps somewhat overemphasized and lacking in relaxed Schubertian Gemütlichkeit, but planned and executed with high craftsmanship, and particularly notable for its lucidity, the unadorned weight of its double-bass passages, and the sparkling dexterity—and authentic tonal qualities— of its piano part.

LEONARD SORKIN: "Symphony of The Dance"


Musical Arts Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Sorkin, cond. ● ● Concertapes 4T 3003. 32 min. $6.95.

It speaks well for this diverting "apologia of the dance" program that with each rehearing it reveals new charms. I’ve praised it often before (the "B" side smaller pieces formed part of Concertapes’ "Stereo Starter" set; the Glinka and Borodin works were in a two-track tape; and the whole program appeared in a stereo disc version last year), but its bright sonics, marked stereoism, and Sorkin’s own unflagging verve now seem even more reliable. Surely he gives us the most piquant and properly proportioned version of the often-recorded Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture; and while I am still conscious that the orchestra itself is scarcely large enough for the full weight and impact of the Polovtsian Dances, Dance of the Tumblers, and Russian Sailors’ Dance, that lack is amply compensated by their vivacity and by the clarity with which their kaleidoscopic tonal coloring is reproduced.

SYMPHONY OF THE AIR: Orchestral Program


Symphony of the Air (conductorless). ● ● Concertapes 4T 4002. 39 min. $7.95.

In its four-track version, the age of this pioneering stereo recording is more apparent than it was in the two-reel, two-track tape issued about a year ago, particularly in its relative lack of sheer tonal mass and weight. Happily, however, this does not detract from the program’s special appeal, based primarily on its historical value both as a documentation of the memorable September 24, 1954 concert by the then newly established Symphony of the Air and as one of the closest possible approximations to stereo editions of Toscanini performances. The former NBC Symphony musicians, playing without a conductor, here reproduce Toscanini’s interpretative ideas almost identically. And, just as they were under the Maestro himself, the Berlioz and Wagner works are more eloquent than the overpersonal Nutcracker.

JOHANN STRAUSS, II: "Miscellany"


Musical Arts Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Sorkin, cond. ● ● Concertapes 4T 3005. 32 min. $6.95.

If this is simply a new processing, rather than a complete re-recording, of the same program issued more than three years ago on Concertapes two-track 101 A, it vividly demonstrates anew how magically improved recorded performances can sound when they are given good processing. The 1956 tape was not only poor technically, but made the Sorkin readings seem wholly ineffectual. Both they and the over-all sonics came off much better in the recent stereo disc version (CS 28) and are further improved here, particularly in the elimination of almost all traces of bass tubbiness. Unfortunately, however, not even processing magic can restore genuine acoustical warmth, expand the obviously too small orchestral forces, compensate for the lack of a zither in Tales from the Vienna Woods, or provide authentic inflections and pulse.

"And They Called It Dixieland." Matty Matlock and the Paddach Patrol. Warner Bros. BST 1263, 35 min., $7.95. This is a sequel to last year’s Dixieland Story anthology by a Hollywood studio group, starring the leader on clarinet, Abe Lincoln’s exuberant trombone, Stan Wrightman’s bouncy piano, George Van Eps’s guitar, and Eddie Miller’s baritone (and, in one piece, tenor) sax. Most characteristic are the zestfully free-for-all versions of I’m Gonna Stomp, Mr. Henry Lee, China Boy, and Runnin’ Wild, but the hand is surprisingly songful in the slower Lazy River and Louisville Loo, and the strongly stereoscopic recording is brilliantly if somewhat dirty clear throughout.

"Autumn Leaves"; "Gigi." David Rose and His Orchestra. M-G-M ST 3592-3640, 63 min., $11.95. A bargain package of twelve autumnal mood selections, unwaveringly lush except for the suddenly lively final Autumn Holiday, with these are included ten

Continued on next page
TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page
tunes from the Lerner & Loewe film score. Here Rose's ripely romantic, string-dominated treatments are more frequently alternated with piquant animations, and his dual styles are best reconciled in a gentle yet catchy version of 'I'm Glad I'm Not Young Anymore.' The extremely smooth and rich stereosound makes the most of the big orchestra's mavinies.

"Cha-Cha-Cha." Eduardo Fernandez and His Cha-Cha Kings. Tanberg/SMS S 7, 34 min., $7.95.

At first the extreme stereosound and extremely dry recording here make one conscious only of the harsh tonal qualities of the insistent scratcher, squally brass, and mostly staccato electronic organ and/or orchestra, but before long one realizes how appropriate these timbres are to the high-powered hand's toe-tickling treatments of such usually bland pops favorites as 'Blue Skies,' 'Should I,' 'Why Do I Love You?' and even such unlikely choices as 'The Stars and Stripes Forever' and Dvořák's Humoresque. A little cha-cha normally goes a long way with us, but I must admit that this is one of the most insidious invitations to dance to complete exhaustion, and sonically it is particularly interesting for the ingenious use of cross-channel antiphonal effects.

"Dance Along." Larry Clinton and His Orchestra. Kapp KT 41013, 33 min., $7.95.

Middle-of-the-road big-band dance versions of 'Tom Dooley,' 'It's All in the Game,' 'Everybody Loves a Lover,' Volare, Bimbohney, and seven others, given more than ordinary ear-and-tee appeal by the always imaginative (and occasionally quite poetic) arrangements and performances. Strongly I must admit that this is one of the most insidious invitations to dance to complete exhaustion, and sonically it is particularly interesting for the ingenious use of cross-channel antiphonal effects.

"The Greatest." Joe Williams; Count Basie and His Orchestra. Verve VST 4 204, 35 min., $7.95.

With all due respect for Williams' often quite expressive singing, I'd much rather hear him in the blues he does so well than in the present pops ballads, where the real interest lies throughout in Basie's resilient accompaniments and orchestral interludes featuring his own sparkling pianism. Most attractive here are the quietly sonorous 'Come Rain or Come Shine' and 'Love Is Here To Stay,' and the brisk 'I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me' and 'Thou Swell'; but the open stereosound itself is excellent throughout, particularly so when Buddy Bregman's arrangements provide such ingenious cross-channel responses as those in the exuberant 'This Can't Be Love.'

While Ella is most exciting in hotter material than the present fifteen almost unvariedly slow and torchy ballads, she has seldom been in better voice or sung more movingly than she does here in 'How Long Has This Been Going On,' 'Hurry Home,' 'More Than You Know,' 'What Will I Tell My Heart,' 'I Never Had a Chance,' and 'Right Wind.' De Vol's arrangements and accompaniments are discreetly in unexaggerated stereosound.

The following reviews are of the older type of 2-track 7.5 ips tapes, on reels.

COPLAND: Symphony No. 3
London Symphony Orchestra, Aaron Copland, cond.

• • EVEREST STBR 2018. 40 min. $10.95.

The Third Symphony has been widely praised for its integration of Copland's "popular" and "abstract" styles—a judgment true enough insofar as this work does represent the best common meeting ground for listeners who have previously esteemed the composer for only one or the other facet of his talents. For me, however, it is more important for its simultaneous summing up and concentration of all aspects of his art—more artistically than in perhaps any of his film scores and ballets, yet at the same time with a greater wealth of immediate rhythmic and melodic attractions than in any other of his "abstract" compositions.

At any rate, the Copland Third has come to rank justly as a major American symphonic achievement—which we now can hear exactly as the composer wanted it to be heard, perhaps less dramatically than in Dorati's still fine LP version, but with the attention to inner detail and over-all plasticity which only a composer-conductor—and stereo techniques at their best—can provide. For myself, I'd prefer just a shade more reverberance in the otherwise-faithful recording, and I wish that Copland had let his uncommonly sonorous brass choir "go" a bit more uninhibitedly; but this would be asking for a superfluity of sheerly sonorous thrills—which there already are enough, particularly when the super-bass drum is detonated (rather than merely hit).

(Incidentally, a four-track tape edition should be available shortly: Everest is one of several companies which I've been happy to learn plan to issue their tapes in both the old and new media.)


These Australian twin balladeers give us relatively little Down-Under twang in their rather sophisticated and popularized arrangements, which feature the same key changing and other clichés. Nevertheless, they sing attractively, are deftly accompanied by an appropriate accordion, banjo, and harmonica ensemble, and are brilliantly recorded in strongly channel-differentiated stereosound. Many

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of their songs are delightful in themselves, besides being refreshingly unfamiliar—particularly the lilting "Click Go the Shears, bouncy Shearers' Jamboree, the effectively echo-chambered and atmospheric "Cooee Call," and the hillbillyish "Across the Western Plains."

"Broadway in Rhythm." Ray Conniff and His Orchestra and Chorus. Columbia FCB 39, 18 min., $5.95.

More hit tunes (here from Oklahoma and The King and I) in Conniff's now familiar style featuring wordless choral glosses on already fancy orchestral arrangements. The markedly stereotonic, brilliant, and reverberant recording is extremely effective, and although some of the performances are decidedly slapdash, Oklahoma! and Oh! What a Beautiful Morning (the latter in a novel fox-trot arrangement) have considerable catchiness for all their occasional rhythmic jerksness and sonic raucousness.

"Larry Elgart and His Orchestra": "New Sounds at the Roosevelt." RCA Victor CPS 246, 26 min., $8.95; EPS 244, 35 min., $11.95.

The big, open, strongly stereotonic recording of the second program here sounds even more natural and attractive than it did in the discs issued some months ago. And while I still relish best the bouncier, more staccato performances ("Walkin', Let My People Swing, Cool-Aid, etc."), I now appreciate better the songfulness and lifting pulse of such quieter pieces as "Yearning and April." The shorter program, too, is scarcely less appealing, if somewhat less strongly contrasted; top honors go to a poetic "Dream Boat," the easygoing "Once in Love with Amy" and "Are You Living, Old Man?", and the brisk versions of "Beyond the Blue Horizon" and "Heartaches."

"An Evening with Lerner & Loewe." Robert Merrill, Jan Peerce, Jane Powell, Phil Harris; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra and Chorale, Johnny Green, cond. RCA Victor EPS 242, 46 min., $15.95.

Despite the title and substantial price tag, this reel contains only half—the Brigadoon and My Fair Lady selections—of the original two-disc LP and SD release, omitting the extensive selections from Paint Your Wagon and Gigi. What we do have here is, however, extremely good—far better indeed than most similar ventures featuring operatic stars in musical comedy materials. Peerce doesn't quite have the appropriate style, yet he sings magnificently and—for a miracle—is not too closely miked; Merrill and a surprisingly inspired Jane Powell are just right, especially in their duets and the former's solos; only Harris is relatively ineffective here, and that is probably less the result of his own mannerisms than of the ineradicable memory of Stanley Holloway's incomparable way with the same songs. Two major assets are the really big and skillful orchestral overtures and ac-

TAPE DECK
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companions and the superbly natural recording—reverberant, unexaggeratedly stereoscopic yet broadspread—which in combination do full concert-hall justice to the often overlooked scoring virtues of the L. & L. masterpieces.

"Exploring New Sounds in Stereo; "Strings Allame." Esquivel and His Orchestra. RCA Victor APS 226, 15 min.; APS 227, 16 min.; $4.95 each.

For those who relish the young Mexican's fascinating, if often extravagantly uninhibited, sonic explorations, the only complaint with these two reels must be that they include only the "A"-side selections from the original SD and LP versions of these programs. Otherwise the unusual sound effects and intricate details of Esquivel's elaborate arrangements come out even more clearly and brilliantly on tape, with preference going to the "Strings Allame" reel for its greater musical effectiveness, especially in Guadalajara, Scheherazade (with its fine chromatic timpani), and the stereo-movement effects in Sun Valley Ski Run.

"Here Is Phineas." Phineas Newborn, piano, rhythm trio. Atlantic 3D 5, 28 min., $11.95.

Although this is—in part at least—the "Fabulous" Phineas' debut program, originally released in LP over two years ago, it remains much more interesting (particularly from a jazz, rather than a pops-entertainment, point of view) than any he has done since. The present moderate-level, extremely pure stereoism transparently reveals both the soloist's imaginative dexterity and his unusually fine accompaniments. (by Oscar Pettiford, bass, Calvin Newborn, guitar; and Kenny Clarke, drums). I am most impressed by the excitingly fast Cellos, vivacious Bar- hadas, scampering Duhav, and easily-going Afternoon in Paris, but even in the frantic I'm Beginning To See the Light and somewhat disorganized soliloquizing on All the Things You Are there is extraordinary virtuosity.

"Mood Jazz." Joe Castro, piano; small orchestra and chorus. Atlantic 3D 3, 29 min., $11.95.

Relaxed and casual, but somewhat tentative and colorless piano playing, which I'd enjoy a lot more if Castro could be heard on his own, or with rhythm group only, instead of having been saddled (as he often is here) by a suave string ensemble and an incongruously Holly- woodian wordless chorus.


Miss Gould's debut program reveals that she has mastered by rote every stylistic trick of the great blues shouters, but for all her exuberance she still lacks the sharply profiled personality and conviction of her models. Yet her singing (happily not too closely miked, although the bright recording still seems acoustically dry) does have considerable verve and brassy effectiveness, well emphasized by Fotin's driving honky-tonk small-band accompaniments.

H E'S ADMIRING TWO INVEST- ments well-made; investments which guarantee him—and you—a world of unending listening pleasure. The ST442 Stereo FM-AM Tuner gives you sensitivity and freedom from distortion that are unequaled at its remarkable price. It also includes a tuning meter, provision for multiplex adapter and automatic volume control on each channel, features usually found only in units costing much more.

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HOW TO BUILD A STEREO CONSOLE THAT REPRODUCES MUSIC AS FAITHFULLY AS SEPARATELY MOUNTED COMPONENTS

For many years, serious music lovers have searched for a way to enclose high quality high-fidelity equipment in a cabinet that would match their finest furniture.

Until now, there was no practical solution. You had to compromise. You had to sacrifice the best possible music reproduction if you wanted a good looking cabinet. If you insisted on high quality reproduction, you chose components, some of which may not have been quite so appealing to the eye.

If you dislike compromise, Stromberg-Carlson's new kind of console will interest you. We call them Integrity Series Component Ensembles—and to an uncompromising music lover each word in that name will be significant.

At the start, we faced the same problem that every console manufacturer has tried to overcome: when full-range speakers were rigidly mounted in the same console as high quality components, there was a serious loss of sound quality.

This loss—most often recognized as muddy or boomy noise—is caused by "feedback." It occurs because sensitive components can detect the speaker vibrations which are fed back through the body of the cabinet. These vibrations are amplified with the music and reproduced as noise.

If you own a console now, but do not hear these noises, it is not because your ears are insensitive. You do not hear them because we and every other console manufacturer had to eliminate them by compromising the musical reproduction of your console. You do not hear them because the sound you hear is not complete.

HOW TO BUILD A CONSOLE THAT ELIMINATES FEEDBACK NOISES

As we analyzed the problem, we realized there were seven projects that we had to accomplish before we could bring you this new kind of console.

PROJECT #1 The first consideration was given to our components. They had to have high quality reproduction. The standards we set for them can be most simply described by the phrase "Integrity in Music Reproduction." If you are familiar with Stromberg-Carlson stereo tuners, amplifiers, turntables and speakers, we believe you will agree they earn this description.

PROJECT #2 Speaker systems were the next important project. For our new kind of stereo console we needed two speaker systems of unquestionable quality. We were fortunate here, because we had already developed a system that met the quality requirements, the well-regarded Acoustical Labyrinth® Speaker System. Its quarter wavelength duct enclosure, properly coupled to a low-frequency radiator, achieved a system resonance lower than the un baffled free air cone resonance of the radiator itself. This is the kind of quality we knew you wanted.

PROJECT #3 To reduce the size of high quality speaker systems so that they would fit into a stereo console of reasonable dimensions. We were certain that component-quality sound in a console could only be achieved with speaker systems that did not depend on the console cabinet for their enclosure. This meant that we had to reduce the size of the Acoustical Labyrinth enclo-
sure so that we could fit two separate speaker enclosures within a cabinet that had reasonable dimensions. It was not easy, but we did it. After many, many trials and tests we achieved the correct size without sacrificing one iota of the extremely linear and extended response of the system.

NOW THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM HAD TO BE FACED

PROJECT #4 To effectively eliminate feedback by effectively eliminating the mechanical coupling that allows it to occur. Instead of treating the symptoms, we treated the cause. We developed a method of effectively isolating the speaker systems from the sensitive components. (As a result, Stromberg-Carlson Integrity Series Ensembles are the first successful uncompromised ensembles.)

The key development is what we call ISO-COUSTIC SPEAKER SYSTEM MOUNTING. This mounting, in which the resistance and compliance to vertical and horizontal pressures have been carefully engineered, has solved the problem. It allows Stromberg-Carlson to create a cabinet-within-cabinet suspension system which prevents transmission of speaker vibrations to the sensitive components. If you component owners could put your equipment into a cabinet whose speaker systems have our ISO-COUSTIC Mounting, the quality of the sound you’d hear would be as good as your component system is now. In fact, the components we use are the same ones you would choose for your separately mounted component system. They are interchangeable.

INTEGRITY SERIES WILL NEVER BE OBSOLETE

PROJECT #5 To assure the purchaser of an Integrity Ensemble that his choice would never be obsolete, we designed the units in accordance with a modular concept. All of the components are completely interchangeable. You can replace any component in the ensemble to keep pace with new developments—without ever replacing your fine cabinetry.

CABINETRY HAD TO BE EXCEPTIONAL, TOO

PROJECT #6 To design cabinets with the permanent beauty of fine furniture. Federico responded to the challenge by creating cabinetry in Traditional, Contemporary, Early American, Italian Provincial, French Provincial and Oriental styling. You choose from 16 basic models in these styles, in a choice of finishes. These cabinets, like a fine painting, best describe themselves. They must be seen.

PROJECT #7 To give you maximum flexibility in your enjoyment of an Integrity Series Ensemble. Every ensemble provides for your listening tastes and room acoustics, by including the Stereo Choice Switch for precise regulation of stereo separation, with or without separate matching speaker systems. All ensembles provide space for adding a tape deck.

You may select your own Stromberg-Carlson stereo components or choose a recommended component complement—in any case Stromberg-Carlson components are always interchangeable.

If you now own a console or components, we invite you to exercise your critical judgment by listening to an Integrity Series Ensemble. (You will find that the better component shops—as well as the better department and music stores—have chosen to feature this new kind of stereo console.) Listen carefully. Look closely. Ask questions. Then accept not our judgment, but your own.

INTEGRITY SERIES COMPONENT ENSEMBLES —three hundred and fifty dollars to about six thousand dollars. You may choose from 16 models in Traditional, Contemporary and Period stylings, each tastefully designed by Federico. You may select your own Stromberg-Carlson components or choose a recommended Stromberg-Carlson component complement—in any case Stromberg-Carlson components are always interchangeable.

For a complete color catalog of Integrity Series Component Ensembles and components write STROMBERG-CARLSON, Special Products Division, 1419 N. Goodman St., Rochester 3, New York.

"There is nothing finer than a Stromberg-Carlson"

STROMBERG-CARLSON A DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS

December 1959

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For integrity in music...

A NEW STROMBERG-CARLSON SINGLE-SPEED TURNTABLE

...in component systems
...in Integrity Series Ensembles

PR-500 SINGLE SPEED Here is a revolutionary concept in turntable design: a dual-drive system consisting of two hysteresis synchronous motors operating one belt drive.

The motors are spaced exactly 180° apart. Any variation of speed is automatically corrected by the interaction of the motors and the impregnated belt. Rumble and noise are virtually eliminated by the belt drive and a unique suspension system in which the tone arm and table, as a unit, are isolated from the mounting board.

Single, 33⅓ speed. Includes tone arm. PR-500, black and brushed chrome ............ $69.95*

PR-499 "PERFECTEMPO" ALL SPEEDS The "Perfectempo" incorporates every valid, time-proven design principle: belt drive; continuously variable cone drive (14 to 80 rpm); stroboscopic speed indicator; dynamically balanced, weighted table; precision motor; plus Stromberg-Carlson's original double-acting motor and table suspension system that effectively eliminates unwanted noise. Performance proves it: Wow 0.14% rms; Flutter 0.09% rms; Rumble - 55 db re 20 cm/sec at 1 kc. PR-499, morocco red with aluminum trim .................. $99.95*

RA-498 TONE ARM The Stromberg-Carlson Tone Arm uses the most valid engineering concepts of tone arm design. Single pivot point suspension, true viscous damping and high moment of inertia result in extremely low resonance and consequently yield flat response below the limits of audibility. A calibrated counterweight is adjustable to provide any needle point force. For stereo operation, complete with mounting base, viscous fluid, rest, and cartridge clip. Fits all standard turntables. RA-498 .......... $24.95*

*Rates audiophile net, turntables less bases.

"THERE IS NOTHING FINER THAN A STROMBERG-CARLSON"
For integrity in music...

THREE NEW STROMBERG-CARLSON TUNERS

...in component systems
...in Integrity Series Ensembles

SR-445 AM-FM STEREO TUNER The SR-445 is actually two separate and complete units which have been placed together for convenience of mounting and use. They have individual circuitry in which no duplicate use of tubes or circuits is involved. Operate as an AM tuner, an FM tuner or together as an AM-FM stereo tuner. The SR-445 combines the separate AM and FM tuners described below. The specifications are exactly the same as listed for these two units. SR-445 .... $129.95

All three tuners are available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome. Top cover in white, black, tan or red available at extra cost.

SR-445

FM-443 FM TUNER Exceptionally sensitive, low noise reception due to the wide peak-to-peak separation (475 kc) and long, linear slope (350 kc) of the balanced ratio detector, and the grounded grid cascode front end. Sensitivity is 2 uv for 20 db quieting, 4 uv for 30 db quieting (300 ohm). Local-Distant Switch results in 2 uv for 40 db quieting on local stations. Dial station selector and "hair-trigger" tuning eye. Temperature controlled circuits eliminate drift. Includes switched AFC circuit. Tuning Range: 88-108 mc. Bandwidth: 200 kc. Frequency Response: 20-20,000 cps. Self-powered with auxiliary power for AM-441 tuner. Provision for multiplex adapter. FM-443 ................. $79.95

AM-442 AM TUNER For exceptional AM reception, this tuner has a frequency response of 20-7,000 cps, down 7 db at 7,000 cps. It features a tuned RF stage and 3-gang variable tuning condenser. Its tuning range is 540 to 1,600 kc; Bandwidth is 9 kc. Local-Distant Switch adds 20 db quieting on local stations. Adjustable ferrite loop and external antenna. AM-442 ...................... $59.95

AM-441 AM TUNER Same as above, but without its own power supply .................. $49.95

*Prices audiophile net, zone 1, less cover

STROMBERG-CARLSON

A DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS

December 1959

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For integrity in music...

STROMBERG-CARLSON
STEREO CONTROL AMPLIFIERS

...for component systems

...for Integrity Series Ensembles

ASR-433 STEREO "24" CONTROL AMPLIFIER A dual channel amplifier with excellent performance and control features. Each channel provides 12 watts of exceptionally clean, balanced power. The exclusive "Stereo Tone Balance" signal permits you to adjust the two channels by a single tone.

The deliberately conservative specifications include: frequency response 20-20,000 cps; harmonic distortion less than 1% at full output; IM distortion less than 1% at program level; hum and noise 63 db down. Inputs: magnetic and ceramic phono; tuner; tapehead; auxiliary/tape. Available in gold and white or black and brushed chrome. ASR-433 . $129.95

ASR-444 STEREO "60" CONTROL AMPLIFIER offers all desirable controls, plus high power. Each channel provides 30 watts of balanced power. It features separate bass, treble and volume controls for each channel, a master gain and loudness control, and the "Stereo Tone Balance" signal. Specifications: frequency response 20-20,000 cps; harmonic distortion less than 0.7% at full output; IM distortion less than 1% at program level. Same inputs as ASR-433. In gold and white or black and brushed chrome. ASR-444 . $169.95

ASR-333 STEREO CONTROL AMPLIFIER, and a fine ceramic cartridge, give you quality performance at a low price. This amplifier—with 12 watts per channel—was designed for optimum reproduction with ceramic cartridges. It features tone and volume controls for each channel, plus a loudness control. Frequency response, noise level, distortion, same as ASR-433. Inputs: ceramic phono, tuner, tape/auxiliary. In black and brushed chrome. ASR-333 . $99.95

*Prices Audiophile net, Zone 1, less top covers, which are available in white, black, tan or red.

"THERE IS NOTHING FINER THAN A STROMBERG-CARLSON"
Stromberg-Carlson manufactures a full line of speakers and the famous Acoustical Labyrinth® Speaker System. This system enclosure achieves a system resonance that is lower than the unbaflled free air cone resonance of the low frequency radiator. It utilizes mass loading and frictional damping as acoustical devices to extend the low frequency range of the system with extreme flatness of response. Five new complete speaker systems with a variety of decorator housings are now available. We suggest that you compare the quality of their performance with similar equipment. You be the judge.

SPEAKERS Stromberg-Carlson loudspeakers include tweeters, woofers, coaxials and mid-range transducers. They are available in all popular sizes and price ranges.

The unusual Stromberg-Carlson “Slimline” feature allows maximum versatility in installation, and is made possible by another feature: the new “Barite” ceramic magnet, which is used to insure excellent transient response over the full effective frequency range.

ENCLOSURE KITS Acoustical Labyrinth enclosures are now available as unassembled kits. All pieces are precision-cut to size, ready to assemble. Nails, glue, complete instructions—everything you need is included. Enclosures are available for 8”, 12” and 15” systems. The same decorator housings available for factory assembled systems may be used. Write for full details on speakers and housings available.

For full details on Stromberg-Carlson components, write Stromberg-Carlson, a Division of General Dynamics, 1419 N. Goodman St., Rochester 3, N. Y.
The overall design of the HF-81 is conservative, honest and functional. It is a good value considered purely on its own merits, and a better one when its price is considered as well.

—Hirsch-Houck Labs (HIGH FIDELITY Magazine)

- Advanced engineering
- Finest quality components
- "Beginner-Tested," easy step-by-step instructions
- LIFETIME service & calibration guarantee at nominal cost
- IN STOCK — compare, then take home any EICO equipment — right "off the shelf" — from 1500 neighborhood EICO dealers.

Ask your dealer about EICO's exclusive Stereo Records Bonus.

**Stereo Amplifier-Preamplifier HF81**

HF81 Stereo Amplifier-Preamplifier selects, amplifies, controls any stereo source & feeds it to self-contained dual 14W amplifiers to a pair of speakers. Provides 28W monophonically. Ganged level and separate balance control independent bass & treble controls for each channel. 7-position type, push-pull, E84 power amplifiers. "Excellent" — SATURDAY REVIEW AT HOME. "Outstanding quality, extremely versatile." — ELECTRONICS WIRE #161 TESTED. Kit $69.95. Wired $109.95. Includes cover.

HF85 Stereo Preamplifier is a complete, master stereo preamplifier-control unit, self-powered for flexibility & to avoid power-supply problems. Distortion borders on unmeasurable even at high output levels. Level, bass, & treble controls independent for each channel or shared for both channels. Inputs for phone, tape head, mike, AM, FM, & FM-multiples. One auxiliary A & B input in each channel. Switched-in loudness compensator. "Extreme flexibility...a bargain." — HI-FI REVIEW. Kit $39.95. Wired $64.95. Includes cover.

New HF87 70-Watt Stereo Power Amplifier: Dual 35W power amplifiers of the highest quality. Uses top-quality output transformers for undistorted response across the entire audio range at full power to provide utmost clarity on-full orchestra & organ. IM distortion 1% at 70W, harmonic distortion less than 1% from 20 to 20,000 cps within 1 db of 70W. Ultra-linear connected E84 output stages & protector-protected silicon diode rectifier power supply. Selects, switch chooses mono or stereo service; 4, 8, 16, and 32 ohm speaker taps, input level controls, basic sensitivity 0.38 volts. Without exaggeration, one of the finest stereo amplifiers available regardless of price. Use with self-powered stereo preamplifier-control unit (HF85 recommended). Kit $74.95. Wired $114.95.

HF86 75W Stereo Power Amplifier Kit $43.95. Wired $74.95.


New AM Tuner HT91. Selects "H.I.F.I." wide (200 ... 9 kc) or weak-station narrow (200 ... 9 kc @ -3 db) bandwidths. Tuned RF stage for high selectivity & sensitivity; precision stereo-ecric tuning. Kit $39.95. Wired $65.95. Cover $6.95. F.T. incl.

New FM/AM Tuner HT92 combines the renowned EICO HF90 FM Tuner with excellent AM tuning facilities. Kit $59.95. Wired $94.95. Includes cover & F.T. Test.

HF4 Stereo Amplifier provides clean 4W per channel or 8W total output: Inputs for ceramic/crystal stereo pickup, AM-FM stereo, FM-multiplex stereo, 8-ohm mono, mono selector, Clutch-concentric level & tone controls. Uses with a pair of HF5 or Speaker Systems for good quality, low-cost stereo. Kit $23.95. Wired $46.95.


New HF53 3-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 3½" tweetered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, full-inch excursion 12" woofer (220 oz. res.). 8½-midrange speaker with high internal damping cone for smooth response. 3½" cone tweeter. 2½" x 4" ducted-duct enclosure. System Q of 1⁄4 for smoothest frequency & best transient response. 12-14,000 cps clean, useful response. 18 ohms impedance. HFWD: 26 1⁄4", 13% 24". Unfinished birch $72.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak $87.50.

New HF55 2-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 3½" tweetered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, 1½" excursion 8" woofer (45 cps res.), & 3½" cone tweeter. 1½ cu. ft. ducted-rectangular enclosure System Q of 1⁄4 for smoothest frequency & best transient response. 45-14,000 cps clean, useful response. HFWD: 24", 15½", 10¼". Unfinished birch $47.50. Walnut, mahogany or teak $59.50.

HF53 Bookshelf Speaker System complete with factory-built cabinet, Jensen 6" woofer, matching Jensen compression-driver exponential horn tweeter. Smooth clean bass; crisp extended highs. 70-7,000 cps range, 8 ohms. HFWD: 22" x 11" x 9½". Price $39.95.

HF52 Omni-Directional Speaker System (not illustrated) HFWD: 30", 15½", 17½" "Eminently musical" — HIGH FIDELITY. "Fine for stereo" — MODERN Hi-Fi. Complete factory-built. Mahogany or walnut $139.95. Birch $144.95.

EICO, 33-35 Northern Blvd., L.I.C., N.Y., 11357. SHOW ME HOW TO SAVE 50% ON 65 models of this quality.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

"Hi-Fi" Test Instruments

"Name..."" and ""Free Stereo Hi-Fi Guide"" catalog & name of neighborhood EICO dealer.

LISTEN TO THE EICO HOUR: WBAA-FM, 99.5 MC, Mon., Thurs., Sat. 7-8 P.M., and Sat. 3-4 P.M.
**From the High-Fidelity Newsfronts**

**Early in October,** we once more successfully survived the audio show in New York and, in spite of aching feet, aching back, aching ears, we had the usual fine and challenging time. It's a fine time because we see all the new equipment and talk with most of the manufacturers; it is also challenging because so many High Fidelity readers stop at our exhibit rooms to discuss—politely or vigorously—the pros and cons of the Magazine.

Publishing deadlines are such that it is now too late, to say the least, to spend much time reviewing the new equipment. Most of it has long since appeared in our advertising pages and new-product listings. But let's wander around and pick up a few pieces of literature, representing the highlights of the show as we saw it. We don't claim to have caught every highlight; there were five floors... with about 120 companies exhibiting from one to twenty or more products each!

One of the most interesting products at the show was the all-transistor stereo control amplifier exhibited by Transi-Tronics of California. Though in operation all day, it gave off no heat and took its electric power from dry cells totaling only 12 volts. (It works also, of course, from the usual 117-volt AC source.) It provided complete selector, tone control, and function facilities, along with equalization, microphone and phono preamplification—and two 25-watt power output channels. The unit is guaranteed, by the way, for two years.

Sem-Con Electronics equipment also was transistorized, with a three-unit line including stereo and monophonic control amplifiers and an FM-only tuner.

Among tape recorders, there was the Movie from Denmark, an upper-middle-price professional job; the monophonic and stereophonic models by Harting, “packaged” units with built-in speaker and many interesting features; and two Uher models. One, at show time, was a prototype of a stereo unit; the other, which attracted a lot of attention, was small and portable with speeds of 33 1/3, 1 1/2, and 1 1/2 inches per second! Expecting nothing in the way of frequency range at the slowest speed, we were surprised at how much could be accomplished. Other features of the Uher—and there was a long list—included automatic reverse at the end of a reel and a tricky device which turned the recorder on and off by voice: speak, and it starts; stop talking, and the recorder stops.

**Other shows news:** Harman-Kardon introduced two kits: power amplifier and stereo control units. Acro had new kits, a small but complete preamp being of special interest. Connoisseur (Ercona) had a new arm, which is positioned over the record, then lowered by turning a dial at the rear pivot point. Turn the knob the other way, and the arm rises off the record. Comes equipped with a diamond-tipped ceramic cartridge. Speaking of cartridges, Dynaco has a new one, by B & O of Denmark.

Beam-Echo (Avantic) products, of England, are again being imported to this country. And Lectronics of City Line Center is importing a beautiful tone arm from Canada, hand-made of walnut. — Madison Fielding came up with a new receiver (FM-AM stereo tuner, preamp-control unit, and power amplifier) which is reported on in this issue. — Scope Electronics is importing the EMI line from England... and Karg has a new continuous FM tuner. Their previous units (being continued) have “tuned” 10 or 12 preselected FM stations by crystal tuning control. — Finally, Cletron had a stereo loudspeaker system. The woofer was mounted on a panel on the back of the sofa, facing to the rear. Two other units, carrying middle and high frequencies, faced forward, one in each corner of the sofa back.

All in all, the show was a great success from our point of view... and we have enough products lined up for High Fidelity's Test Report section to keep the Hirsch-Houck Labs. busy for months.

**Charles Fowler**
Fisher Model 600
Stereo Tuner and Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer):
This is a complete stereo receiver, providing FM-AM stereo tuning facilities, preamplifier control functions, and two-channel power amplification, all on one compact chassis. Controls: AM tuning, FM tuning, bass and treble tone (Concentric), tape monitor, high filter, low filter, AM broad-narrow, balance, loudness, volume, mono-stereo function, and selector. Full connections for FM multiplex accessory adaptors. Record and tape head equalization. Speaker phase reverse switch. Center channel output jack. Built-in ferrite AM antenna. Provision for connection to third tape head, for monitoring during recording. Price: $349.50. MANUFACTURER: Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 Forty-fourth Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

At a glance: The Fisher Model 600 is a complete stereo FM-AM receiver, including full stereo control facilities and a pair of power amplifiers on one chassis. Practically all system interconnections have been eliminated without sacrificing the performance obtainable from separate components of good quality. The performance of each portion of the Model 600 is of top caliber, and the complete unit requires only the addition of a pair of good speakers, a turntable, and a stereo pickup to form a truly high-fidelity stereo music system.

In detail: Since the Fisher Model 600 consists of an FM-AM stereo tuner and an integrated stereo amplifier, functionally separate though physically on one chassis, we will treat each portion of the unit separately.

Amplifier
The amplifier is rated at 20 watts per channel, with a pair of 7189 tubes in each output stage. Function selection is by means of a MONO-Stereo switch, which has positions for CHANNEL A (FM), CHANNEL B (AM), Stereo Reverse, and a Mono-Phono position. In this position the two phono inputs are paralleled, enabling a stereo cartridge to be used for monophonic reproduction and achieving vertical rumble cancellation. An input selector switches the amplifier inputs to a high-level AUX input, FM Multiplex, FM-AM, Phono, and Tape Head. All inputs except FM-AM are located on the rear of the chassis. The FM-AM inputs are internally connected, with the choice of FM, AM, or both being made with the MONO-Stereo switch. A connector in the rear of the unit supplies an output for an external FM Multiplex adapter, whose audio outputs then go to a pair of input connectors on the Model 600.

Phono equalization is for the RIAA characteristic, used on practically all modern LPs including stereo discs. The tone controls have positions marked for modifying the RIAA characteristic to the older Columbia LP or 78-rpm characteristics. The tone controls for the two channels are concentric, with slip clutches so that they may be adjusted separately and then operated as single controls. A gauged volume control is combined with a...
power switch. A stereo balance control provides some 7 db of boost on one channel while reducing the gain of the other channel by 9 db. Both channels have rumble and scratch filters that are effective on all inputs. A tape monitor switch permits monitoring a stereo or mono tape recording as it is being made, provided a three-headed tape recorder is available.

The controls on the rear of the chassis include level-set adjustments for the internal AM tuner, multiplex adapter, and phono and tape inputs. A switch reverses the phase of the signal to one speaker. Outputs are provided for 4-, 8- and 16-ohm speakers.

**Test Results**

The maximum power obtained from each channel in our tests was 17 watts. Power response over the audio spectrum was exceptionally uniform. Even at 20 cycles, harmonic distortion was very low at the usual listening levels. The amplifiers of the Fisher 600 showed less distortion at very low frequencies than any other integrated stereo or mono amplifier we have tested, whether rated at 20 watts output or less.

Tone control characteristics were entirely conventional. The loudness control suffers from one minor defect: since there is no independent adjustment of level when listening to FM programs, the user has no control over the degree of compensation except to turn it on or off. Fortunately, the contours are well chosen, with the bass boost starting at 300 cycles or lower, and a slight amount of treble boost occurring above 8 kc at low settings of the volume control. The result is a well-balanced sound, free from boombiness at any volume setting.

RIAA phono equalization is within 2 db of the ideal curve at all points. Setting the tone controls to the indicated points produced an LP equalization characteristic of similar accuracy. The NARTB tape playback characteristic is very accurate except for a 5-dB bump in the 30- to 50-cycle region.

**Effect on response...**

![Graph of effect on response](image)

**... of loudness control.**

The rumble and scratch filters are nearly ideal, with negligible effect on middle frequencies, and sharp cutoff characteristics. These filters, which are most effective in their intended functions, hardly disturb musical content.

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**FM Tuner**

The Fisher 600's FM tuner is simple and straightforward. It uses a ratio detector, and does not have AFC. The tuning eye presents a horizontal bar of light with a dark segment in the middle. The dark segment becomes smaller as the signal is tuned in.

The tuner's sensitivity was measured by the IHFM Tuner Standard. The total hum, noise, and distortion in the tuner output is plotted against signal strength, with a 100% modulated test signal. The noise and distortion is 30 db below 100% modulation with a 6-microvolt signal, and this is considered the usable sensitivity of the tuner.

This sensitivity is exceeded only by some of the more expensive tuners. More important than mere sensitivity, however, is the fact that the Fisher 600 has adequate IF bandwidth to receive weak signals without clipping or distortion even at high-modulation levels. It is very easy to tune, and most of the negligible amount of warm-up drift occurs in the first three or four minutes. The tuning eye is remarkably sensitive, showing a definite indication for signals as weak as 2 microvolts.

**AM Tuner**

No laboratory measurements were made on the AM tuner. It is equipped with a ferrite rod antenna, which may be rotated for best reception. Its circuit could hardly be simpler: it has only three tubes, plus a tuning eye similar to the one used on the FM tuner. A front-panel switch allows either a sharp or a broad IF response.

The best test of an AM tuner is to make an A-B comparison of its sound with that of a good FM tuner, using a station employing both tuners. Most AM tuners are uninspiring in such a test. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the AM sound of the Fisher 600 did not suffer a bit by comparison with its FM sound. Its highs were very nearly as crisp, and if anything the over-all sound was better rounded on AM than on FM. With this receiver we were able to appreciate AM-AM stereo broadcasts fully, which is more than we can say for most FM-AM stereo tuners we have used.

Much of the Fisher AM tuner's outstanding sound was due to the silent background. Its freedom from hiss, birds (it has an excellent 10-kc whistle filter), and other interference helped reduce to minor proportions the gap between AM and FM sound. The sensitivity proved to be more than adequate for the New York metropolitan area, and should be sufficient for any but fringe area reception. For that matter, no AM tuner is likely to prove very satisfactory for high-fidelity reception under those conditions.

**Manufacturer's Comment:** 1. Although the FM sensitivity of the Fisher 600 is quite high, measured in accordance with IHFM standards, we are pleased to state that the sensitivity on regular production units has for some time been running 40% higher even than that attributed to it in the report. 2. The Fisher 600 is now equipped with a low-impedance, center-channel output jack. This makes it possible for the owner to use his old monophonic amplifier as a center-channel source, either for "curtain-of-sound" stereo in the same room with the 600, or to drive a remote speaker installation.

II. H. Labs.

**Equalization accuracy.**

![Graph of equalization accuracy](image)

The rumble and scratch filters are nearly ideal, with negligible effect on middle frequencies, and sharp cutoff characteristics. These filters, which are most effective in their intended functions, hardly disturb musical content.
Permoflux HDB-16-16 Stereo Headset and AD-25-2 Adapter

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): A high-quality headset wired for stereo listening, with control box. Headphone impedances: 16 ohms each (other models available). Control box impedance: 10,000 to 8 ohms. Frequency response: 50 to 15,000 cps. ±10 db. Price: $40. MANUFACTURER: Permoflux Products Co., 4101 San Fernando Rd., Glendale 4, Calif.

At a glance: Permoflux phones provide high-quality headphone listening or stereo monitoring from a conventional stereo power amplifier.

In detail: Permoflux manufactures a series of stereophonic (and of course, monophonic) headsets. The essential difference is in the impedance. In the stereo group, the following impedance ratings are available: 12, 16, 300, 600, and 10,000 ohms. The phones used for this report were of 16-ohm impedance—and that certainly makes a big difference.

To get best performance, earphones (headsets, headphones, what have you) should be of an impedance close to that of the equipment with which they are to be used. Thus the 12- and 16-ohm sets work best when connected to the output of regular stereo power amplifiers (either 8- or 16-ohm taps).

The two models with 300 and 600 ohms impedance are intended for connection to standard broadcast and recording studio lines. Some professional-model tape recorders have 600-ohm outputs. Most home-style recorders, however, have high-impedance outputs for monitoring; if they include loudspeakers, there may be an output connection marked “speaker” which would be at low impedance (4 to 16 ohms).

The headphones supplied to us were tested under two conditions: connected to the 16-ohm terminals of a power amplifier, and to the high-impedance output of a home-style recorder, but one which did not have a power amplifier or loudspeaker. In the first arrangement the volume was ear-shattering; in the second, the mismatch was too severe.

When using the power amplifier, the volume could of course have been kept down by the preamplifier’s volume control, but adequate control was difficult. A good solution was reached, however, by adding the impedance-matching device supplied us by Permoflux. With the impedance adapter set to provide a mismatch, the preamp’s volume control could be rotated to its twelve-o’clock position and all was well.

In fact, we got the usual pleasant surprise that always seems to accompany listening with good earphones. It’s pleasant, and more than just novel; stereo really sounds better—it must be because the second acoustical environment (the home living room) is excluded. The Permoflux phones seem smooth and have fine highs, with a slight—and pleasant—droop at the very top, and good bass if one considers the fact that they are headsets. Distortion seemed to be extremely low.

When used with the tape recorder, the impedance adapter did not entirely cure the mismatch problem; at least, the volume remained insufficient. Though the recorder has never put out much wallop, with another pair of standard high-impedance phones the volume has been adequate (no more) for critical monitoring. We just could not bring it up to that level with the Permoflux pair.

The impedance-matching box has two wires, with plugs, and two jacks for the headphone plugs, and a switch for binaural-monophonic listening. Care should be exercised to get things connected properly. Given the wrong setup, particularly when listening to a monophonic source, no sound at all emerges, or only a faint whisper. And when the unit is connected to a high-impedance source (the tape recorder we were talking about) the setting of the five-position impedance-matching switch can change tonal response.

All in all, fine phones. Just be sure to get the right impedance for the job for which they are intended.

MANUFACTURER’S COMMENT: Permoflux High Fidelity Dynamic headphones are manufactured in both high and low impedance. A minimum of ¾ of a watt is required to drive the headphones in order to obtain a satisfactory listening level. We recommend, however, that low-impedance headphones be hooked up to the output of the power amplifier to obtain the fullest and most satisfactory performance. There is no need to use matching transformers when the headphones are hooked up to the power amplifier since they are of low impedance. Monophonic headphones are available in impedances of 8, 25, and 32 ohms. Stereophonic units are available with 12 and 16 ohms on each side.

Dynakit Stereo 70
Dual Power Amplifier Kit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): The Stereo 70 is a dual power amplifier conservatively rated at 35 watts per channel. Frequency response: ±0.5 db from 10 to 40,000 cycles. IM distortion: less than 1% at 35 watts. Output impedances: 4, 8, and 16 ohms. Special features: two separate power supply sockets for preamplifiers. Front-panel switch to parallel outputs for operation as a 70-watt monophonic amplifier. Price, including cover: $99.95. MANUFACTURER: Dynaco, Inc., 617 North Forty-first St., Philadelphia 4, Pa.

At a glance: The Stereo 70 is a dual 35-watt power amplifier, featuring the high quality and moderate price which has characterized earlier Dynakit amplifiers. Its electrical performance is matched only by manufactured amplifiers that cost far more. The Stereo 70 can be used as a pair of 35-watt amplifiers for stereo, or as a 70-watt mono amplifier. Its power and distortion ratings are completely conservative. Its listening quality is unsurpassed.

In detail: Each channel of the Dynakit Stereo 70 employs a 7199 triode-pentode and a pair of EL-34 output tubes. The lower plate voltage used in the Stereo 70 assures long life for tubes and filter capacitors. In fact this amplifier’s components are operated more conservatively than those in any other commercial amplifier we have tested.

The circuitry of the Stereo 70 is very similar to that of the older Mark II and Mark III amplifiers, except for the smaller output transformers. Somehow, the two amplifiers and their power supply have been packaged in a space not much greater than that of the older mono amplifiers, without crowding and apparently without running at a higher temperature.

The Stereo 70’s frequency response

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is so flat that it almost seems pointless to plot it. The power response, in either mono or stereo modes, is nearly as good. The apparent discrepancy between the maximum power outputs shown in these curves and those suggested by the distortion curves is simply due to the different method of measurement. The power response shows the maximum power obtainable before some distortion of the output waveform can be seen on an oscilloscope. Very small amounts of distortion can be detected in this way. Acceptably low numerical distortion values can be obtained at much higher power levels.

As the curves show, the distortion in each channel of the Stereo 70 is immeasurably low or approaching the limitations of the test equipment at powers of 10 watts or less. At 1,000 cy-

Frequency response at low and maximum levels.

cles each channel is capable of some 43 watts before distortion becomes appreciable. By paralleling the two channels with the switch provided on the amplifier, one has a superb 85-watt amplifier (though Dyna calls it a 70-watt amplifier).

The hum level when driven from a low-impedance source (such as any preamplifier) is better than 90 db below 10 watts. Less than 0.7 volts is needed to drive each channel to 10 watts, or both channels to 20 watts. The damping factor is approximately 9 (Dyna says 15). Outputs are provided for 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers. The Stereo 70 will develop the equivalent of 18 watts per channel into a 3-md capacitive load at 10 kc, which makes it quite suitable for driving electrostatic speakers at high volume levels. It is absolutely stable and free from ringing under any conditions of capacitive loading.

Two power take-off sockets are provided to operate a pair of Dynakit preamplifiers. Each has its own heater winding to prevent interaction between channels.

A comparison of the performance of the Stereo 70 against the Dynakit Mark III shows the Stereo 70 to be definitely superior in all respects. Its distortion at all power levels is lower than that of the Mark III, and strikingly so near maximum power output. Its frequency and power response are better at the extremes of the audio range. Its sensitivity is about 15% higher. Of course, this improvement in flexibility and performance costs money which, in many cases, might not be warranted. But for the person who wants a very compact, superior quality stereo amplifier, or an extremely powerful mono amplifier at a remarkably low price, the Dynakit Stereo 70 is a natural.—H. H. Labs.

**MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT:** There seems to be only one important point which the Hirsch-Hauk Labs did not include—the fact that the Stereo 70 which they analyzed was not a kit (although it is also available wired). We attribute the excellent performance which can be obtained from our kit to the use of a factory-assembled printed circuit board containing the critical parts of the circuit, the quality of the parts used, and the factory testing and matching of tubes. The conservative operation of the components permits us to offer a one-year guarantee on all parts—a guarantee which we believe is unique in the kit field.

**KITY NOTES**

The Dynakit 70 was received as a kit. Before it was sent for test by the Hirsch-Hauk Laboratories, it had to be assembled and wired. The task was assigned to John Diegel of our office staff. His notes and comments follow.

The Stereo 70 is a complete dual 35-watt power amplifier kit offering the highest possible fidelity at a low cost and in most compact arrangement. It uses patented circuits of outstanding performance characteristics along with the new Dynaco A-470 transformers. Two noninteracting 35-watt channels provide adequate power in a stereophonic or two-channel system. The two channels can be paralleled for a full 70 watts of power suitable for practically any monophonic use.

**Construction Notes**

As its forerunners have done, the Stereo 70 sets a standard for simplicity of construction. The 52 odd components require about five hours for assembly into the finished product. Plans are very clear and a large set of pictorials simplify identification and placement of parts. All wiring is done step by step and layer by layer.

The instructions are divided into two sections. First, mechanical assembly, having to do with the attaching of tube sockets, inputs plugs, power and output transformers, chokes and other bolted-down parts. There are fifteen steps in this section. Second, the wiring procedure: there are seventy steps in this stage. In the mechanical assembly be very careful to orient properly the keyways of tube sockets and power take-off sockets for the preamp. Also in Step 6 of the mechanical assembly you should take care to see that the selenium rectifier for the bias voltage is properly mounted. The lug marked + K must go closest to the chassis. The rectifier is quite small and it is very easy to mistake the plus and minus sides.

The power supply is the first section to be wired. Then follows the output stage and 1 choke. After the first forty steps have been completed, you are ready to wire the printed circuit board. Connections are made to the board at numbered eyelets. These eyelets already have solder in them, making soldering easy and lessening the danger of damaging the printed wiring. This work should be done with a small iron. Use no more heat on the eyelet than is required to make the solder flow. All eyelets are clearly marked and instructions in this phase are very detailed.

When you finish wiring the printed circuit board and insert the line cord, the amplifier is complete. It iswise at this point to go back over the wiring and check all joints and connections for good mechanical and electrical bonding. Also check to make sure that the solder didn’t run to another connection or ground out a component accidentally.

The last step is the setting of the bias voltage. This is where the Dyna Biost comes into use and greatly simplifies the initial adjustment of the amplifier. The bias is checked at pin No. 8 of each preamplifier power take-off socket. The reading should be 1.56 volts DC. Once this step is complete you are ready to use your new amplifier.
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Kit builders, try out these four suggestions when working on your next project. Left: To clean the tip of your soldering iron, use aluminum foil: won't burn (like cloth), won't eat up metal (like a file), won't get into electric gear (like steel wool). Center: To fix a nut on a screw on the underside of a chassis, seat the nut on a strip of tape attached sticky-side out to your finger. Bottom left: To make an electric wire or cable feed-through insulator, cut a plastic 35-mm film spool in half, drill out the inside, and insert one half into the chassis as shown. A touch of household cement will hold it firmly in place. Below: You can make a shock-proof solder holder very easily from an old ball-point pen: take out the cartridge, clip off the top of the pen, and insert solder as shown. You can use this gadget to solder in "hot" electric circuits without the slightest fear of getting a shock, since the pen will insulate your hand from the solder.

HINTS
for the audio kit builder
A Preview of New Equipment

Stereo Tape for Home Recording

"Scotch" brand has now put out Tartan Series quality stereo tapes, especially developed for home recordists; they combine acetate (plastic) backing with extra-high-potency oxide coating. Built-in silicone lubrication helps smoothen operation and protect recording head against wear. In 5- and 7-inch reels: lengths and suggested prices: 600-ft., $1.75; 900-ft., $2.50; 1,200-ft., $2.95; 1,800-ft., $4.25.

Fane High-Frequency Speaker

British pressure-type unit, used with crossover network or condenser, handles high-note portion of 15 watts of music. Level response from 2,000 to 14,000 cps, gradual rolloff thereafter. Useful range, 1,500 to 18,000 cps. Hardened aluminum diaphragm has special loading system. May be used with or without baffle. Imported by Moe Swedgal Electronics, New York.

New Monophonic Amplifier


Lafayette FM Tuner

Model LT-80, Lafayette Radio’s new FM tuner, is hand-wired and individually tested in the laboratory. As a result, say the makers, it has a sensitivity of 1.5 uv for 20 db quieting. An Armstrong grounded-grid low-noise front end, triode mixer, tuned dual limiters, Foster-Seeley discriminator, and 3-gang tuning condenser form part of the circuitry. Frequency response: 20–20,000 cps ± ½ db. Price: $49.50.
Low-cost 4-Speaker System

A low-cost four-speaker combination system that has both monophonic and stereophonic application has been put out by Europe's largest speaker manufacturer, Isophon. Available in 20 and 25 watts; hand-crafted cabinets designed on distributed-port principle. Can be bought complete, or without enclosure for wall or custom installation; sold in kit form, too. Prices: $83 to $125.

Grundig Recorder Weighs 5 Pounds

Powered by ordinary flashlight batteries, this unit offers "almost an hour of high-fidelity sound reproduction," says Grundig. Matchbook-sized microphone weighs less than an ounce, yet can pick up sound 25 feet away while tucked in shirt or vest pocket. Carrying case in charcoal and office gray. Size 7" x 3" x 11". Price: $79.95.

Ampex Amplifier-Speaker Systems

New model 303 makes available—in component form—the power amplifier and speaker units used in the Ampex Signature Home Music System console. (One difference: the console costs $2,600; model 303 costs $285.50.) "The units are identical with those of the famed console," Ampex insists, "and within a comparable enclosure will produce sound of identical quality." Two model 303s are needed for stereo. Model 302, somewhat smaller, sells for $174.50.

Finish These Yourself

Two Jensen bookshelf speaker systems—the new Duette 2-way and the Tri-ette 3-way (illustrated)—now come in unfinished cabinets of light, smooth, 3⁄4-inch gum hardwood. Cabinet front edges are banded. Extra grille-former comes with each system; you can match any décor by installing grille fabric of your choice. Tube vented, bass-superflex enclosures. Prices: $59.95, $89.50.

Portable Tape Recorder

Hosho's Model 105, now available, weighs only 18 pounds, includes power amplifier, twin speakers. Speeds: 3 3⁄4; 7 1⁄2 ips; remote control; magic-eye record level indicator; precision mechanism with dynamically balanced flywheel assembly; earphone; high-frequency erasure; extension speaker jack and audio cable; input for recording direct from radio, phonograph, TV; table stand. Price: $129.95.
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Stereo Discs

Continued from page 78

In F. K. 413, and No. 20 in D minor, K. 466, and the results are well worth your attention, for the pianist is in absolutely top form in both works (Columbia MS 6049). The new D minor is infinitely more attractive than Serkin's earlier version.

If you have been waiting for a good up-to-date recording of Sibelius' immensely difficult Violin Concerto in D minor, I think you will discover it in a performance by Ruggiero Ricci and the London Symphony (London CS 6087). It may not equal the prewar Heifetz-Beecham version but it is an effective and musicianly reading.

Opera

Stereo has unquestionably proved its worth in the domain of opera, for it is capable of conjuring up the illusion of stage movement, of atmosphere, and of theatre excitement. Almost every score yet recorded in the new medium has benefited greatly. Nowhere have stereo techniques been more fantastically successful than in the first complete recording of Wagner's Das Rheingold (London OSA 1309). This is a memorable achievement in every way—from Solti's magnificent grasp of the score and the sustained eloquence of a superb cast, particularly Flagstad's radiant Fricka, to the recording itself, which literally transports you to your seat in the opera house.

If you find Wagnerian opera heavy and prefer the effervescent brioz of Italian opera, listen to a new and brilliant recording of Rossini's Barber of Seville under Erich Leinsdorf's direction (RCA Victor LSC 6143). This is the most complete version of the opera ever recorded, and it is sung to perfection by a cast that includes Robert Merrill, Cesare Valletti, and Roberta Peters.

The operetta buff, tired of the more standard items in the repertoire, should certainly sample Franz Lehár's seldom heard Giuditta. The score is full of luscious melodies, which Hilde Gueden and a cast of Viennese artists sing with distinction in an animated performance as you could wish to hear (London OSA 1301). And almost any Gilbert and Sullivan devotee (even the confirmed D'Oyly Carte Company enthusiast) will be delighted by a stylish performance of H.M.S. Pinafore led by Sir Malcolm Sargent (Angel S3589 B/L),

Choral

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STEREO DISCS
Continued from page 170

Messiah comes first to mind, for it has long been considered THE ideal Christmas gift. Alas, the new recordings of it by Beecham, Ormandy, Sargent, and Seherchen were not yet released when this article was written. [But see Nathan Broder’s review of them on P. 79, En.] However, the Stereo Fidelity recording of Messiah issued earlier in the year is attractive for more reasons than its low price of $11.95. Conductor Walter Suskind, the London Philharmonic, and the little-known soloists and chorus acquit themselves very well, and the stereo sound is quite overwhelming (SFCC 201).

Four new recordings of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion are due for release this season, but I wonder whether any will surpass the intensely musical and devoted performance led by Karl Richter for Decca’s Archive series (ARC 731/25’6’). On a smaller scale, but just as magical, is a lovely concert of Monteverdi madrigals sung by the Deller Consort with great purity of style and impeccable taste (Vanguard BG 5007).

Chamber Music

Successful stereo recordings of chamber music have been comparatively rare to date. Among the happier efforts is a Vanguard album in which the Griller Quartet excels in grateful performances of Haydn’s Quartets Opus 71 and Opus 74 complete (VSD 2033/34). Equally successful is London’s disc containing a poignant performance of Schubert’s marvelous Octet, Op. 166. The Viennese musicians catch every gleam of color in this beautiful work, and London’s well-spread sound further illuminates their performance (CS 6651).

In more modern vein, Hindemith’s often recorded Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2, is to be had in a splendid stereo recording by the New York Woodwind Quintet (Concert Disc CS 205). The Eulenspiegelish character of this lively music is conveyed with persuasive conviction, and the sound is splendid.

Possibly the most successful of all stereo recordings of chamber music is to be found in a pairing of two modern but easily assimilated works, the Villa

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**Popular**

Broadway show albums are sure-fire gifts at Christmas or any other season. Although no new original-cast albums were available at press time, two holdovers from last season, *Destry Rides Again* and *Flower Drum Song*, still seem worthy of mention. The former, a big, brassy, fast-moving musical, a little short on melody but packed with action, has been recorded with startling fidelity and wonderful theatrical atmosphere (Decca DL 79075). *Flower Drum Song*, a more leisurely paced show with a bevy of charming songs by Richard Rodgers, is offered by Columbia (OS 2009).

If you’ve ever had a yen to indulge in that form of musical calisthenics known as conducting, RCA Victor has just the record to satisfy it. “Music for Frustrated Conductors” places at your disposal a variety of orchestras, thoughtfully presents you with a baton, and bids you direct the music of Bizet, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, et al. to your heart’s content (RCA Victor LSC 2235).

Few people ever seem to have enough dance records around, and you can easily add to the general weal and pleasure by proffering one or two stereo discs by the best dance band in the business today, the Lester Lanin Orchestra. I’d suggest either “Have Band, Will Travel” (Epic BN 517) for those whose tastes run to large bands, or “Cocktail Dancing” (Epic BN 516) for those who like a more intimate style.

Plays, poetry, and speech have thus far received little attention from stereo engineers, so this gives me a chance to sneak in one monophonic disc that should by no means be overlooked. This is *Ages of Man,* magnificent readings by Sir John Gielgud of scenes from Shakespeare’s plays plus five of the sonnets (Columbia OL 5390). It’s a thrilling and memorable listening experience.

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- OTTO KLEMPERER

Continued from page 71

bottomless sockets, the hands, able to stretch an octave and a half, hang from fleshless wrists, and the mouth is tight and strained. Paralyzed down one side, speaking with a haggard shuf.

Klempner seen, when he appeared in London in 1947, like some ghostly reincarnation of King Lear. When, four years later in Canada, he broke his femur on the unpaved side of his body, it seemed as though he could hardly continue the arduous existence of a traveling conductor. Then came two internal operations, one of them a major affair. Yet he struggled on, sluffing painfully on and off concert platforms, and sitting to conduct without a baton.

Around 1934 his health started to improve. Audiences noticed that he was moving rather more easily and that his skeletal frame seemed less frail. Orchestral players started to report a genial side to a character that had once seemed completely unbend.

ing. "Good," said Klempner to a flutist at a rehearsal. Astounded at this lavish praise, the whole orchestra burst into applause. "It was not all that good," snapped Klempner, with the poker face he likes to assume when he makes a joke. Gradually the crustches grew less elaborate, then he moved with two canes, then with one. Finally, in the spring of 1955 when he was conducting a radio performance of Don Giovanni at Cologne, in the excitation of those tremendous trombone chords that announce the arrival of the statue at Don Giovanni's supper, Klempner stood again.

There is something intensely moving in the way that this unworldefly man has fought his way through persecution and exile, through terrible physical and mental suffering into a golden Indian summer. And there is a certain compensation that this Indian summer should have brought him acknowledgment as perhaps the day's outstanding exponent of the classics. I wish that I could end on that happy note. But in the autumn of 1958 Klempner set fire to his bed with a pipe and was burned so badly that he was hospitlized for many months and again this fall was taken suddenly ill.

Klempner is not an easy man to know, and it would be presumptuous, on the basis of a few meetings, to try to describe his character. He is, at first, extremely difficult to talk to, being quite without capacity for small talk. Anything in the nature of an interview clearly disconcerts him, if only because—unlike almost every other artist I have ever met—he genuinely finds it embarrassing to talk about himself. In consequence he submits to journalists' questionings rather like a tame bear suffering children's pats and caresses. At a chance meeting, he might let out something below in his curious hollow voice some controversial observation. Klempner is an imposing and even alarming figure, and I must confess that it was some time before I discovered that what he really wanted was to be talked back to. It is real discussion of some issue that locks his capacity for con-

versation. During the 1958 Edinburgh Festival the dining room of the George Hotel echoed to a voluble discussion between Klempner and Ansermet on the question of atonality. Characteristically, Klempner, who today tends to regard dodecaphonic technique with suspicion, took an opposing view to Ansermet's firm rejection of atonal practices.

As a conductor, it is, I think, Klempner's total lack of any sort of vanity that so endears him to orchestral players. (Certainly the relationship be-

This page is a continuation of page 71.
body that takes kindly to all conductors—positively affectionate.) And it is this complete absence of vanity and of striving for effect that gives his performances an almost startling directness. It is also perhaps this very directness, together with the measured tempo at which he takes allegros, that causes some critics to find him pedestrian. The whole key to Klemperer’s approach to a symphonic movement lies in the extraordinary sense of momentum and continuity he imparts. He can afford to dispense with more speed as a unifying force because of his unflagging sense of rhythm, the extraordinary onward-pressing quality this gives to his phrasing. And because, however much he may allow himself to stray from the main tempo, he always returns, not like many conductors to something near it, but to it exactly. Thus even the most extended movements are given a strong underlying pulse, while his measured tempo yields both an impression of size that dwarfs most other performances and a spaciousness in which every detail can be perfectly articulated. Sometimes this feeling of sheer size is, it seems to me, overdone, as in Beethoven’s gay Eighth Symphony. Sometimes I think there is a trace of pedantry which, for instance, causes him to take the scherzo of the Pastoral Symphony at an excessively slow pace, merely because it is a Landler. But even here, Klemperer’s performance comes near persuading one that, if his tempo is too slow, those of other conductors are equally too fast.

Most particularly in Klemperer’s interpretations of Beethoven there seems to exist what I can only call some profound spiritual affinity between composer and conductor. Victor Gollancz put the same point in a different way: After a memorable performance of the Ninth Symphony at the Festival Hall he said to me: “It’s curious to think that one hundred and fifty years ago a composer went deaf and yet overcame this crippling disability to write some of the greatest music there is; and that today a conductor should be smitten with appalling physical and mental tribulation, should survive it, and grow into a supreme interpreter of the music of the deaf man.”

Orchestral players are not usually given to emotionalism about their work. But when I once asked one to tell me what he thought of Klemperer as a conductor, he shuddered with embarrassment and then said: “Well, you see, it’s as though Beethoven himself were standing there.” I cannot think of a greater tribute.

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MARRIAGE

Continued from page 81

made a shrewd guess as to what Beecham meant by "today," for he produced an orchestration in the style of—Die Meistersinger! There are solo passages for flute, melting sallies by a horn or a clarinet, rich brass chords, harp arpeggios, ecstatic trills on the triangle, cymbal crashes, and other paraphernalia of the late romantic orchestra. A harpsichord would be a shocking anachronism here. It would be hard to imagine anything less suited to Handel.

The performance is a fine one. Each of the soloists does a highly competent job, even though none is especially outstanding. Jennifer Vyvyan sings both "He shall feed His flock" and "How beautiful are the feet" with a lovely, tender quality of tone, and in the coloratura of "Rejoice greatly," which is taken quite fast, she is most of the time accurate. Monica Sinclair's "He was despised" is wholly successful though not as stirring as it can be. Jon Vickers effectively conveys both the pathos of "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart" and its succeeding arioso and the strength of "Thou shalt break them." The ubiquitous Giorgio Tozzi is particularly impressive in "But who may abide" and he even manages to negotiate the cruelly difficult "Why do the nations" without becoming a casualty. The chorus is excellent, except for occasional weakness in the alto section; and, save for a couple of ragged moments. Beecham conducts with a zeal and skill worthy of a better cause. It must be said that he does not, as in his last previous Messiah recording, chop off arias after their middle section. He presents the work on seven sides with the conventional cuts, and then, apparently in a sudden access of concern for the purist, offers the deleted portions bunched together as an appendix on the eighth side. It would seem that anyone desiring to hear the work complete in its proper order is expected to switch back and forth between whatever side he is listening to and Side 8. A word should be said about the booklet, which includes nine prints in magnificent color, the bookable and suitable for framing, of great paintings on appropriate subjects from the New Testament. And the whole production, an item in RCA Victor's new "Soria Series," is encased in an album that is not only strikingly handsome but eminently practical.

Sargent's performance employs pretty much the same forces as his earlier Angel recording of Messiah. He uses a large orchestra and chorus, makes the customary cuts in Parts II and III, and plays Mozart's orchestration with

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his own modifications. He accents the drama of the work, which is all to the good, but the singing of his soloists is not very distinguished, and the chorus sounds less good in this version than in its previous appearance. Elsie Morison is much better in sustained passages (like her portion, beautifully sung, of "He shall feed His flock") than in those that require agility (the sixteenth-note figures in "Rejoice greatly," for example, Warfel as well). Marjorie Thomas seems to lack the true contralto timbre and sounds here more like a not very expressive mezzo-soprano. The singing of Richard Lewis is mellowed and sometimes eloquent, as in "Comfort ye," but once or twice, as in "All they that see Him," it is a bit unsteady. If Norman Walker's triplets in "Why do the nations are bleary, his work elsewhere is acceptable. The chorus is light-footed and flexible in "For unto us" (was a smaller group used here?), though rather thick-sounding in "And He shall purify." Its size and a fast tempo militate against clarity in "He trusted in God," and on several occasions the tenors are shifty. All in all, this performance seems to lack the warmth and polish that redeemed the shortcomings of Sargent's earlier version.

Ormandy's is a traditional version, apparently based on Mozart's, but more drastically cut than is customary, perhaps to keep within four sides. Lopped off, in addition to the usual numbers, are "The people that walked in darkness" with its preceding arioso, "Rejoice greatly," "How beautiful are the feet" and "His sound is gone out," and several other items. What is left, both musically and textually, is a mere torso. There is some excellent work here by Davis Cunningham and William Warfield, as well as what seems to me the finest performance of an individual number in all four sets—Eileen Farrell's confident and utterly beautiful singing of "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But the choral sopranos sound thin on top, and in general this performance seldom strikes fire.

The Scherchen recording is complete, and in its orchestration almost painfully "pure"—oboes are used only in a few places and I could not hear bassoons anywhere. Like Scherchen's previous version, this is an imaginative job, paying no attention to tradition. In some respects the results are very fine. With the aid of a chorus that seems to be small but has a firm, round tone, the conductor brings out the luminous transparency of "And the glory of the Lord." and effectively presents the contrasts prominent in "Glory to God." Some of his untouchable tempos are not convincing. "For unto us" seems too fast; at one point it develops into a bit of a scramble. Too many of the slow movements (among others "And with His stripes," "Thou are gone up on high," "If God be for us," the Grave sections of "Since by man came death") drag, and the final Amen is played so broadly (Andante, instead of Allegro moderato) that it sounds like a solemn choral étude rather than an animated affirmation of faith in the Eternal. Léopold Simoneau's rather light-sounding tenor skips happily through "Ev'ry valley."

"But who may abide" is sung by the alto here, instead of the bass; after a trembling start Nan Merriman brings it off nicely, and she also provides a moving performance of "O thou that tellest good tidings." Richard Standen sings the "people that walked in darkness" with fine tone quality throughout its wide-ranging part; elsewhere, too, he is a decided asset to the performance. Less valuable, unfortunately, is Pierrette Alarie's contribution. She seems to be addicted to crooning. This type of sotto voce singing may be all right in "How beautiful are the feet" but it seems out of place in an expression of confidence like "If God be for us." Incidentally, Miss Alarie sings "justiffe-eth" and the chorus has a tendency to pronounce the definite article "theh," but otherwise the English pronunciation by these mostly foreign singers is excellent.

In a work of this kind stereo adds enormously in depth and clarity. In all four recordings it accomplishes its now-familiar miracle of arraying the performers across as wide a platform as one's living room can provide.

From the standpoint of performance, however, I am not strongly tempted to swap my copy of the Boul port purist set for any of these. The aggregate of musical qualities in that recording (London A 4403)—Sir Adrian's conducting, the first-class chorus, the singing especially of Miss Vyvyan and George Maran (the tenor)—makes it to me still the most satisfying version of Messiah now available.

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BACK TO BRITAIN

Continued from page 76

Reid: Did it strike the Japs that way?

Britten: The Japanese people in London made no difficulty. They accepted the outline at once. I completed the score and sent it off to Tokyo. Then all hell broke loose. I was summoned to the Japanese Consulate in New York and had an absolutely furious letter from somebody in Tokyo. The letter said, among other things, that it was an insult to Japan to submit a work of Christian character. I replied formally, by letter, that, as I was a Christian, that was only to have been expected. (The Sinfonia has its first performance in March 1941 by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Barbirolli.)

Reid: It was through the Sinfonia, was it not, that you met Serge Koussevitzky?

Britten: Koussevitzky must have heard about Barbirolli’s performance of it. He did two performances of the Sinfonia himself in Boston before taking it on tour. One of them I attended. Wonderful conductor. He took infinite pains. He told me how impressed he was by the dramatic qualities of my score. Then he said, “Why don’t you write an opera?” I told him I was so busy writing incidental music and shorter works that I simply couldn’t afford to take the time off. I saw him next about a week later. He said, “Well, I’ve got some money for you [viz., $1,000 from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation]. Will you write an opera now?” I said “Of course.” Peter Grimes was the result.

Reid: By that time you were home-bound?

Britten: I had decided in August 1941 that I must get home at all costs. Peter and I stayed for six months with our trunks packed awaiting passage, always ready to leave at twenty-four hours’ notice. I hadn’t much money. I did all kinds of odd jobs, including proof correcting. We came back on a...
Swedish ship, New York to Belfast, originally in convoy, but the funnel caught fire and for a while we steamed alone. The voyage lasted a month and was frightening at times. But I had started composing again. On shipboard I wrote the Hymn to Saint Cecilia, A Ceremony of Carols, and several things I didn’t finally use. Scares apart, that month at sea was one of the most enjoyable of my life.


Seventeen years have passed since Britten’s memorable ocean crossing. In this time his opus roll has grown from No. 27 to No. 60. (There is a swarm of unnumbered pieces, too.) The peaks include, as well as works already cited: The Turn of the Screw, The Rape of Lucretia, and Albert Herring (chamber operas); the Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings; the Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra; the Second String Quartet; the glittering Spring Symphony; The Little Sucep (children’s opera); Noye’s Fludde, a setting (for child actors and musicians mainly) of the Chester miracle play; and, most recent of all at this writing, the Nocturne for tenor and orchestra, with obbligato interludes. Frustration has been mentioned. Along with frustrations there have been bursts of unmatched success. Britten is probably the only living composer who has been obliged to stock autographed photographs of himself for handing out at stage doors, who has had the number of his operas produced multiply in great theatres of Europe and of other continents, who has scored with genius for tin tea mugs, handbells, and boys’ bugles. (These oddities figure in Noye’s Fludde, which at its first production in a historic ancient parish church outside Aldeburgh in 1958 moved case-hardened critics to tears, this writer among them.) I wrote earlier of a personal mellowing. We do not hear so many curt and cutting appraisals as formerly. His dismissal of Puccini as mere “musical journalism” still provokes a moan of impatience. So does his remark, reported by the Earl of Harewood in 1952, that once in a while he plays through Brahms just to see whether his music is as bad as he thought, only to find it worse, if anything. Seven years later, when I challenge him about this judgment, he trims his sails a bit.

“I still stand by George Harewood’s ‘quote,’ ” he says, “although I hate anything that is too much black and white. One’s feelings are in black and white, I admit, but they don’t necessarily represent a final and absolute truth. I have no great sympathy for either Brahms or Beethoven, although I ad-

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BACK TO BRITAIN
Continued from preceding page

mit that both are very great masters. Both of them have influenced me enormously. They were my favorite composers as a child. But I moved off them. They have failed me. Or I have failed them... Perhaps it is a little oversimplified to say how 'bad' they are. It would be truer to say that I am not now sympathetic to certain points of view their music represents. In any case it is dangerous to hold a viewpoint and never rethink it. I may return to Beethoven and Brahms."

At Aldeburgh, Britten plays with his daclshunds, thinks out music while trudging across the salt marshes, composes in a loft over his garage, and at times himself at his work desk as rigorously as foremen time factory hands. He has certainly made himself what he set out to be, a professional composer. As is clear from his latest score, the Norturne, professionalism is only a fringe quality. Britten's music is still shot with marvel, touched with dawn and dew.

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