Toscanini in Stereo  a report on RCA's "electronic reprocessing"

high fidelity

MARCH 1961
THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS  60 CENTS

in this issue

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Toscanini in Stereo
A report on electronically reprocessing the Maestro's discs.

The Mixture That Is Milhaud
A close look at France's prolific composer.

Sometimes Look Beyond the Stars
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Do Re Mi Marks a Record Marathon
Overtime labors produced the tape of Broadway's latest success.

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Cover Photo Courtesy Gray Sound Corp.
Regular readers of the New York Times’ music columns are noting more and more frequently of late the by-line of Erich Salzman. They no doubt deduce that another bright young critic has entered on the musical scene. They deduce quite correctly. Mr. Salzman, still a safe distance on the near side of thirty, started training for his present career a good many years ago, beginning with violin lessons at age seven and going on to piano studies and private classes in musical theory and composition. How he managed on the side a high school varsity letter in basketball, we don’t know—but it’s a fact he did.) An A.B. from Columbia, graduate work at Princeton, and a Fulbright Fellowship for study in Rome followed. Also teaching. Also conducting. Also performing. And writing about music and musicians, of course. This month Mr. Salzman gives us (p. 30) a disquisition on recording hells here and abroad.

Jack Arthur Somer, whose “Toscanini in Stereo” appears on p. 40, holds at RCA Victor the post of administrator for audio coordination. A graduate of CCNY with a degree in mechanical engineering, Mr. Somer was previously employed at RCA’s Indianapolis development laboratories. When he could manage to extricate himself from the fascinating experiments going on there (and we all know scientists’ devotion to duty), he acted in his spare time as assistant to Edwin Bilcliffe, director of the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir. As a matter of fact, Mr. Somer has had a more than casual interest in music ever since he started taking piano lessons as a small boy, he himself is now giving lessons to several adult beginners and, together with a fellow Victor staff member, is engaged in composing a three-act opera.

London-born Edward Lockspeiser, author of “The Mixture That Is Mulhauenz” (p. 42), has made his reputation largely as an authority on French music, especially the work of Debussy. (In recognition of his services in this connection he was made in 1948 an Officer of the French Legion of Honour.) His latest book will be published in this country next year, to coincide with the Debussy centenary. Mr. Lockspeiser is also known as a conductor, lecturer, author of The Literary Clef—an anthology of the writings of French composers from Berlioz to Satie—and lecturer. Recently he visited the United States to speak at a number of Eastern universities.

Our frequent contributor Alan Wagner (his current appearance in these pages is as author of “Sometimes LaVallée and the Stars,” p. 44) claims that nothing new has happened to him recently. The changes in his existence, he writes, are more of a degree than of kind. (Being all in favor of a quiet life, we think this is fine.) Mr. Wagner now bears a more imposing title at a New York advertising agency; he finds that these days his radio program on WNYC consumes more and more of his time; and he suddenly is being forced to recognize that a younger generation challenges his musical authority, so now Down-on-the-three-legged stool, willingly only to Bach. Mr. Wagner is an aficionado of the opera. Everybody has his own problems, we guess.
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A cardinal feature of the plan is GUIDANCE. The Society has a Selection Panel whose sole function is to recommend "must-have" works. The panel includes DEEMS TAYLOR, Chairman; composer and commentator; JACQUES BARZUN, author and music critic; SAMUEL CHOTZINOFF, General Music Director; and JOHN M. CONLY, music editor, The Atlantic; AARON COPLAND, composer; ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN, music director, San Francisco Chronicle; DOUGLAS MOORE, composer and Professor of Music, Columbia University; WILLIAM SCHUMAN, composer and president of Juilliard School of Music; CARLETON SPARGUE SMITH, former Chief of Music Division, New York Public Library; G. WALLACE WOODWORTH, Professor of Music, Harvard.

HOW THE SOCIETY OPERATES

Every month three or more 12-inch 331/3 R.P.M. RCA Victor Red Seal records are announced to members. One is singled out as the record-of-the-month and, unless the Society is otherwise instructed (on a simple form always provided), this record is sent. If the member does not want the work he may specify an alternate, or instruct the Society to send him nothing. For every record members pay only $4.98 for stereo $5.98—for the manufacturer's nationally advertised price. (A small charge for postage and handling is added.)

Circle 23 on Reader-Service Card

March 1961
IT MAY BE A TURNTABLE
OR IT MAY BE AUTOMATIC
IT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE BOTH

Before you spend a sizeable sum of money, consider these basic differences between an authentic turntable such as the REK-O-KUT Stereotable, and the so-called "automatic turntable" which is nothing more than an ordinary record changer! Your high fidelity dealer will readily confirm and demonstrate the following facts.

**TURNTABLE:** Check the rotating table on which the record is placed. In the REK-O-KUT Stereotable this table is a heavy, cast-aluminum, precision-machined unit. Its record spindle is part of the table and rotates with the record! This construction eliminates wow and flutter (undesirable pitch variations).

**"AUTOMATIC":** In the "automatic", this table may be nothing more than a large weighted shell covering and camouflaging a thin metal stamping. Its spindle is stationary and inevitably wears the record centerhole. This results in quavering piano tones and vibrato in vocals.

**TURNTABLE:** Check the tonearm. With the REK-O-KUT Stereotable you use an independent tonearm. This tonearm is in no way linked to the turntable and is completely free to faithfully track the record groove. An independent tonearm, such as the REK-O-KUT Tonearm, which is perfectly balanced, assures even and minimum pressure against both tracks of a stereo groove. The stylus point remains vertical to the record at all times—a must for minimum record wear and optimum fidelity.

**"AUTOMATIC":** Now, look underneath the so-called "automatic turntable". It reveals its true identity—nothing more than a record changer! Note that the arm is tied to the table with a complex of multiple linkages which imposes additional weight and pressure on the arm, causing it to drag against one side of the groove. This reduces the stereo effect materially and causes excessive and rapid groove wear.

**TURNTABLE:** Observe the motor. This is the heart of any record player. The REK-O-KUT Stereotable employs a hysteresis synchronous motor—a remarkably quiet unit which operates at a constant rate of speed regardless of any variations in current from your electrical outlet.

**"AUTOMATIC":** Here again, the "automatic turntable" exposes its true identity by utilizing an induction motor. The difference? As vast and as marked as the difference between a modern high compression automobile engine and its less powerful counterpart. The undesirable rumble noises present in the operation of the ordinary induction motor will be reproduced through your speakers. As record piles upon record, the added weight slows the speed of this motor and the rotating table—to say nothing of the harmful abrasive grinding action between precious record surfaces.

Remember, you pay the bill and you should receive a product that is all it represents itself to be. **REK-O-KUT** has earned a world-wide reputation for providing the finest possible equipment at a price in keeping with its true value... and factually presented to the public. Ask your dealer to show you the fine selection of **REK-O-KUT** Stereotables, Tonearms and Audax Speaker Systems. Write for free catalog.

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* In addition to recordings of Metropolitan productions, operas recorded abroad by RCA Victor will be made available to members, with Metropolitan artists in the cast. In virtually every case, the operas will be available in complete form.

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MARCH 1961
Tips on tape handling and storing

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STORE IN THE ORIGINAL BOX to protect against dirt and damage. Place containers "on edge," or if you lay them flat, avoid weight that might distort reels or injure tape edges. And keep tape away from magnets or strong magnetic fields that might cause accidental erasure.

AVOID LONG EXPOSURE to extreme temperatures and humidity. If humidity varies, store in sealed containers. If tape is exposed to extreme heat or cold, allow it to return to normal room temperature before playing.

CLEAN RECORDER HEADS and guides periodically following recorder manufacturer's instructions, and avoid excessive winding tension that might stretch or distort tape. To protect your recorder head, use "Scotch" brand Tartan Tapes. Exclusive lifetime Silicone lubrication reduces head wear, eliminates squeal and extends tape life.

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Do Re Mi Marks a Record Marathon

An eighteen-hour work day put Broadway's hit on tape.

Recording a brand-new Broadway musical comedy while it is riding the crest of the raves is, I am sure, an event unlike any other on earth. The session usually takes place on Sunday, and the principals may find themselves still in the hall when the sun comes up on Monday, especially if the completed album must, by previous commitment, go on sale in the stores on Wednesday morning. Such was the timetable for RCA Victor's recent taping of Do Re Mi, and the eighteen hours of takes and retakes (with a meal or two interspersed) demonstrated that the show must not only go on... but on and on and on.

Do Re Mi is the story of an inveterate bungler named Hubert Cram (Phil Silvers) who decides that his chance to make big money lies in the jukebox racket. His wife Kay (Nancy Walker) has been through this sort of thing before, and although she really wants to do is open a dry-cleaning establishment, she is with Hubie to the end. For the recording session, Silvers and Miss Walker were scheduled for afternoon and evening; lesser lights of the cast were on hand much earlier.

It was ten A.M. when Lehman Engel, dean of Broadway conductors, beamed joyfully at his orchestra assembled in the intensely pink ballroom of the Manhattan Center on West 34th Street, lit a six-inch cigar, and gave the downbeat of the overture in a cloud of smoke. In the adjacent room (which is, on more prosaic occasions, a bar) the engineers had set up three huge speakers and an elaborate array of tape equipment seated near the control panels. Flanked by technicians, was the show's composer, Jule Styne (The Bells Are Ringing, Gypsy), a compact, well-tailored man in his fifties who is known for driving energy and a sense of determination that brooks no contradiction. "This session is going to be the devil," an RCA man confided to me. "Styne's a real stickler." Which proved to be no exaggeration—the overture required, in all, fourteen takes before the balance of inner voices and the behavior of the trombones were worked out to the composer's satisfaction.

Meanwhile, as the morning progressed, the control room began to fill with others responsible for Broadway's newest hit. Lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green appeared (The Bells Are Ringing, On the Town, Wonderful Town), the former cool and imperturbable, the latter looking rather like a character from Great Expectations (in spite of the proficiency with which he occasionally performed an absent-minded soft-shoe routine off in one corner, or sat by the speakers conducting intensively to himself, never still for a moment, eyes squinted against the trailing smoke of a perpetual cigarette). The producer, David Merrick (A Taste of Honey, Becket, Irma La Douce), alone and watchful, paced between the ballroom and the engineers' encampment, as much a veteran of the show as any member of the troupe by virtue of having traveled with the company during the entire six weeks of the out-of-town tryouts—a somewhat unusual procedure but one in keeping with Merrick's reputation as one of the most astute buckers in the business. "Phil Silvers wanted to come back to Broadway, so we cast around for a show for him," was his explanation of how it all began.

The first of the leads scheduled to record was John Reardon, a tall, athletic baritone who has worked his way from musical comedy into opera (at New York City Center) and back again. Reardon vaulted onstage and began a love song titled Make Someone Happy with an ease belying the fact that he had been singing Guglielmo in Cosi fan tutte only a few months before. A grueling series of retakes on his three solo numbers

Continued on page 12
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CIRCLE 90 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DO RE MI

Continued from page 10

stretched well into the afternoon, after which he and Nancy Dussault did a rousing duet called Fireworks. Sinking onto a nearby trunk full of electric cables, Mr. Reardon was heard to moan, "This puts Götterdämmerung in the shade."

By midafternoon the chorus had checked in, clad in everything from toreador pants to silk sheaths, Edwardian suits to turtle-neck sweaters. Lehman Engel was still irresistible, having changed shirts three times and cigars perhaps half a dozen; he made several vain inquiries as to "who has the adrenaline concession around here?" but his own energy was obviously far from depleted. Members of the orchestra who weren't called upon to play had several quiet, high-staked draw-poker games in progress at tables around the edge of the dance floor, and in the control room the engineers hadn't budged since lunchtime.

The chorus got to work, and later Phil Silvers of the inimitable slouch and wagging shoulders shuffled in. He was soon on stage with Nancy Dussault, rapping out a strapping number called Ambition, but pushed to the back of his head, arms outstretched in a wide embrace of the empty rows of the balcony, glasses reflecting darts of light to the rear of the house. Jule Styne, at his post near the controls, was still implacable, calling for better balance with the orchestra, better diction, "more drive, more excitement," unperturbed by Silvers' protest, during a playback, that "I'm tearing my throat out for you, man."

And so it went, into the night. By the time the show's costar, Nancy Walker, came on with a menacing solo called Waiting, Waiting, it was nearly midnight. Most of the onlookers had gone home, and the poker games had long since given out. Lehman Engel was wearing his fourth shirt, and composer Styne looked as impeccable and unwrinkled as when he had sat down some fourteen hours earlier. By four A.M. the last song was recorded, and an RCA engineer went off to the company's Twenty-fourth Street offices to make the tape-to-disc transfer. Another musical marathon had been won.

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New LK-72 72-Watt stereo complete amplifier kit (left), $149.95. LT-10 Wide-Band FM Tuner kit (2.2uV sensitivity), $89.95.*

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CIRCLE 76 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Notes from Abroad

HANOVER—This city of more than half a million people looms large in the history of the phonograph. Emil Berliner, inventor of the disc record, was born here, 110 years ago. Today, Hanover retains its importance among the phonographic centers, thanks to the large factory of Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft.

I arrived at DGG’s offices at a propitious moment. Tapes of Elektra—recorded in Dresden under Karl Böhm, with Jean Madeira, Marianne Schoch, and Fischer-Dieskau—had just been edited and I was able to hear the complete performance. It seemed to me that both from the musical and technical point of view a far better job had been done than with the company’s Rosenkavalier of a couple of years ago.

When Richard Strauss, many decades ago, rehearsed Elektra with the Dresden orchestra, he interrupted the musicians right after the very first bars to say: “Gentlemen, I should like you to play more softly in place of what I wrote in the score. I made a number of mistakes when composing this music. My dynamic marks are far too loud.” Karl Böhm enjoys telling this story, and it seems to have had a salutary effect upon the way in which this new Elektra has been played and recorded.

Gavazzeni Dreams. Another opera I listened to at DGG came from Milan: Un Ballo in maschera, recorded at La Scala under Gianandrea Gavazzeni and including in the cast Antonietta Stella, Adrianna Lazzarini, Ettore Bastianini, and Gianni Poggi. His approach seems authentic, his rendering of the score full of zest. You can clearly tell that even an Italian conductor with a seemingly born-in-knowledge of the correct tempo for every passage in Verdi’s scores occasionally revises his ideas when he listens to a playback. One morning Maestro Gavazzeni arrived late for a recording session and announced that he wanted to repeat a passage from the second act done the night before. The engineers were surprised because on that evening Gavazzeni had seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the results. “Well,” he explained, “you know that in my dreams I keep discussing all my problems with Toscanini. And last night Toscanini said that I should definitely play the passage much faster. I am sure he is right.” The recording technique applied to Un Ballo differs very much from that chosen for Elektra, with the stereo sound conveying considerably more illusion of a stage performance.

Fricsay to the Front. I also had a chance to hear the tapes of Brahms’s Second Piano Concerto played by Geza Anda and the Berlin Philharmonic under Ferenc Fricsay, which is soon due for release. It is Fricsay’s association with the Berlin Philharmonic and his leading position with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra that mainly account for DGG’s choice of Berlin as one of its recording centers. Recently, Fricsay recorded there Beethoven’s Seventh (with the Berlin Philharmonic) and Bartók’s First Piano Concerto (with Geza Anda and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra).

Berlin has also recognized Fricsay’s leading position in the operatic field by entrusting him with the conductorship of Don Giovanni, which will be performed at the opening of the new West Berlin Opera House in September 1961. Further recognition has come from Salzburg, which turned to Fricsay when Karajan suddenly withdrew from the Festival: next July, Fricsay will conduct the first Mozart opera in the new Festspielhaus (Idomeneo).

Mazzel, Markvitch, et al. Of Paris-made recordings I heard Ravel’s L’Enfant et les sortilèges, taped at the Salle de la Mutualité in November 1960. Lorin Mazzel is the conductor of the Paris Radio Choir, the Orchestre National, and an all-French cast. This, as far as I know, is the first attempt to record the “Fantasie lyrique” by Ravel and Colette since Ansermet conducted it for a monophonic London recording in Geneva more than five years ago. The filigree music gains much by stereo.

Mazzel is now in Berlin again, where he is scheduled to record Mendelssohn’s Fifth, Schubert’s Fifth and Sixth (with the Berlin Philharmonic), as well as César Franck’s Symphony and Les Éolides (with the Berlin Radio Symphony). But DGG work in Paris continues at an undiminished pace. At the time of this writing, Igor Markvitch was making the Symphonie fantastique and a set of French overtures in the Salle de la Mutualité, and Gerard Souzay, accompanied by Dalton Baldwin, was recording songs by Debussy.

And a Pianist. While I was in Hanover, I also attended a DGG recording session. From the control room next to the Beethovenhalle came the sound of Chopin’s Revolutionary Etude (Op. 10, No. 12). “Herr Vásáry is just listening to the playback,” somebody whispered to me. I listened, respectfully, to the vigorous rendering of Chopin’s old warhorse. Rather surprisingly, the twenty-seven-year-old Hungarian pianist is a small man

Continued on page 21
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A walk in the rain and the new ADC-1 Stereo Cartridge

What makes the sensitive person's response to nature so spontaneous and inexplicable? Whatever it is, for such people, listening to fine music reproduced with the new ADC-1 stereo cartridge is a refreshing, even elating, experience.

The new ADC-1 is the first stereo cartridge designed expressly for such people—people with a special kind of sensitivity to the world around them. If you are one of them, experience the thrill of sound reproduced with the ADC-1; you'll sense the subtle differences immediately; the experience will startle and delights you. Your records come alive, revealing brilliant highs and thunderous lows free from distortion. You'll hear subtleties of timbre and tone you never suspected were in your discs.

Play your records again and again... Notice that the sound continues to be reproduced at the same fine level; the ADC-1's light tracking force reduces wear to the vanishing point. In addition, surface noise is greatly reduced, increasing your records' dynamic range.

The ADC-1 must be experienced to be enjoyed. Ask your dealer to demonstrate it for you today.

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CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
whose shyness contrasts in a very marked manner with his energetic piano playing. Vásáry was not satisfied with what had been taped. He insisted that there was some unevenness in his fingerwork (which, by the way, I was unable to detect). So it was decided to try Op. 10. No. 12 again. All the Etudes of Op. 10 and Op. 25 were eventually included in the Hanover program.

Vásáry received his music education at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, but in 1951 was deported from the Hungarian capital to a small provincial town. "A guardian angel watched over me," he says. "Zoltán Kodály, the great composer, came to my rescue. He sent me the most precious, the most useful present—a piano, which enabled me to continue practicing."

A few years later Vásáry became again "acceptable" to the authorities and was even appointed to the faculty of the Budapest Academy. ("I am sure this was due to Kodály's influence.") In 1956, however, he left Hungary and went to Switzerland in order to study under the late Clara Haskil. With his first records, issued by DGG, his name became known in Western Europe and engagements for recitals in London, Berlin, and other cities followed. The present series of Chopin recordings should do much to make Vásáry better known in the States.

KURT BLAUKOPP

PARIS—Financial people say that the depression in the French record industry is petering out. Dealers in Paris are folding less rapidly. Manufacturers are talking about stability. This is, perhaps, a good occasion to look again at the sickness of the last two years—and to hope that French record firms will be more adventurous than they have been lately.

There may be 1,500,000 phonographs in use in France, but one industry source told me recently that there are not more than a million worth counting. Competing for this market are four major companies (Pathé-Marconi, Philips, RCA-Decca, and Vega) and a dozen smaller ones. The latest catalogue lists 101 labels as French, although some of these are naturalized foreigners. Total production is now about 3,500,000 records a month. Prices, in terms of real wages, are at least 100 per cent higher than in the United States. Stereo has created mainly confusion and hesitation. Monophonic discs account for 99 per cent of sales.

These are the main elements in the crisis. Obviously, too many people are trying to sell a luxury to too few. Why? Well, largely because too few were trying ten years ago, when the LP revolution arrived. At that time French record companies had not yet recovered from the war. Dealers had inventories to establish, and collectors were eager. So a rush started. Factories were built with more enthusiasm than judgment. So, in the winter of 1958-59, the bubble burst.
It Took Eleven Years and One Night to Design
The World's Best Speaker System
The New CITATION X by Harman-Kardon

Stewart Hegeman, Director of Engineering, Citation Kit Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc.

STEW HEGEMAN owns a big, old Charles Adams-type wood frame house in New Jersey. It has its disadvantages—but it's a rather special kind of house. The original high-ceilinged living room has been converted into a sound laboratory replete with Morris chairs, the best testing equipment and Universal Coffeemator machines. According to legend, Stew has coffee now flowing through his veins instead of blood—a concomitant of spending night after night searching for perfection in audio design. It was at this house, one night last summer, that the Citation X speaker system was born.

The antecedents of this story date back to 1949 when Hegeman first heard a Lowther driver. That was it; the beginning of a remarkable collaboration between this great American audio engineer—now Director of Engineering of the Citation Kit Division of Harman-Kardon—and the highly-regarded Lowther company of England. Together, they created speaker systems which became classics: the original Hegeman-Lowther horn—the great "Grey Monster" with its top section of plaster of Paris and the Brociner Model 4 Horn.

Over the years, Hegeman and Donald Chave—head of Lowther—continued to work together. Ideas were exchanged; concepts discussed and explored. Independent lines of research into the perfection of speaker design were followed by both. Then came their meeting one night last summer—and the creation of Citation X—the culmination of 11 years of joint and independent research into speaker design.

Reflected Sound

DESIGNED IN THE CITATION TRADITION—the best regardless of cost—the new speaker system places no limits upon performance. It can perfectly reproduce the whole complex structure of a musical composition without adding or taking anything away from the original performance.

The Citation X diffuses sound in a hemispheric radiation pattern—by a blend of direct and reflected sound. In creating this design, the precise process of what occurs in a concert hall has now been duplicated. Audio engineers know that approximately 60% of the sound in a good concert hall is reflected from the ceilings, walls, etc. It is this mixture of direct and reflected sound that gives music its depth and dimension, its exciting spatial quality.

The Citation X achieves precisely this effect by distributing music on vertical and horizontal planes. Conventional speakers beam the sound at you on a horizontal plane—similar to automobile headlights. In stereo, this is akin to listening to the full orchestra through two holes in the wall. Replace the conventional speakers with Citation X and the wall disappears. You are in the same room with the music. There is no ping-pong effect; no "hole-in-the-middle." All of the music is there in all of its depth and dimension and reality. For the first time, the word "presence" has been made meaningful.

The Lowther Driver

THE BASIC ELEMENTS of the Citation X are the Lowther driver and the Hegeman enclosure design—a split, slot-loaded conical horn, with two 7'2" feet sections folded within the enclosure. The driver is a massive Lowther unit specifically engineered for the Citation system. It consists of four working elements:

- Direct radiation from front of cone.
- Radiation from the midrange "whizzer" cone which operates between 2000 and 7000 cycles.
- A stabilizer which places a damping load on the cone and acts as a diffuser and distributor of the very highs.
- Radiation from the back of the main cone which is directly coupled to the folded horn.

Features of the specially designed driver include: magnetic structure of anisotropic magnetic alloy (Ticonal C) which is the most efficient magnetic material known today; usable frequency range of 20 to 50,000 cps; gap flux—17,500 gauss; total flux 190,000 maxwells; aluminum voice coil for increased high frequency efficiency; twin cone construction with foam plastic front and rear suspension; no distortion at crossover frequencies due to elimination of distortion producing LC networks.

The Horn

CONVENTIONAL HORN DESIGNS use an acoustic chamber to couple the diaphragm to the throat of the horn. In the Citation X, the chamber is removed and the driver placed directly into the throat of the horn. This eliminates the last resonating element in the horn configuration and results in absolutely smooth transfer of radiation between horn and driver.

Instead of the conventional "open mouth," the Citation X horn terminates in a slot at the base of the enclosure. This presents the horn and driver with the impedance of an infinite horn. Thus, phase shift is reduced within the horn and room reflections are prevented from entering the horn's mouth and reaching the driver. Pressure loading by the horn damps completely the mechanical resonance of the cone and its suspension.

The interior of the handsomely hand-rubbed walnut enclosure is constructed of Timblend which has no directive resonance and is stronger than wood. The entire internal horn structure is honeycombed for strength and prevention of panel resonance.

For those who own Citation units—for all those who want perfection in speaker performance—we can recommend the Citation X without qualification. The dimensions of the Citation X are 20" wide x 14" deep x 36" high—because that is the size necessary for the design of the world's best speaker system.

The Citation X—$250.00

Price slightly higher in the West.

For complete Citation catalog write to: Dept. HF-J, Citation Kit Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, New York.
Cuts and Clubs. Slashing prices would seem to be the indicated remedy, and it is being applied. Some of the companies, I am told, are even secretly sending new records — hand signed — to the Flea Market. But there are economic limits to the cuts, and a curious psychological limit: apparently French collectors, used to thinking of records as luxuries, suspect defects when offered too good a bargain. Anyway, that is what Champs-Elysées dealers say.

Educating a larger public is perhaps a better approach, and it is now being tried with considerable success by Pathé-Marconi. Last fall the firm launched a record club, offering three discs for the price of one as a starter, bonuses to keep things rolling, and an illustrated monthly magazine. Standard classics and popular tunes are available, interpreted by Maria Callas, André Cluytens, Herbert von Karajan, Edith Piaf, Miles Davis, and other stars of the EMI empire. Retailers worried by this direct approach have been given a double reassurance: no record goes on the club list until six months after release, and none is kept on the list for more than six months.

At this writing the club has more than fifty thousand members. Most of the prospecting for subscribers has been done in the provinces, where well-stocked dealers are surprisingly rare. But this does not mean that Pathé-Marconi has romantic illusions about bringing music to art-hungry peasants. The best results have been obtained among students, shop girls, and small-town professional men.

Collectors and Critics. My latest unscientific survey of French musical taste—as revealed by Paris record sales—has yielded only one surprise: Vivaldi, except for The Seasons, is slipping badly. Beethoven, of course, is still far ahead, followed by a slightly faltering Mozart. Bartók, Berlioz, Mahler, and Prokofiev are coming up fast. A record-lending library back of De Gaulle's palace has noticed that beginning listeners may jump from familiar Beethoven into an extraordinary enthusiasm for Bartók, with nothing in between. I don't know what this phenomenon means.

Vega, which has made a magnificent effort to record contemporary music over the past five years, thinks that new composers are part of the answer to the French crisis. The total public may not be large for new works, but it is apt to be faithful and there is little competition. The company has now passed the six thousand mark with its recording of Pierre Boulez's Maeterlinck sans maître.

Do critics have any influence? Paris dealers are rather skeptical. "We sell legends," one of them told me. "People like pianists who die young, and sopranos who have love affairs." But this cynicism is not shared by everyone. Philips has found that serious reviewers who compare different recorded versions of the same work substantially affect sales.
Maybe you don't remember the magic tick-tick of Dad's alarm clock . . . or the excitement you felt at the tiny sound of his key turning in the lock.

But don't despair. Grownups, too, can experience exciting moments in sound. Try Audiotape and see.

The unique quality of this tape gives you more clarity and range, less distortion and background noise. It's your silent (but knowledgeable) partner in capturing fresh, clear, memorable sound—whether it's Saturday night merriment . . . or a Sunday afternoon concert.

Remember: if it's worth recording, it's worth Audiotape. There are eight types . . . one exactly suited to the next recording you make.

CIRCLE 11 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Criticism that makes no comparative judgments is apt to be less influential.

ROY MCMULLEN

BUCHAREST—Rumania is a fascinating dark-hued country where Europe stops and the East begins; where, except in the larger cities or the capital itself, time seems to have stood still ages ago: where huge herds of swine and buffaloes, the latter black and with quaint, curly horns, block the main highways as they are driven to their villages from the outlying fields; where, in Bucharest, a gypsy woman, nursing her child at her breast, sits at the steps of a splendid new concrete and steel housing block, where, along the sparsely traveled roads, the only signs are party slogans, encouraging the peasants and workers to more efficiency; and where the country people are of a generous warm heartedness (we occasionally asked for a mug of creamy buffalo milk, and never would a peasant accept money for it).

It may seem incongruous for Rumania even to have a record industry, but although the country is hundreds of miles deep in Eastern Europe, its cultural tie to the West—especially to Paris—remain strongly felt. Rumanian orchestras are a curious and attractive mixture of French and Central European, having a rather Austrian string tone balanced by a woodwind and brass texture distinctly Gallic in character. In Bucharest, the principal orchestra is the State Philharmonic, named after Rumania's greatest musical son, Georges Enesco, and it is a very fine orchestra indeed—not, perhaps, on the level of the Leningrad, Vienna, or Berlin Philharmonic, but only just below them. And Cluj—the second largest city, which was formerly part of Hungary and still has a large Hungarian element—boasts both a Hungarian Opera House and a Rumanian Opera House. Like those of other Eastern European countries, the peasants in Rumania are highly musical, and their unutterably sad, desolate folk tunes have left an indelible mark on all Rumanian music of today.

Rumania's Record Scene. The State Record Company, Electrecord, began to produce LPs in 1956; recordings had been made in Rumania twenty years before then, but mostly dance music and on a very limited scale. Officials of the company told me that the original LPs were technically inferior, and in the past years they have imported German, British, and Danish equipment to record, process, and press their records. This year Electrecord has begun to make stereo recordings (Beethoven's Ninth Symphony conducted by George Georgescu, works by Enesco), but since stereo playback equipment is not generally available, the stereo tapes are intended primarily for export.

Recently Electrecord has been making...
NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from preceding page

Joint recordings with Supraphon in Prague and Erato in Paris; in Rumania, you can buy Furtwangler and Menuhin discs, the rights for which Electrecord leased from French HMV. The prices of records in Rumania are relatively cheap: for example, a 12-in. LP costs 46 Lei—a little over $3.00. (There are half a dozen different rates of exchange in this country; I have used the one tourists get, which is considerably better than the official bank rate for businesses, and so forth.)

I was given a large number of records, and I also heard several test pressings (e.g., a magnificent performance of Enesco’s Third Violin Sonata, with Enesco himself and Dinu Lipatti—an old tape which has been skillfully reprocessed). On the whole, the technical quality of the records is far higher than I expected, and the performances I heard were all first-rate. There seem to be two star conductors in Bucharest, Georgescu and, of course, Contanin Silvestri, who is known to the West through his EMI recordings. All save one of the Electrecord discs of classical orchestral music I heard were conducted by Georgescu.

Beautiful and Sad. On the folk-music side, Rumania has more to offer than almost any other European country. The peasants’ agelessly beautiful, deeply poignant melodies have fascinated musicians ever since Bartók began giving them more than local circulation. The Rumanian Folk-Lore Institute (in whose offices I spent an enthralling morning) has issued, via Electrecord, a series of twelve-inch LPs covering Rumanian folk music (“Culgere de Cintece Romainesti”) and to hear this music, which varies from heart-rending sadness to almost hysterical gaiety, is an experience no music lover should miss. Some of the arrangements, I felt, derived from the night club; but others are straight from remote Rumanian villages where there has never been a radio or a television set to pollute the strength and purity of these ancient tunes. It is music close to the earth: it sings of birth, and love, and death; it conjures up the rich, black earth of Transylvania, and the neat white-washed houses, and the peasants after the harvest, drinking the new wine in the shadow of the ancient church. It tells of the icy north wind, moaning across the plains to Hungary; it tells of a race sad before they were born, “Because” (says one nursery song) “it is not a thing of joy to be placed on the earth.” No wonder that the sick Bartók, looking at the beautiful hills of New England the last summer before he died, longed for the Rumanian villages. Eastern Europe is a tragedy in many ways, but out of its seething history has come the greatest folk music of our civilization.

H. C. Robbins Landon

Continued from preceding page

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Beautiful and Sad. On the folk-music side, Rumania has more to offer than almost any other European country. The peasants’ agelessly beautiful, deeply poignant melodies have fascinated musicians ever since Bartók began giving them more than local circulation. The Rumanian Folk-Lore Institute (in whose offices I spent an enthralling morning) has issued, via Electrecord, a series of twelve-inch LPs covering Rumanian folk music (“Culgere de Cintece Romainesti”) and to hear this music, which varies from heart-rending sadness to almost hysterical gaiety, is an experience no music lover should miss. Some of the arrangements, I felt, derived from the night club; but others are straight from remote Rumanian villages where there has never been a radio or a television set to pollute the strength and purity of these ancient tunes. It is music close to the earth: it sings of birth, and love, and death; it conjures up the rich, black earth of Transylvania, and the neat white-washed houses, and the peasants after the harvest, drinking the new wine in the shadow of the ancient church. It tells of the icy north wind, moaning across the plains to Hungary; it tells of a race sad before they were born, “Because” (says one nursery song) “it is not a thing of joy to be placed on the earth.” No wonder that the sick Bartók, looking at the beautiful hills of New England the last summer before he died, longed for the Rumanian villages. Eastern Europe is a tragedy in many ways, but out of its seething history has come the greatest folk music of our civilization.

H. C. Robbins Landon

Continued from preceding page

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H. C. Robbins Landon
The term high fidelity has been used so freely that its literal meaning is often forgotten. It does not refer to over-loud, over-resonant, over-brilliant sound, but to the faithful recreation of a musical performance.

The ultimate test of a high fidelity system, then, is a direct comparison with the sound of the original instruments.

Such a comparison was made during the recent hi-fi show in New York City, when AR speakers and Dynakit amplifiers vied with the Fine Arts Quartet in a "live vs. recorded" concert. At intervals the Quartet stopped playing and allowed the hi-fi system to take over, using pre-recorded sections of the music, without missing a beat.

McProud, editor of Audio, reported: "We must admit that we couldn't tell when it was live and when it wasn't." The Herald Tribune referred to "awesome fidelity". Record reviewer Canby wrote: "My eyes told me one thing, my ears another." Freas, audio editor of High Fidelity, wrote: "Few could separate the live from the recorded portions."

After all of the trade jargon and esoteric talk heard at hi-fi shows, this was the real thing.

**DYNAKIT MARK III AMPLIFIERS AND STEREO PREAMP, AND ACOUSTIC RESEARCH AR-3 LOUDSPEAKERS**, components designed for the home, created the illusion. Although these components are medium priced,* they are widely regarded as representing the highest quality that the present state of the art makes possible.

Further information on these products, including a list of high fidelity dealers in your area who carry and demonstrate them, is available for the asking.

*A complete high fidelity record playing system using the above components would cost about $750. You may hear AR speakers and Dynakit amplifiers together (in these and other, less expensive models) at AR Music Rooms, on the west balcony of Grand Central Terminal in New York City, and at 52 Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge 41, Massachusetts
DYNACO, INC., 3912 Powelton Avenue, Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania

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GARRARD'S THREE STEREO AUTOMATICS

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THE AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE
LABORATORY SERIES TYPE A

An entirely new kind of record-playing unit combining all the advantages of a true dynamically balanced tone arm, a full-size professional turntable, plus the convenience of the world's finest automatic record-handling mechanism—all in one superb instrument. This unit was designed to appeal to the most critical and knowledgeable, with performance so outstanding that it even surpasses the professional turntable standards established by NARTB.

(key text)

MODEL 88 (MK II)
DELUXE RECORD CHANGER

This is a new version of the famed RCB8 manual player/automatic changer combination, with every key feature already proven through years of unsurpassed performance... millions of playing hours in hundreds of thousands of homes. Now further refined to provide even better performance, the new RC88 still offers the exclusive pusher platform which made its predecessor the best selling unit in the entire high fidelity component field.

(key text)

MODEL 210
DELUXE INTERMIX CHANGER

Garrett's most compact automatic and manual changer... the Model 210 is noteworthy for its versatility. It is scaled to fit any cabinet designed for a record changer. It plays and intermixes records of all sizes. Though moderately priced, it is a Garrett in every respect, precision built to Garrett's highest standards, suitable for the finest stereo and mono music systems; ideal for replacing obsolete record changers.

(key text)

Write for your Garrett Comparator Guide, Dept. GC-21, Garrett Sales Corp., Port Washington, N. Y.

CIRCLE 28 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
The Hobbyhorse Still Rocks

Remember the cartoon in which a breathless matron bursts into a room full of swizzled guests and martini-induced euphoria? "Dinner is ready," she announces, "What shall we do with it?"

Audio hobbyists are finding themselves in a similar quandary these days. "The system is installed," they are heard to complain. "Now, what do we do with it?"

Listen to music? Of course. But what about the tinkering, the loving installation of accessory refinements that kept us so busily and happily occupied a few years ago? In a sense, the manufacturers have taken that fun away from us. In the new stereo-inspired audio equipment, with its unprecedented control features and operating facilities, the need for further "nuts and bolts" activity is practically nonexistent. Another way of putting this is that the components produced today, unlike those on the market as recently as three years ago, largely anticipate the user's needs.

Such intricate operations, for example, as wiring a signal take-off to feed a tape recorder from an amplifier are no longer necessary; the connecting jack and associated circuits now come built in on most amplifiers, with simply one more switch on the control panel. Tone arms now are supplied with stylus pressure settings calibrated along the arm; in some, the pickup leads already are connected to signal cables, ready to be plugged into the amplifier. Leveling indicators, as well as the leveling adjustments, are showing up as standard equipment on more and more turntables. Built-in bias and balancing meters in amplifiers eliminate the need for connecting one's own meter to check critical circuits. In another area, the cut-and-try experimenting in fitting "naked speakers" into home-built enclosures has been obviated to a great extent by the integrated speaker system in which drivers, dividing network, enclosure, even grille cloth all are conceived and produced as an entity. Even less ambitious activities such as "making up" odd types of signal cables for special interconnection between components hardly seem worth the bother when, for a few cents, one can buy a length of cable prefitted with any combination of plugs, and stronger than any made at home.

Yet, despite the fact that many of the hobby aspects of audio have become passé, we believe that the hobbyhorse still is rocking, if in a different tempo and on a higher level. For one thing, there are any number of newcomers to the ranks. It is true that buyers today can simply put their money down and take home equipment far more sophisticated and advanced in design than was available a few years ago. Even so, how long before the new audiophiles start asking the old questions: why this? and how that? and can I get it to sound better?

Secondly, many of these questions have not been resolved—and cannot be, except in terms of the individual listener and his environment. Certain types of distortion, for example, still are not completely understood, particularly as they relate to the listening experience. One of the most challenging of these types involves the effect on sound—both in recording and playback—of the room itself, "acoustic distortion" if you will. Here indeed is virgin territory for the hobbyist to explore, from experimenting with speaker placement to experimenting with the room itself.

In another, though related, area there is a growing tendency towards integrating the high-fidelity system with room décor, by cabinets, built-ins, equipment housing, or room dividers. This suggests new discoveries and personal involvement for the hobbyist. It is a short step from kit building (and the rising interest in kits at all levels of price and performance suggests that the do-it-yourself movement is stronger than ever) to woodcrafting and allied arts. What has emerged, and undoubtedly will continue to grow, is a new understanding of how sonic beauty can be related to visual beauty.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the fidelitarian—active or passive—likely never will abdicate his "rule from the sidelines." He will maintain his prerogative of inquiry, and of criticism; and he will not stint his appreciation of new equipment and techniques.

Aside from all this, what more is left for audio enthusiasts to do? Quite simply, to sit back and listen to their music. The prospect, we confess, pleases.

Norman Eisenberg
WHERE SOUND SOUNDS BEST

Kingsway Hall, photo by Hans Wild
A METHODIST MISSION HALL in London, an abandoned basilica in Milan, the lobby of the opera house in Brescia, a handful of faded ballrooms in New York and other American cities, an out-of-the-way chapel on New York's East Side, an old St. Louis beer hall—all have one thing in common: the making of records.

Good recording halls are hard to find. The industry's musical directors and sound engineers have searched everywhere from barns to ballrooms, clapping hands, firing pistol shots, and shouting across empty rooms in an effort to locate acceptable sites for their work. With every advance in sound reproduction—and stereo has compounded the problems—the choice of a recording location becomes more and more crucial. Hall acoustics can mean the difference between a genuine musical re-creation and an artificial imitation. The finest performance can be severely damaged if recorded in an acoustically inadequate auditorium.

Long ago, performers went to the studio—to the recording equipment. Engineers merely wanted musicians close enough to the horn so that something—anything—would be heard. Even after the development of better and more flexible recording equipment, the studio retained the advantages of convenience. Solo and chamber music are still often recorded in the studio, and it is the usual locale for pops recordings, where special effects may be desired and where artificial gimmicking is often introduced. But for orchestra, choral, and operatic music, the studio today plays a secondary role.

Aside from the fact that few studios have the space to accommodate large instrumental and vocal ensembles and that the older ones (and even some of the newer) are often inferior acoustically, the much-proclaimed ideal of "concert hall sound" led logically to the choice of actual concert halls for recording. Their acoustic properties are well known, and they provide comfortable, familiar surroundings for the musicians. The recordings made in Boston's Symphony Hall and in Chicago's Orchestra Hall serve as examples of the fine results that can be obtained in concert halls. Their use, however, is not without problems. Some have bad acoustics—the Royal Albert and Royal Festival Halls in London, the Salle Pleyel in Paris, and the Ford Auditorium in Detroit are notorious cases in point. Furthermore, since the microphone does not hear the same way human ears do, a good concert hall isn't necessarily a good recording hall. The ear listens selectively; the microphone picks up everything, with brutal objectivity. Omnidirectional microphones in large halls reproduce reverberation that our ears (aimed forward as they are) and mental attitudes (trained to notice only what we consider important) note only slightly, while strongly directional mikes miss great areas of complex reverberations and make the hall sound drier than it would in concert. Conversely, a hall not accounted good for concerts may be excellent for recording. A first-rate concert hall must have even diffusion of sound through most of its area, but recording engineers need only as many choice listening spots as there are microphones.

Another significant difference between the sound of a hall for concert and for recording purposes relates to the presence or absence of an audience. Performers know of the vast difference in sound between an empty hall and a full one, and many a concert hall is not at its acoustical best unless full of people. And there are further difficulties in using established halls: they are engaged for other, conflicting functions; a rival firm may have exclusive use of the wanted hall; street and traffic noises (enormously magnified on recordings) may be audible inside—Carnegie Hall's subway rumble is a famous example.

These factors, complicated by the industry's growth (and need for quality reproduction), have triggered a search for adequate halls and forced engineers to face the very difficult, basic question—what makes a good hall good?

To understand the magnitude and complexity of the problems, consider the physical characteristics of a hall: size and shape of the stage; curve of the back wall; presence or absence of reflectors; construction of the roof above the stage; proscenium arch; size and shape of the hall itself, including the shape of the walls, roof, and floor; number and arrangement of seats, balconies, and boxes as well as the variety of materials used in each. Every surface reflects or absorbs sound; thus materials, shapes, construction, and even decoration is significant. Rococo curlicues on the boxes make a difference. Distance between surfaces means differences in reverberation and diffusion. Hall acoustics result from a fantastically complex interplay of sound waves reflected or absorbed by the myriad surfaces of the hall.

A tale of recording halls, and of why sound engineers clap their hands—and turn gray early.

MARCH 1961
Today's taste in recorded sound—especially in stereo—calls for considerable reverberation with absorption held down. Among American firms particularly, clarity is achieved by close miking. At its best, this technique results in a lush, reverberant "aura" around a basically focused primary sound. In stereo, it tends to emphasize directionality rather than depth. European companies often place the microphones at a distance, to take more advantage of the hall's natural resonance. This procedure is coming into favor in this country, even though directionality is somewhat lessened thereby. The ideal for microphone placement has been defined as finding the point farthest away from the musicians where definition and clarity are retained. Beyond that point, sound tends to haziness and mushiness.

Add to these problems, the humidity, the temperature, and the temper of the musicians—all of which change from day to day and, with them, the resulting sound. The type of music, the style, the medium, the number and kind of performers, and even the performing style of the musicians should also be taken into account. What may work for a string orchestra might be dreadful on a solo piano disc. What is clear and incisive for a percussion ensemble might be hideous for Italian opera. Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven might benefit from a drier, cleaner sound, while Debussy and Ravel would be better off with rich reverberance.

To top it off, the recording director's listening point makes a difference. The best location is usually considered to be the monitoring room, where the sound is supposed to be heard exactly as it will be inscribed on the record. The acoustics of the monitoring room then come into play, and they can differ greatly. They undoubtedly differ from the living rooms in which the music will be ultimately heard. The record buyer's impression of the quality of the sound will depend, of course, not only on his playing equipment, but on the acoustics of his own listening room.

Ideally, potential recording halls should be tested under actual recording conditions—with the performers in their seats playing the music at hand. But obviously, no one puts one hundred and ten musicians in a hall, only to decide—after a few
tests—that the place isn't really suitable. Even trial runs for minor adjustments are held to a minimum since a symphony orchestra's time is valuable from a number of points of view. Engineers have to rely on past experience, often gained through sad trial-and-error methods. Many a much-used hall has been sacrificed when technology and public awareness passed it by. In unfamiliar halls engineers depend on their ability to spot the likely qualities of the locale, abetted by some simple tests.

Old halls are generally more desirable than modern ones (this is true of concert halls as well). Perhaps they have mellowed with age. They often have much wood; desirable, since wood does not sop up sound or give the sharp, ugly rebound of harder materials. They have heavier, thicker walls, well settled and apparently less affected by climatic changes. More importantly, most older halls abound in columns, chandeliers, niches, friezes, and other forms of rococo ornamentation far more likely to produce even, rich sound or optimum reverberation than the starkness of a sleek modern hall composed of synthetic materials. Harold Lawrence of Mercury Records compares a hall to a speaker enclosure—both are frequency selective, and the gingerbread hall is most likely to have a smooth frequency response without peaks.

Hall-testing procedures are simple and limited. Talking and shouting at different distances gives some notion of clarity, and loud handclaps, sharp percussive noises, or even a pistol shot will reveal reverberation time as well as special disturbing echo effects—shatter echo (a kind of breaking-glass effect), ta-ta-ta echo (repetitions of the sound fading away at distinct time intervals), and slap-back (a sharp split-second return of the sound). The most desirable kind of reverberation produces a very distinct kind of fade-out (technically referred to as decay), very fast at the beginning and then slow and steady.

Once the hall is chosen and musicians assembled, further tests are in order and many minor adjustments are made. Players are moved, curtains hung, and even temporary structural changes may be made. Dario Soria recalls, for instance, a fearful session at the Teatro La Scala in Milan when Victor de Sabata was recording Tosca. He drove everyone to tears (and close to financial ruin) by making the assembled orchestra and singers stand by while every possible modification of the hall was attempted. Seats were covered, curtains hung, boxes boarded up, and musicians shifted from one position to another for days before he was satisfied.

If the engineers are aware of the quirks of the hall, many adjustments can be made in advance. They have learned, among other things, that the best position for the musicians is often not the one normal for a concert performance. The space above the stage and the proscenium curtains seems to soak up sound aimed at the recording microphones and, for some of the reasons outlined above, this seems more pronounced on recordings than in concert. Also, one hears on discs what is sometime described as the "room within a room" effect; the proscenium pushes the sound together and, in stereo, makes it appear to come from a single source. So out come the seats in the hall and the orchestra moves down from the stage. On the floor of the hall (either directly in the center, somewhat off-center, or directly in front of the stage—depending on the hall and the calculations of the engineers) the full reverberation of the hall comes into play, giving the much-prized richness and depth. This procedure, common nowadays, is often supplemented by completely closing the stage curtains.

There are variations. In the Munich recording of the Berlioz Requiem, chorus and soloists stood on the stage of Boston's Symphony Hall while the orchestra was down on the floor. In recordings of piano concertos, the piano has sometimes been placed on the stage in order to make it project over, yet blend with, the orchestra. In some cases, the orchestra has been divided between stage and floor—to get an antiphonal effect or to correct instrumental imbalances resulting from special acoustical problems of a hall. Orchestras have even been placed on the stage backwards, with performers facing the back wall and the conductor facing the drawn curtains of the stage. In this way, the large area above the stage can be a good resonator.

In the London recording of the final scene from Strauss's Salome, the orchestral sound would not blend properly with the voice of Inge Borkh. Either her soprano would soar above or be submerged by the masses of orchestral sound. Since the vocal sound should blend with the orchestral texture, someone finally hit on the idea of putting her right smack in the center of the orchestra. When, in the heat of a passionate delivery, she flailed out a bit, two music stands and a second Continued on page 106
CABINETS

FOR COMPONENTS

A word from the wise on wrapping woodwork around your watts and your Wagner.

LITTLE MORE than a decade ago, the prevailing approach to housing audio equipment was decidedly that of the naked components school. Good fidelitarians frankly enjoyed living with their artifacts: an amplifier sat here, a control unit there—and wading ankle-deep in wires only heightened pride of ownership. If some disorder and early sorrow resulted, real high fidelity was worth it.

This point of view, of course, had its opponents, who believed that in the interests of domestic decorum high fidelity should be heard but not seen. With the coming of stereo—and its threat to preëmpt even more shelf, table, and floor space—the struggle between the let-it-all-show camp and the cover-it-all-up brigade became acute. The former naturally wished to avoid any resemblance to the consoles and package sets associated with low fidelity. More to the point, they were concerned with what might happen to components when confined in cabinets that afforded inadequate ventilation, or whose dimensions precluded future expansion of the basic system, or whose structure made installation a chore or hampered its successful completion. Of what use is a cabinet, ran their argument, if it meant, for example, that the components would be so thoroughly "installed" that replacing a tube in the tuner could become a major problem in demolition? Yet the voice of those who held that a living room was intended for people to live in became more and more articulate.

One way out was the "built-in" or "entertainment wall," wedding storage space and exciting design motifs into a dynamic, yet functional unity. It also inspired the subsequent variation, actually an abstraction of the wall, known as the "room divider." A good many enthusiasts seized on this approach.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
to installing high-fidelity equipment, but for others the wall was simply too "way out." Aside from the fact that it jogged firmly established concepts in home décor, it also took considerable doing to be successful structurally, functionally, and aesthetically. What's more, it took considerable cash. And for people with unsympathetic landlords, the "music wall" was clearly impractical.

An alternate solution, charted when designers and craftsmen began seriously to relate timber to timbre, was a simple addition to home audio gear: the free-standing, self-contained equipment cabinet. As it has evolved recently from the casually conceived and mass-produced box to the precisely designed and hand-crafted custom job, the equipment cabinet has become something of a three-part invention.

One part is concerned with basic functions, and to the extent that any cabinet performs these functions, it may be said to qualify as a useful adjunct to a high-fidelity system. These functions, in the main, are: 1) housing and protection for equipment against harmful exposure and accidental damage; 2) assisting in the logical arrangement of components and thus facilitating their convenient use; 3) serving as an installation aid from the standpoint of proper functioning—specifically in the shock-mounting and leveling of turntables, the correct positioning of tone arms, proper orientation of components for minimum interference and spurious interaction such as hum pickup or heat transfer, and finally in providing adequate ventilation for critical units, particularly power amplifiers; 4) permitting removal of parts for servicing.

Obviously, a cabinet that fulfills these ends is not like any other piece of furniture ever devised. However attractive it may be to the eye, it must put function first. Without primary regard to its use as equipment housing, the cabinet fails or, at best, can prove very troublesome and frustrating to the wary buyer.

There are cabinets—and cabinets. One common type is a simple, boxlike affair with two doors, swinging or sliding, and one shelf, usually adjustable. Actually, this is an "all purpose" cabinet of fairly uninspired design. Such a cabinet is likely to be shown in the furniture section of a large store as a "high-fidelity equipment cabinet" and in the music and record department as a "record storage cabinet." Strictly speaking, it is neither, although with some effort and additional cost it could conceivably be adapted for these functions. To use it as an equipment cabinet, the buyer has to supply and install the fitments for a record player, drill holes to ventilate the amplifier, and so on. For record storage it should be fitted with vertical partitions spaced about five or six inches apart so that the records will be held upright without undue pressure from one to another. (With this much do-it-yourself involved, one might as well design and build his own cabinet from scratch. Indeed, for an example of what one handy audiophile did with hand tools and material from the local lumberyard, see page 97 of this issue.) In any case, and leaving aside matters of appearance and possibilities for future expansion of the system—which may or may not be of importance to the individual buyer—the only appeal of the "general purpose" cabinet is relatively low cost. In fact if one is really economy-minded, something like an unpainted toy chest with a lift-up lid—and a sales tag of about $20—can, with some effort, be made as suitable for installing equipment as the higher-priced "all purpose" cabinet. Most people will, however, feel that the housing needs of, say, a $200 amplifier or a $100 turntable and pickup, or a $450 tape system are not quite the same as those of a set of building blocks, or a pile of linens, or a collection of potables.

The second part of the three-part invention to which I have referred involves a special aspect of cabinetry: the question of whether the housing is to serve as the final dress-up for the system, or, rather, as a frame into which the owner can slip different components and accessories as his taste dictates and his budget permits. Cabinet people who take their work seriously, striving for good design while meeting the requirements of good audio prac-

Wood grain and roughly woven cloth provide texture contrast for this finely proportioned custom-built cabinet. The turntable drawer lies above tape deck. (By Gray Sound Corp., New York City.)
The profile of this unique equipment cabinet reflects its "chair-side" function. Comfort is the keynote as a seated music listener selects the signal to be fed to the speakers placed on the opposite side of the room. (By British Industries Corp.)

tice, have their hands full with this problem. The engineering and aesthetics that come together to make for a successful design (in terms of structural, visual, production, and marketing factors) for one type of cabinet may not as often work for the other type. One obvious result is the availability of two distinct types of cabinets—one for a "permanent" installation, the other for the buyer who will probably change or expand his system. Another result is perennial talk of a "universal" unit, or cabinet system, that conceivably would satisfy the demands of all buyers. There are, indeed, some examples of ingenious attempts at such units. As a general rule, however, the prospective cabinet buyer would do well to formulate his own intentions before setting out on a shopping tour.

One thing to bear in mind—and which is assuming increasing importance to cabinet designers—is the changing face of audio components themselves. More and more, the operating and control panels of components are entrusted not to the engineer but to an industrial designer. As a result, audio equipment has become visually more pleasing. This recent interest in design on the part of high-fidelity manufacturers has helped clarify the approach of furniture builders. Although some of the equipment cabinets offered ten years ago were attractive enough, they proved to be of limited use in monophonic systems and became wholly inadequate for stereo. Today, however, certain specifics are more apparent: there is, for instance, a definite trend away from the permanently fitted, cut-out front panel, thus permitting components to be changed or new ones to be added without radically altering the cabinet.

The designer who is himself an audiophile is particularly likely to keep in mind the needs of individual owners. Manuel Mundschenk, head of Artizans of New England, for example, has built a cabinet that permits the owner to install components correctly and handsomely, but with the option of changing things at will. The trick is accomplished by providing a sliding, removable mounting panel, as well as a generous amount of unmapped, but carefully contained, space. This approach does not attempt to solve the problem of what a given system ultimately will become; rather it permits the owner to solve it for himself.

The third part of the three-part invention involves the extra-audio aspects of cabinetry—style, finish, materials, structural features, price. Whatever its special functions as a new kind of cabinet intended specifically to house audio equipment, it remains also a piece of furniture and often a particularly conspicuous one.

The shop of custom designer Melvin Gray (Gray...
Sound Corp., New York), for instance, resembles more than anything else the showroom of a fine cabinet maker—but of cabinets specifically tailored for audio systems. Gray, as a matter of fact, is one who holds that it is the cabinet itself which attracts many to quality sound in the first place. Often, says Gray, people now will think in terms of “furniture with music.” As the focal point of a room, rather than, as they once did, of a huge breakfront or credenza. And, he reasons, why not give them both good furniture and good sound? Of course, breakfronts or what-have-you can be fitted with components, but the piece designed especially for high fidelity is likely to be superior in every respect. One can have such refinements as removable panels for replacement or servicing of components, heavy-duty smooth-sliding tracks for tape decks or turntables, lift-up lids or doors that disappear into the sides of the cabinet, or—for those who must have the speakers in the same cabinet with the other equipment—specially treated compartments in which full-range, quality speaker systems in their own enclosures can be installed without danger of acoustic feedback.

Another, related aspect of the custom-made cabinet is that often wood may be used with other materials; tile or formica, for example, for attractive yet rugged surfaces. Or, as suggested by the well-known designer Paul McCobb, aluminum can be combined with wood for structural strength as well as a clean, uncluttered look. Again, the style may be related to certain almost metaphysical concepts. One example is the use of a glass case blended with a wooden structure (featured both at Gray and at Phillip Enfield Designs). The avowed intention here is that a “suitable setting” should be provided for quality components, which are, after all, “something of gems in their own way.” Precious as this may seem at first glance, it is a trend reflected widely in the use of clear plastic and plexiglass covers for changers and turntables.

These, of course, are only a few of the variations possible. The person whose inclination (and budget) permits a full exploration naturally turns to the custom designer, or to the producer who is both designer and manufacturer. Some cabinet builders can be approached directly by the prospective buyer. Others work through retail outlets or through interior decorators who serve as roving retailers and advisers. In a few cases, the same company’s line is sold in one city through decorators, and in other places by local furniture stores.

One of the well-known attractions of using a decorator to obtain high quality furniture is the anticipated discount, usually 40 per cent, from the manufacturer’s “list price.” Of course, the decorator then adds a smaller percentage, generally 10 to 15 per cent, for the service. There is no fixed rule for the exact amount, nor for the important consideration of whether the decorator’s percentage is based on the original list price or the discounted net price. Usually, this depends on the time and effort expended by the decorator, and many are unwilling to commit themselves in advance. In any case, knowing what percentages are involved, and how they are split, can make the customer a wiser shopper.

With established retail furniture dealers, where no decorator is involved, the pricing situation is even more tenuous. Some dealers will quote list price for a piece that can be obtained, elsewhere, for considerably less. Others are likely to offer some discount, perhaps 20 to 25 per cent, but rarely approaching the larger discount obtained by a decorator. They reason that they, in effect, serve the function of the decorator. With the relatively few component dealers who also can supply custom-made cabinets or the cabinets of a “prestige line” (such as Gray in New York, Kierulf in Los Angeles, etc.), there generally is less doubt, and less coyness, about selling prices. While substantially below “list,” their prices nevertheless must reflect the fact that they often serve dual roles, acting both as decorators and as audio consultants.

For the buyer willing to accept a production-line model, there are many perfectly suitable cabinets to choose from. To the extent that they fulfill the audio functions outlined above and meet the needs of the buyer’s own music system and his taste in

This compact cabinet holds equipment for all program sources—tape, tuner, discs. The lift top protects the tape deck. Disc storage is behind door. (By Rockford Special Furniture Company.)
Grain and Tint, and Wax and Lac

All cabinets are made of wood, but there are woods—and woods. Here, in descending order of average cost, is a rundown on widely used hardwoods, based on information supplied by trade sources.

Macassar (or Makassar) ebony, obtained from the dominion of that name in the Dutch East Indies, ranks as one of the choicest, most expensive, and most difficult-to-work woods. Next in order is rosewood. The Brazilian variety (also known as "palisander") boasts a richly figured grain and tends to run in alternating hues of deep orange-brown tones. Rosewood from the Indies tends towards more consistently darker hues as well as straighter grains.

Only slightly less expensive is teak, imported from Siam and nearby regions, and a Hawaiian wood known as koa. Both are excellent furniture woods combining strength with great beauty.

The most popular hardwoods group includes limba, walnut, and mahogany. Limba, which comes from a province in central Africa, bears the trade name "korina." Walnut, including many types that are called "imported walnut," is obtained mostly from our own forests, with a sizable bulk "imported" from the state of Indiana. A notable exception is French walnut; this genuinely imported variety is characterized by a figured grain described as "wide and wild."

"Mahogany" has become a catch-all term for woods of varying quality. African mahogany, one of the best furniture woods, is very similar to the mahogany obtained from Mexico and Honduras. On the other hand, Philippine mahogany is distinctly lower in quality; in fact, the lumber and furniture trades do not even regard it as real mahogany. An even cheaper imitation is made from Spanish cedar; this wood, familiar to many as the stuff of which cigar boxes are made, is also the stuff of which dreams are made since its grain resembles that of real mahogany. Over-all, however, the grain does not run as true, and unfortunately the wood itself is a comparatively flimsy replica of the real thing.

Maple and birch, both native to the United States, are considered acceptable for cabinet work, though not as desirable as the stronger, more richly grained woods.

What makes one wood "better" than another? Among the factors are its resistance to moisture and warpage, its density, its imperiousness to damage, its tensile strength. These qualities are not the only hallmarks. Value in a furniture wood also is a matter of how it takes a finish, how it ages in use, and—to an extent—how scarce it happens to be or how costly it is to obtain. Thus, teak is relatively inexpensive in Scandinavia, while it is almost a "premium wood" in this country. On the other hand, American walnut brings a fairly high price in Europe. Again, some of the new synthetic woods or pressed composition boards—actually made of scrap and waste—may boast greater strength than many natural woods, and yet cost much less simply because they have acquired no prestige value.

With few exceptions, furniture woods are not solid slabs of the basic natural types, but rather plywood sandwiches of which only the outer layer, or layers, and most always the edging, are made of the type of wood that lends its name to the entire piece. The best plywood types are the "lumber core" types which consist of lengths or "staves" of some fairly hard, white wood—usually poplar—covered with a thin layer or "veneer" of the hardwood in question. "Full-stave lumber core" describes the highest grade of plywood, in which the core is a series of two-inch staves, closely spaced, and running the full length of the panel. "Block lumber core" is composed of narrower staves, not as closely spaced, and not running the full length of the panel. Both types are highly warp-free and provide good stability, but the full-stave type generally superior.

"Veneer core" plywood does not use staves for its sandwich material, but instead thin layers of fairly common wood, usually fir, that are bonded together and faced with a hardwood surface. The layers just under the surfaces, on both sides, are sandwiched in at right angles to the surface; this "cross-banding" lends strength to the board. This type of plywood comes in three-, five-, and seven-layer versions. The number of layers includes the cross-bands and the surface veneers.

A new and relatively inexpensive kind of plywood is "flake board core," which uses as its core pressed composition board without any cross-banding. The virtues of this type stem not so much from the material used (generally scraps of fairly low-grade wood), but rather from the way in which it is put together. This plywood is usually faced on both surfaces with a hardwood veneer. Its high density, stability, and resistance to warpage recommend it for many uses, including the building of speaker enclosures. On the other hand, it is not as good for most purposes as the better grades of lumber core plywood, and is heavier and less impervious to punctures.

Finishes on wood are, of course, purely a matter of individual preference. They may have varying degrees of gloss, from the highly polished, almost reflective surface of varnish or lacquer, through the more satiny look of shellac, to the more subdued tones of wax, or the soft, natural look of oils. The last two finishes—which do little to the wood other than preserve it, darken it somewhat, and bring out its natural patina—are best used with quality hardwoods of distinctive grain, such as walnut and teak. An oil finish should be renewed periodically by rubbing in new oil (linseed or a recommended substitute). A practical advantage of an oil finish is its resistance to damage; usually a slight defect, such as a cigarette burn or a scratch, can be rubbed out with steel wool and then recoated. Restoring a glossy finish generally requires professional services.
furniture, they too qualify as examples of the “three-part invention” that is the true equipment cabinet. A number of producers have entered this area; some (such as Furniture Craftsmen of Grand Rapids) distribute more or less regionally. Others (such as Drexel) sell more nationally. Some (such as Rockford) sell heavily in high-fidelity outlets. A list of such manufacturers is appended to this article.

Yet another aspect of the changing face of high fidelity is the entry into the furniture field by several component manufacturers, either as distributors for cabinets produced by other organizations, or with products made by their own facilities. Thus the new Audax/Omni units offered by Rek-O-Kut (which can serve as individual cabinets or as building blocks for room dividers and wall units); the River Edge line offered by British Industries (which features the handy chair-side equipment cabinet); the expanding lines recently announced by Heath; the new, striking cabinets and room divider systems sold by Allied Radio. While qualifying easily as housing for audio equipment, these units all show the influence of fine cabinet-making in styling and finishes. Similar advances are apparent in do-it-yourself furniture, from the preassembled but unfinished models (such as the new Stereocraft line) to the completely knocked-down, to-be-assembled kit available from a number of producers.

Related to the equipment cabinet is the record storage unit. With more, and bulkier, equipment being used, and more records being bought, many designers simply have given up trying to provide space for both equipment and records in the same cabinet. Conceivably, some of the space “left over” in many cabinets could be used for a limited number of records, but the collector whose library approaches the sixty to seventy mark (and no end in sight) would do well to consider some sort of record storage unit. Many types are being made, from skeletal units that display the records to furniture-styled cabinets that file them away. One such line is offered by Kersting Manufacturing Company. A useful notion is served by the kind of record cabinet that can be expanded with a matching add-on unit. These are available in ready-made form as well as in kit form (from Lafayette and Radio Shack).

High-fidelity sound in a visually pleasing setting is now an actuality. The audiophile is finding himself as interested in details of cabinet structure, finish, joining, and so on as he has been in frequency response, distortion, and channel separation. In fact, the well-designed cabinet is itself something of a component—and certainly one that can contribute much to the pleasure of music in the home.

Descriptive List of Cabinet Manufacturers

Acousti-Craft, 14122 Aetna St., Van Nuys, Calif.—comprehensive line of equipment cabinets in various styles, sizes, and woods.

Allied Radio Corp., 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago 80, Ill.—same, including some in kit form; new shelf-cabinet line.


Artizans of New England, Box 206, Rt. 7, Brookfield, Conn.—comprehensive line, some in kit form, various styles, sizes, and woods.

British Industries Corp., 80 Shore Rd., Port Washington, N.Y.—new “chair-side” equipment cabinet; other River Edge Continued on page 110
Toscanini in Stereo

Through techniques of "electronic reprocessing," the Maestro can now be heard on two channels.

by Jack Arthur Somer

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is no secret in the record industry that the sales of Toscanini recordings have fallen off appreciably in the past two or three years. This decreased interest in a unique musical heritage has been an unfortunate by-product of the increased interest in stereophonic reproduction. Toscanini's recordings are all pre-stereo. In 1958, however, RCA Victor embarked on a project to reprocess many of these recordings in a form having the essential characteristics of stereo. The story of the two and a half years' experimentation involved and the techniques finally achieved is told below by the engineer in charge. A critical evaluation of the three discs just issued appears on page 53.

ALTHOUGH I was born and brought up in New York City, I never saw Arturo Toscanini perform. I did, of course, hear his broadcasts with the NBC Symphony, and I think that even as a child I sensed the greatness of a man who was already a legend. It was not until a year after the Maestro's death, however, that I first came into close personal contact with his music. It was in the summer of 1958, as a development engineer in the Record Laboratory of RCA Victor Records, that I was assigned the formidable task I am about to describe.

One year after Toscanini's death, the stereophonic disc became a commercial reality. Stereo represented a significant technical advance, but it threatened to outmodle a precious catalogue of recordings by great artists of the past unless means could be found to revitalize that catalogue by some kind of sonic updating process. Obviously, the recordings of Arturo Toscanini—all of them pre-stereophonic—were uppermost in our minds.

The job of converting many of Toscanini's celebrated monophonic discs to a form having stereophonic qualities fell to me—which meant producing a two-channel recording with different information in each channel, a recording possessing directional effects consistent with the music and having the spread, depth, and reverberant qualities typical of true stereo reproduction. It was of course quite clear to me and everyone else involved in the project that whatever reprocessing technique I decided upon would have to be revised for the music's sake: that is, that it would have to be a technical method flexible enough to adjust to the specific musical characteristics of any piece of music to which it was applied.

I followed the premise that the stereophonic effect is produced by two essential elements—direct and reverberant sound. In a true stereophonic (two-microphone) recording each microphone picks up some direct signal from all orchestral instruments, level and phrasing being dependent on relative distances from the instrumental source. The microphones also pick up reverberant sound, the quality of reverberation being dependent on the construction of the hall or studio, microphone placement, and other factors. Fortunately, symphonic orchestras in a concert hall are arranged according to fairly common patterns. A typical seating plan is shown in the accompanying diagram. This arrangement shows that the generally higher-pitched instruments are concentrated to the left and center and the lower-pitched instruments are concentrated to the right—a fact of considerable value to the recording engineer.

The duplication (or synthesis) of stereophonic recording from a complete single signal requires the following:
1. Means to divide the spectrum into high and low frequency bands corresponding to left and right channels respectively.

2. Means to accommodate deviations from or reversals of this division.

3. Means of dividing the spectrum without detriment to the total sound of the original.

4. Means to increase the spatial effect to resemble that of a true stereophonic recording.

5. A detailed knowledge of the musical score so that all its requirements may be anticipated.

The first experiments were pure groping on my part. A general principle of technique had to be discovered, then worked out in its practical applications. After playing with time-delay devices, echo chambers, and fixed filters, it became apparent to me that the use of variable filters had the most promising potentialities. I set up two filters in such a way that they divided the frequency spectrum of the music source at any frequency of my choice. I spent many hours “enjoying” split-frequency stereo performances and learning much about cut-off frequency and its effect on the tonal balance of sound.

By using a high-pass filter system on the left and a low-pass on the right, I could divide the original spectrum of a monophonic recording into two signals, each containing a large portion of the fundamental frequencies of the instruments I wished to place in these positions, according to my arbitrarily chosen orchestra seating plan. These early attempts were in general quite unsatisfactory, though some startling effects were produced when the cut-off was selected properly. I learned that simple fixed filters set at the same value resulted in very uncomfortable sonic balances. The right track became acoustically subordinate to the left because of its total lack of high frequency content. It became apparent that though the bass frequencies contribute the bulk of the energy in a wide-range signal, it is the mid and high frequency content that produces the effect of “loudness.”

The next step was the addition of some “highs” to the right track, by means of a third filter. The addition of highs produced a remarkably satisfying effect. The increased “loudness” resulted with little increase in electrical energy (as viewed on a VU meter), and a large portion of the instrumental overtones were restored. Finally, the third filter made it possible for the first time to place some higher fundamental frequencies on the right track when such were desired.

This then became the basic working plan. With these three filter outputs splitting a full-range monophonic signal, the source could be monitored by an operator or stereo synthesist, following a score. By first establishing a positive pattern of instrument placement, the output level of each filter and its frequency of cut-off could be continuously adjusted to satisfy the requirements of the music.

To illustrate, the left track might contain all fundamental and overtones above 200 cps, the right track all frequencies below 1,000 cps and above 3,000 cps. The left track, therefore, would project all instruments of the middle to upper ranges, including violins and higher winds, with all their overtones. The right track would carry the fundamentals and lower overtones of cellos and double basses, winds, brass, timpani, as well as their higher overtones. If enough overlap were maintained between the high cut-off on the left and the low cut-off on the right, a large portion of the fundamentals of the middle-range winds, strings, and brass could be balanced equally between channels, thus forming the so-called “phantom” center track.

At this point, however, there was still insufficient flexibility and too much frequency elimination. To fill in the gaps left by the filters, a full-range signal was added to each channel at a level somewhat lower than the filtered signals. In this way no frequency band was completely eliminated from either channel, but the spectrum shape of each channel could be continuously variable over an infinite range. The final step was the addition of a controlled low frequency signal on the left.

This variable frequency spectrum method enables an operator, fully acquainted with the score of the work he is converting, to manipulate these six signals to produce an effective simulation of a stereophonic recording. The essential elements of the original performance must of course be thoroughly studied, orchestral balances and dynamics respected. Obviously, the simplest passages to control are instrumental solos or light orchestrations with broad contrasts in instrumental ranges. In more complex tuttis the synthesist must seek by experimentation the ideal balance that satisfies as well as possible the psychoacoustic requirements he has set for himself.

So much for the directional effects that can be achieved. Next, spatial effects had to be produced through the addition of reverberation and delayed signals. Three reverberation chambers were employed, two adjusted for a relatively short decay of 1.5 to 3 seconds and a third set in the range of 3 to 5 seconds. The shorter decay chambers were introduced in cross-channel fashion to simulate the across-the-stage pickups of each of two theoretical microphones. The third (longer decay) chamber was fed to both channels Continued on page 109

Seating plan for Toscanini's "Stereo Orchestra."
by Edward Lockspeiser

THE MIXTURE THAT IS MILHAUD

A Hebrew of Biblical bent, a Gaul with the acid wit of Provence, named oddly for a Persian king, Darius Milhaud never will be explained, but here a perceptive friend does his best.

FROM A DISTANCE, Darius Milhaud might almost be taken for Churchill: his great solid bulk has the amplitude of that figure—a big man, a generous-minded man; and you have the same impression as you see him more closely—there is a Churchillian determination about the curl of the lips. "We may all have ideas," he says, "but it is the setting of them down that is the terrifying experience. For most composers this is almost a matter of life and death!"

Certainly, Milhaud's is a mind teeming with ideas; and just as certainly, he is possessed of the moral energy to give them shape and form. I doubt if there is a composer alive today who is more prolific. Twelve years ago a catalogue of his works was brought out reaching the opus number 297. Milhaud is now in his sixty-ninth year, and the formidable list of his opus numbers has increased to well over 350. He is blessed with a gift of fertility that enables him to produce music as naturally and as lavishly as trees blossom into flower. "Le bon Darius," as he is affectionately known to his friends, has always been this figure of abundance. Aware of his facility, he declared in his youth that he would write one more string quartet than Beethoven. Ten years ago he reached this goal with the publication of his eighteenth quartet.

I knew Milhaud first when the group of Les Six, of which he was a member, was first attracting public attention. Jean Cocteau, their spokesman, had arranged for me to call on him at his apartment in Montmartre, in the Rue Gaillard. I had been greatly amused by the Cocteau-Milhaud ballet *Le Boeuf sur le toit*, which at its premiere in February 1921 was attended by the most fashionable set in Paris (among them the Shah of Persia, who paid a fabulous sum for a box from which he was in full view of the audience though he could see nothing of the stage). I knew that Milhaud, among Les Six, was the bosom friend of the eccentric Erik Satie, and I naturally expected that, like other
sophisticated Parisian composers of the time, he would turn out to be something of a wag. He struck me as nothing of the sort. A swarthy young man in his late twenties, with full sensual features and a wonderful crop of jet black hair, he impressed me as a most serious-minded personality.

Milhaud’s relationship with Satie was curious and is worth dwelling on for a moment. Satie’s manifestos, posted on the walls of Paris (“There is no more art. Art is dead!”); his extravagant behavior (he once turned up at a concert in a fireman’s helmet); the mystifying titles of his works—Gymnopédies, Trois Morceaux en forme de poire—all this deliberate and fantastic clowning on the older man’s part Milhaud considered to be a blind behind which was hidden an innocent child of music, a soul of exquisite shyness and tenderness. Satie, it seems to me, became in fact the very caricature of himself. Milhaud, who for a time was regarded as a kind of Continued on page 98

A SELECTIVE MILHAUD DISCOGRAPHY
by Alfred Frankenstein


Le Carnaval d’Arts. Grant Johannesen, piano: Philharmonia Orchestra, Georges Tzipine, cond. Capitol G 7151 (with Saint-Saëns: Piano Concerto No. 4). Derived from a Diaghilev ballet score, this suite for piano and orchestra is a vivid pageant of commedia dell’arte characters and incidents.

Les Choréphoires. Geneviève Moizan, soprano; Hélène Bouvier, mezzo; Heinz Reffus, baritone; Claude Nollier, narrator: Chorale de l’Université; Lamoureux Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. Decca DL 9936 (with Honegger: Symphony No. 5). Aeschylus translated by Paul Claudel and set by Milhaud with unparalleled savagery and power. The foremost dramatic work of Milhaud now available on records.

La Crèation du monde. Columbia Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond.; Columbia CL 920 (with short works of Copland and Bernstein); also by London Symphony Orchestra Chamber Group, John Carewe, cond.; Everest 6017 or 3017 (with Stravinsky: Histoire du soldat). This chamber orchestra score to a ballet on an African Negro creation myth is one of the earliest examples of the use of jazz idioms in the larger forms, and to this day it remains the best.

The Four Seasons. Szymon Goldberg, violin; Ernst Wallfisch, viola; Geneviève Joy and Jacqueline Bonneau, pianos; Maurice Suzan, trombone; Ensemble of the Concerts Lamoureux, Darius Milhaud, cond. Epic LC 3666 or BC 1069. A delightful cycle of four concertos, à la Vivuldi, for solo instruments and small orchestra—Spring for violin, Summer for viola, Autumn for two pianos, and Winter for trombone.


Symphony No. 4. Vienna Orchestra, F. Charles Adler, cond. SPA 57. The big Berliozian side of Milhaud in a symphony composed to commemorate the revolution of 1848.

Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, and Piano; Passionate for Oboe, Clarinet, and Piano; La Cheminée du roi René. New York Woodwind Quintet. EMS 6. A rich collection of chamber pieces from various periods in Milhaud’s career. The last-named derives its title from a place in Provence and evokes the days of chivalry there.
Sometimes
Look
Beyond
the
Stars

BY ALAN WAGNER

A salute to those invaluable and uncelebrated people, the comprimari.
In the cast of a fairly recent and quite good recording of Mozart's Marriage of Figaro were listed, as the two peasant girls, a pair of singers fetchingly named Elysia Field and Appasionata Schultz. They were, obviously, imaginary—a pair of operatic George Spelvins. The reason behind this rather fey fiction is equally obvious: some more imposing names had filled in the bit parts accredited to the Misses Field and Schultz and preferred their contributions to remain anonymous.

The whole slightly precious matter serves to focus attention on an area of operatic endeavor generally ignored. Day in and day out, in performance after performance and recording after recording, little gems of characterization are turned in by the infantry of music, the comprimari. Season after season, in company after company, these artists who fill the small roles provide the necessary dramatic framework in which the stars glitter. What's more, they accomplish this with hardly any notice. You'll never see a review headlined "Alessio de Paolis Scores as Spoletta in Tosca at Met" or "Kate Pinkerton Sung Brilliantly at Rome Opera by Miti Truccato Pucc." Nor should you. Nevertheless, in an era when second-rate talents can be turned into super-stars by a combination of good publicity and properly utilized funds, these self-effacing artists should be given their due.

Some comprimari have had careers as leading artists. The aforementioned Mr. De Paolis, for example, was a star for some time: he made his debut with the Bologna Opera as the Duke of Mantua in Rigoletto. That he is now far more likely to appear as Borsa in the same opera is mainly a matter of deliberate choice. As a character tenor he has remained a valued member of the Metropolitan roster for over twenty years—a considerably longer tenure than most Dukes of Mantua ever enjoy. De Paolis, as matter of fact, is that rara avis, a comprimario who does get reviewed beyond the usual mention, a season or two ago, for example, earning a very handsome set of notices for his hilarious portrayal of the Old Prisoner in the Met's production of Offenbach's La Périchole.

Although a number of comprimari have made the giddy descent from leads to walk-ons, if not all with the grace and consummate skill of De Paolis, far more common is the reverse situation: an aspiring youngster sings Mercedes hoping to work her way up to Carmen, or looks at Remendado as a whistle stop on the way to Don José. It sometimes happens, too. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is a particularly luminous example; she made her debut in Berlin as a Flower Maiden in Parsifal. On these shores the bootstrap award might go to Margaret Harshaw, who is now singing Brünnhildes and Isoldes after some time on the Met's Norn-Rhinemaiden-Valkyr merry-go-round. In the process, she underwent a metamorphosis from a mezzo into a soprano, but metamorphosis or no, success stories like this are few and far between. For every Schwarzkopf or Harshaw there are dozens who don't wind up in the star dressing room, which is precisely why every opera company has at least some turnover each year in its comprimario roster. Newly eager conservatory graduates and studio fledglings rush to fill the void left by disappointed and despairing brethren.

For the record collector, a perusal of some of the casts of his older opera albums might prove the validity of this assertion. They contain dozens of obscure names, almost all of which have remained obscure and are replaced in more recent sets by a new batch no better known. To excite the discophile and encourage the young singer there are, though, a magic few of the current operatic giants lurking in infinitesimal parts on earlier recordings. For example, the old HMV Cavalleria rusticana that featured Mascagni in the pit and Beniamino Gigli as Turiddu also had Giulietta Simionato in the cast—as Mamma Lucia. Or how about the Columbia Magic Flute that squandered the talents of Sena Jurinac as
the First Lady? HMV probably established some sort of mark for prescience when it issued Andrea Chénier with Simionato, Giuseppe Taddei, and Italo Tajo all singing walk-ons, but there have been sufficient instances elsewhere to make the search rewarding and amusing: Teresa Stich-Randall is the Priestess in RCA Victor's Toscanini-conducted Aida, Nicola Monti sings Beppe for the Angel I Pagliacci. Kim Borg plays Rangoni to Christoff's Boris Godunov . . . the list can be extended. With the increasing number of sets being released—and re-released—in this stereophonic age, it's natural and pleasant to speculate on how many stars of tomorrow today's casts hide, and who they may be.

Certainly a number of latter-day performances are worthy of note. Some voices only recently preserved on vinyl in supporting roles are already marked for potential importance, voices like those of Eberhard Wencheiter and Claire Watson, the Donor and Freia of London's Das Rheingold, both of whom have since recorded leading roles, or Marianne Scheck, the First Lady on the DG Magic Flute and subsequently a sumptuous Marshallin for the same label. In other cases, established front-liners have delighted in the opportunity offered by a bit, and so we are treated to Giorgio Tozzi singing the tiny if melodious role of Jake Wallace in Puccini's The Girl of the Golden West. But even without the stars and the stars-to-be, the perceptive collector can relish some extraodinary opera singing as the regulars, the day-in-and-day-out comprimari, immortalize samples of their skill. Listen critically to one of the many fine recordings of Melchiorre Luise; he's the Sacristan on the Angel Tosca, for one, and Yamadori on the old London Madama Butterfly. De Paolis' funny work in La Périchole has been captured by RCA Victor, as has his distinctive Emperor in Turandot. This company can also boast such regular strengths as Calvin Marsh and Margaret Roggero; notice what these two do as Fiorello (and the Sergeant) and Berta in the Barber of Seville. The doubling Marsh does here is not an unusual comprimario feat. On the EMI-Capitol Gianni Schicchi Alfredo Mariotti sings both the Notary and Maestro Spinelloccio in a virtuoso job of dual characterization. One role or two, artists such as these, artists like Jeanine Collard and Paul Franke (witness Génevieve in Angel's Pelléas et Mélisande and Sellem in Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress on Columbia) are as worthy of recognition as the glittering headliners. It is these out-and-out professionals who, with tremendous competence and very few illusions, form quite literally the backbone of opera. They lend stability and sheen to the companies and recordings they grace, and a depth of artistry as well. Many of them are quite capable of singing major roles should the occasion demand; the Metropolitan's George Cehanovsky, for example, has turned in excellent performances as Silvio in I Pagliacci and Sharpless in Madama Butterfly, and has turned down many other opportunities. Nevertheless, it is as the ubiquitous servants and messengers and courtiers that they make their greatest contribution. Somebody has to do bit parts, the pros see that they are done right.

These performers who have entered their less-than-stellar careers willingly and knowingly make up an impressively large group of opera singers. During any recent season at the Metropolitan some two dozen or more artists might fairly have been labeled comprimari, and well over half of them have been with the company for years in just this capacity and look forward to more of the same. The total number of roles essayed by this crew is staggering. George Cehanovsky alone has sung eighty-three parts in fifty-seven different works during his quarter of a century plus on the Met roster, not to speak of roles performed with other organizations during this period. On the distaff side, Thelma Votipka ("Tippy" to her colleagues) has managed to squeeze about forty roles thus far into her career—and this too counts only duty with the home team.

Why should a singer deliberately choose such a career, with its constant demands and its shortage of glamour? There are almost as many reasons as there are comprimari, and they're all more or less valid. For one thing, being a perennial walk-on is a lot more secure than trying to buck fickle public favor. Singers invariably outnumber the available chances to sing, and one's chances to get work increase in inverse ratio to the size of a role to which one aspires. And permanence has blessings other than pecuniary ones. Nothing, even in the day of the LP, is dearer than yesterday's hero, or as sad, but the good comprimario seems to go on happily forever. The falling high C is not the calamitous tragedy it might be to the star, and many a practitioner of the bit players' art has seen whole generations of big names come and go.

As a matter of fact, this close-up view of opera history from the best vantage point in the house is no small reward to some of the best-known comprimari. Thelma Votipka is very frank and charming: "You know, I'm really a hero worshiper at heart. I love to stand up there with a group of marvelous artists—and I'm just the worst one in the whole cast; then I'm very happy. I love good performances. They do something for my soul. It's not difficult at all, standing there with nothing to sing, looking interested. I am interested; in fact, that's the pleasure of the job."

Tippy, now in her twenty-sixth Metropolitan season, is a representative member of the corps of professional walk-ons. She, like her confreres, includes in her dozens of roles many in the same opera. She has performed four roles each in Die Walküre and Der Rosenkavalier, which has given her, she says, a considerable perspective. "I know a mess of things, and they've all been fun."

Fun, it might be added, and hard work. Miss Votipka's art requires the same years of training as that of a prima donna assoluta; and since her student days her versatility has led her into some Her- culean endeavors. Before the advent of the American Guild of Musical Artists she often sang two roles a day, as many as six or Continued on page 104
The consumer's guide
to new and important
high-fidelity equipment

high fidelity

EQUIPMENT REPORTS

AT A GLANCE: The EICO HF-89 is a dual 50-watt power amplifier, in which the tubes and components are operated conservatively and which meets its published specifications in all important respects.

It is constructed on a large chassis, with good ventilation for tubes and other components. The HF-89, available in kit form or factory-wired, is an excellent choice for the person who wants the advantages of a high-powered, clean amplifier at a relatively modest price. As a kit, it sells for $99.50 (factory-wired, $139.50).

IN DETAIL: The EICO HF-89, for such a powerful amplifier, has a remarkably small tube complement. Only seven tubes are used, with a pair of EL-34s in each output stage. The output tubes are operated well within their dissipation ratings (a point on which some otherwise excellent amplifiers fall down), and the filter capacitors are also safely operated.

A silicon rectifier voltage doubler power supply is used. This results in reduced power transformer size and weight, cooler over-all operation, and better regulation. The latter point is important, especially on a high-powered amplifier where an appreciable difference between quiescent tube currents and the currents drawn at full power output may exist. In a poorly regulated power supply, a voltage drop under strong signal conditions limits the maximum power output obtainable under steady-state conditions. EICO emphasize in their instruction manual that the HF-89 delivers full rated power from both channels simultaneously, due to their good power supply regulation.

Our measurements verified EICO's claims quite closely. The power response of the HF-89 was very flat, with full 50 watts per channel available from 30 cps to 20 kc at 1% distortion. Even at 20 cps it delivered 35 watts per channel at 1% distortion. The power bandwidth, in accordance with IHFM standards on amplifier measurements, is in excess of 20 to 20,000 cps referred to 50 watts at 1% distortion. These measurements were made with both channels driven to the same output simultaneously.

The excellent low frequency performance of the HF-89 is evident in the close correspondence between the 20-cps harmonic distortion curve and the intermodulation distortion curve. In both cases, the distortion at usual listening levels under 10 watts is a small fraction of one per cent, and the IM distortion does not reach 2% until output of 70 watts per channel is reached.

There is no point in plotting frequency response, for it would be virtually a straight line. It was within 0.1 db up to 10 kc, and down 0.4 db at 20 kc. This is within the possible range of our instrument errors.

The EL-34 output tubes were operated well below their maximum dissipation ratings, and filter capacitors never were subjected to more than about 90% of rated voltage. This, combined with the large, open construction of the HF-89, suggests the likelihood of long life without component failure.

The stability of the amplifier was good under capacitive loads, and it rates above average in ability to drive large capacitive loads at high frequencies. The hum level was very low when the input was shorted or driven from a low impedance source (such as the output of most preamplifiers). It was typically about 88 db below 10 watts output. With a higher driving impedance it was about 70 db below 10 watts. Even this is quite inaudible in practice.

The HF-89 had the effortless, solid sound typical of a good, high-powered amplifier at a relatively modest price.

H. H. Labs.
AT A GLANCE: The Garrard Type A is called by its manufacturer an "automatic turntable," rather than a record changer. This is done with considerable justification, since the performance of the Type A is generally comparable to that of a good quality turntable and tone arm, while retaining the operating convenience of a changer. Price: $69.50 (less base and cartridge).

IN DETAIL: The Garrard Type A is more like a good 4-speed turntable with a transcription arm than a record changer. The arm is distinctive; it is mass-balanced with tracking force supplied by a spring. The balance is good enough to play records with the unit tilted at more than 45 degrees, at a 3-grain tracking force. As with any turntable, leveling is recommended for the Type A, but it is not affected by moderate amounts of tilt, and it is insensitive to normal jarring or vibration.

With the arm balanced, the stylus force is set by sliding a pointer along a scale, calibrated from 3 to 7 grams, on the side of the arm. The cartridge mounts in a plug-in shell, which is clamped in place by a small lever. No tools are needed for these adjustments. A thumbscrew is used to lock the adjustable counterweight. The cartridge shell is wired, with clips on the leads to fit most types of cartridge terminals. Hardware is provided for installing practically any type of stereo or mono cartridge. Since the two output cables with plugs attached, the power cable, and a grounding lead are integral parts of the Type A, installation has been simplified to the utmost. As a final touch, mounting springs are also integral with the motorboard, and are equipped with knurled wheels to adjust heights individually for leveling purposes.

The unit has a clearly marked selector lever for its four speeds. The drive wheels disengage when the turntable is shut off, and a brake brings the turntable to a halt. Apparently taken to reduce rumble and other undesirable effects to levels comparable to good quality turntables. The basic turntable is actually a two-piece unit. The under-platter is covered with a light plastic foam pad. A heavy, balanced turntable is fitted over this, resting on the foam to isolate it from rumble. Finally, a ribbed rubber pad lies on the outer turntable.

Interchangeable spindles allow for automatic changer operation and manual playing. The changer mechanism is the familiar pusher platform type. The change mechanism is the velocity type, and does not engage the arm except during the change cycle. A hold-down is provided for keeping the arm on its rest during shipment or when otherwise not in use.

The arm is quite heavy, and a separate tone arm (the Pickering 381A) in the plug-in shell. The stylus force gauge on the arm was found to be accurate, and the force was set at 3 grams for all tests.

The wow and flutter were 0.15% and 0.1% respectively. These figures compare with most good turntables and some of the better record changers. Rumble was measured at -37.5 db relative to 7 cm/sec at 1,000 cps, in both vertical and lateral planes. The NARTB standard uses a different reference level, and when converted to that reference the rumble would be -40.5 db. The NARTB broadcast standards call for a rumble of better than 35 db, and wow and flutter not to exceed 0.2% and 0.1%. The Garrard Type A obviously exceeds NARTB specifications by a healthy margin.

The hum field surrounding the cartridge in any playing position is very low, and the unit is suitable for use with any cartridge in that respect. Mechanical noise was also very low during playing; expected clicks occurred during the change cycle.

The arm resonance was difficult to find. There was no peak at all, just a falling off of response in the extreme low frequency region. It occurs, with the cartridge we used, in the 10- to 15-cps region. Tracking error was very low with the Pickering 381A. Installed it was 3 degrees at a 6-in. radius and did not exceed 1 degree from a 5-in. to a 2-in. radius. Since tracking error can produce more distortion at the inner grooves of the record, this low figure is noteworthy. It would be considered very good performance even for a good separate tone arm. The Pickering cartridge has a 3/8-in. spacing from stylus to mounting centers, while most other cartridges use a 7/16-in. spacing. When such a cartridge is used, the tracking error is slightly greater, but does not exceed 3 degrees between a 5-in. and a 2-in. radius. Arm cannot be moved manually near inner grooves without tripping the changer.

The styling of the Garrard Type A conveys an impression of precision performance and professionalism. The user will find that this impression is not disturbed by the actual performance of the unit.

H. H. Labs.
AT A GLANCE: The Fairchild 500 is an integrated arm and pickup incorporating the SM-2 moving magnet cartridge. The arm features an "anti-skating" action, intended to counteract effects of stylus friction on the record surface.

The frequency response of the Fairchild is smooth and free from resonant peaks throughout its range. The channel separation is adequate at all frequencies, and is characterized by the same freedom from sudden changes as the frequency response. Price: $55.

IN DETAIL: The "anti-skating" feature of the Fairchild 500 attempts to compensate for the inherent frictional force of the record surface on the stylus, a force which tends to push the stylus toward the center of the record. This is an inevitable property of any arm with an offset head (a necessary feature for low tracking error). Reasoning that this factor places an additional force on the inner groove wall, with consequent reduction of tracking force on the outer wall, Fairchild engineers designed an arm in which an opposing force is applied to the stylus.

This is accomplished by a spring in the base of the arm. During installation, it is adjusted by aligning a pair of red dots on the arm and base, with the pickup stylus eleven inches from the turntable center. When so installed, the spring is supposed to exert the correct opposing force to overcome the effects of stylus friction over the entire record surface.

The idea sounds good, in principle. However, the spring force of our test sample could not be set to compensate properly over more than a small portion of the record. When set according to instructions, the force was excessive, in the opposite direction to the usual frictional force. If the pickup skipped a groove, for any reason, it tended to move outward rather than inward. We tried setting in other amounts of spring tension, and found the optimum point to be when the red dots were aligned with the pickup about eight inches from the turntable center. In this condition, the pickup tended to move inward at record radii of five to six inches, and outward at radii of two or three inches. In the middle of the record the frictional forces were reasonably well neutralized. This is not to say that the "anti-skating" feature interfered in any way with the normal performance of the arm and cartridge.

In practice, no significant difference could be found in measurements or listening tests between the various settings of the anti-skating force.

Other than the adjustment in its base, the arm uses no springs, and is factory-set for 3 grams force. The counterweight is easily adjusted. As received, our sample had a tracking force of 2.7 grams. It was reset to 3 grams for testing purposes. The vertical and horizontal pivots are offset, so the arm is well balanced laterally when set for a 3-gram vertical force. The arm tracks well at rather large degrees of off-level operation (such as 45 degrees) and is relatively immune to the effects of jarring.

Installation has been simplified by having all internal arm wiring brought to a connector in the arm base. The output cables are prep wired to a plug which fits this connector, thereby eliminating all soldering and screwdriver connections in installation. Holes punched in the cover of the box containing the pickup act as a template for its installation. A small screwdriver (for setting arm height) and a stylus pressure gauge are included. All in all, we would say that the usual pickup installation problems have been eliminated to the greatest practicable degree in the Fairchild 500.

The Fairchild 500 arm is an eminently satisfactory design. It has low bearing friction, a convenient finger lift and a good "feel," and a tracking error which remains under 2 degrees over the entire record surface (under 1 degree over most of it). The counterweight is isolated from the arm by a resilient damping material which damps the arm resonance effectively. The resonance, which occurs at 15 cps, amounts to only a 1-db rise in output.

The cartridge, designated SM-2, is supplied only in this arm, but is not an integral part of it as in some other integrated pickup designs. It appears to be of conventional proportions, so that it would fit in other arms. and other cartridges presumably could fit in this arm. Unlike the SM-1, the stylus of the SM-2 can be replaced by the user.

The frequency response of the SM-2 is smooth and within plus or minus 1.5 db all the way up to 15 kc. Both channels have identical response curves, though one has 1.6 db more output than the other in the unit tested. This easily corrects with a preamplifier balance control. Channel separation, over 20 db at lower frequencies, reduces gradually to about 10 db in the 10- to 15-kc region. Here, too, there are no sudden peaks or holes, and both curves have

Fairchild 500
Integrated Arm
And Cartridge

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March 1961
identical shapes. The difference in separation between channels, seen in the curves, may be due to the slight tilt of the stylus to one side. This was a characteristic of the unit we tested, and could not be corrected by adjustment or modification of installation procedure.

The output of the SM-2 is moderately high (7.6 mv at 5 cm/sec stylus velocity). Susceptibility to induced hum is low. Needle talk is moderately low.

The listening quality of the Fairchild 300 pickup is definitely smooth. The lack of peaks results in very low surface noise, with all the brilliance and sheen of a good recording being reproduced. The stereo channel separation at high frequencies is more than adequate for its intended function. The important requirement of smoothness and close matching between channels is met, and it contributes to the excellent sound of this novel pickup unit.

H. H. Labs.

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**AT A GLANCE:** The DuKane Ionovac is the latest version of the revolutionary loudspeaker which has no moving parts, but which uses ionized air to generate the sound directly. It is a "super-tweeter," covering frequencies above 3,500 cps.

The Ionovac has the clarity and transparency, in its own frequency range, of a fine high frequency speaker, electrostatic or electrodynamic. Its relatively high efficiency makes it most suitable for use with horn type systems or other high efficiency speakers. The unit can interfere with nearby FM and TV receivers, a factor to be considered in its use. Price: $79 (without enclosure).

**IN DETAIL:** The history and general description of the Ionovac are covered in detail in our January 1961 issue ("The Driverless Tweeter from Paris"). Briefly, this unique speaker generates sound by ionizing air in a small, fused quartz tube with a high radio frequency potential and modulating the radio frequency signal to produce acoustic output. Variation in intensity of ionization produces compressions and rarefactions of air in the tube. This minute sound is coupled to an exponential horn like those used in conventional dynamic speakers.

Although the Ionovac itself has, in principle, no frequency limitations, practical considerations of quartz cell and horn size limit its use to higher audio frequencies. The present version is most effective at frequencies above 3,500 cps.

The Ionovac derives its ionizing potential from an oscillator, in which the quartz cell and its electrodes serve as the capacitance in a series resonant tank circuit. Due to the high "Q" of the tank circuit, a very large potential develops across the cell, although the oscillator tube operates with only about 300 volts. The oscillator, a 6DQ6A, is screen-grid modulated through a transformer which matches the 8-ohm input impedance of the unit to the higher impedance required for screen modulation.

The oscillator in the Ionovac we tested operates at about 25.9 megacycles. Although precautions are taken to minimize radiation from the oscillator, our test speaker did radiate some harmonics. The third harmonic, which has no moving part, was radiated at 103.6 mc on an FM set.

In earlier versions of the Ionovac, the quartz cell had a short life. The cell in the unit being considered is guaranteed for 1,200 hours of use, and is replaced with no more difficulty than replacing a phono stylus, and at nominal cost ($6.25).

The power supply and input transformer of the Ionovac are contained in a small separate box, connected to the oscillator and radiator unit by a five-foot cable. No crossover is built in, and an external 8-ohm crossover network effective at 3,500 cps should be used. Damage to the speaker cannot result from driving it with low frequencies, but its efficiency falls off.

When the unit is first turned on, it sputters briefly. This should not concern the user. Soon it quiets down and one is aware only of its contribution to the reproduced sound.

Some 40 watts are dissipated in the oscillator unit, which heats after a period of operation. We do not recommend its operation in a confined space. In most situations it can be mounted near, but outside, accompanying speakers.

The Ionovac, fortunately, has many virtues. Its frequency response is extremely smooth. The axial pressure response rises at a 6 db/octave rate above 3,000 cps, as in high quality electrostatic.
GEORGE SOLTI'S work on records—
Das Rheingold, Arabella, some Bee-
thoven symphonies—has long given
us a great deal of pleasure, and we
gladly accepted an invitation to make
his acquaintance when he stopped off
in New York this winter to conduct
a few performances of Tannhauser
at the Metropolitan Opera. On the
day we met, test pressings from Solti's
forthcoming stereo Tristan had just
arrived from London Records. Nat-
urally, the conversation turned to Wag-
ner in the recording studio versus
Wagner in the opera house. Did he
order things differently for the micro-
phone than for an audience?

Mr. Solti loosened his tie and
moved forward to the edge of the
sofa. Yes, indeed he did. "For record-
ings, I take a quite different approach.
The microphone requires more inten-
sity, more nuance, more expression
—everything must be heightened to
make up for the loss of visual impact.
But I wouldn't want to give the im-
pression that I considered Wagner
less effective on records than in the
theatre. As a matter of fact, I find
recording an advantage in some re-
spects. It enables me to let out the
orchestra without burying the singers.
In the opera house one must often
hold down the sound of the orchestra
so that the singers can be heard. In
the studio you don't have to worry.
On records, everything can be heard.
For Wagner, I am convinced that
stereo is the ideal medium."

What, we asked, was essential to a
conductor in working before the mi-
crophone? "The ability," Solti replied,
"to make up your mind. A conductor
in the recording studio must realize
what is wrong and how to correct it,
but he must also learn not to lose
expression in a search for the perfec-
tion which recording seems to make pos-
ible. I am against perfectionism. In
Tristan I always chose an expressive'
take' with a small blemish in prefer-
ence to an inexpressive version
that was note-perfect. Of course, ideally
I should like to have perfect execu-
tion of the notes and beautiful expres-
sion, but unfortunately the two don't
always go together."

Solti's recording career began not
as a conductor but as a pianist, ac-
companying the noted German violin-
ist Georg Kulenkampff in sonatas by
Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms.
These discs (made in Switzerland
for English Decca) date from the imme-
diate postwar period, when Solti was
still on an involuntary leave of ab-
sence from conducting. Before the
War, he had conducted opera in his
native Budapest, but in 1939 anti-
Semitism forced him to emigrate.
The outbreak of war found him in Swit-
zerland and jobless. Since a conducting
post seemed out of the question,
Solti brushed up on the piano, won
first prize at the Geneva competition
in 1942, and subsequently eked out
a living as a recitalist and accompa-
nist.

His return to the podium took place
in 1946. The United States autho-
rity in Germany were then finding it dif-
ticult to turn up conductors untainted
by Nazism, and the pianist Eduard
Kilenyi, an old Budapest acquaint-
ance stationed in Munich as a cul-
tural-affairs officer with the Army,
offered Solti an engagement to con-
duct Fidelio at the Munich Opera.
Fidelio was a great success, and Solti
was invited to remain as a permanent
conductor. "I didn't want to stay," he
told us. "Munich was a shambles; every-
thing seemed disorderly and dif-
ficult and discouraging. In fact, I
wanted to go to the States, and it was
my wife who persuaded me to accep-
t the Munich offer. She was right, of
course, I wasn't ready for America."

In due course Solti was appointed
general music director of the State
Opera in Munich. A few years later,
in 1952, he moved to Frankfurt as
general music director of that city's
opera and conductor of the Museum
Concerts. Meanwhile, Decca/London
had transferred him from the key-
board to the podium, first with the
Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, then with
the London Philharmonic, and sub-
sequently with the Israel Philhar-
monic, Paris Conservatoire, and Vi-
enna Philharmonic Orchestras.

For many years Solti's guiding in-
spiration was Arturo Toscanini, with
whom he had worked as an assistant
conductor at Salzburg before the War.
"I was in my early twenties when I
came under Toscanini's influence, and
of course at that age you see every-
thing in black and white. To me,
Toscanini could do no wrong. What
most inspired me was his passion for
detail. Incredible! I shall never forget
it. Naturally, as I matured, I began to
see virtues in other conductors. I
learned to appreciate the greatness of
Furtwängler, to understand his slow
tempos and elastic phrasing. And this
had an effect on my own conducting.
I am getting quieter, phrasing more
broadly, beating time less nervously.
Perhaps you will find in my record-
ing of the Eroica a mixture of both
the Toscanini and Furtwängler in-
fluences."

Next season Solti will be dividing
his time between Los Angeles and
London. He will spend a total of
thirteen weeks in California, as mu-
sic director of the Los Angeles Phil-
harmonic, and twenty weeks in Eng-
land, as music director of the Royal
Opera House, Covent Garden. "Theo-
retically," he says, "I can do both.
Practically? Well, we shall see." Be-
fore the Los Angeles-to-London com-
muting begins, Solti is scheduled to
make a good many recordings, in-
cluding a Ballo in maschera for Lon-
don Records and an Aida for RCA
Victor. And if someone would only
ask him, he would be most happy to
record Alban Berg's Wozzeck.
DFM 3006 • DFS 7006

SIDE 1

BAND No.

1. OCEAN LINER WHISTLE BLASTS 13. RADIO CODE SIGNALS
2. JET TAKING OFF 14. PHONE—DIAL TONE, DIALING, BUSY SIGNAL
3. JET TAKING OFF 15. PHONE—DIAL TONE, DIALING, RINGING
4. VISCOUNT LANDING 16. PHONE RINGING
5. DC7 TAKING OFF 17. AIR HAMMER AND COMPRESSOR
6. 707 JET TAKING OFF 18. GRINDING WHEEL
7. DC8 JET TAKING OFF 19. GAS ENGINE STARTING
8. STEAM ENGINE (SHORT TRAIN) 20. HAMMERING NAIL (RIGHT)
9. DIESEL ENGINE (LONG TRAIN) ELECTRIC SAW (LEFT)
10. RACING CARS (STARTS AND RACING) 21. IBM ELECTRIC TIPEWRITER
11. PIN BALL MACHINE 22. ROYAL TIPEWRITER
12. BOWLING 23. NATIONAL CASH REGISTER ELECTRIC ADDING MACHINE
13. BILLIARDS (POOL TABLE) 24. NATIONAL CASH REGISTER
14. BASEBALL GAME ELECTRIC BILLING MACHINE
15. LARGE CROWD APPLAUSE 25. FIRE ENGINE
16. LARGE CROWD LAUGHTER
17. DOOR—CLOSING, OPENING, SLAMMING
18. CREAKING DOOR
19. PISTOL SHOTS AND RICOCHETS
20. THUNDER
21. HEARTBEATS
22. SURF
23. WATER SOUNDS (DRIP IN BUCKET)
24. SINK DRAINING
25. POURING WATER INTO BUCKET

SIDE 2

1. TROPICAL BIRDS
2. LIONS ROARING
3. DOGS BARKING
4. GLASS BREAKING
5. SHOOTING GALLERY
6. CAROUSEL
7. POP BOTTLE OPENING AND POURING
8. TAP DANCE ROUTINE
9. FIRECRACKERS
10. CHINESE GONG
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12. RAILROAD TELEGRAPH

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
In this issue of *High Fidelity*, page 40, is an account of RCA Victor's project to reprocess many of Arturo Toscanini's recordings, all pre-stereo, in two-channel form. The three albums here considered are the first results of that experiment to be released—and I am happy to say that they are well worth knowing.

The only Toscanini performances originally recorded in stereo are the tapes, never released, of the Maestro's final two public concerts, on March 21 and April 4, 1954. Recorded in stereo as part of what RCA Victor then described as a "continuing policy of development and research in recording techniques," these tapes were made with a separate microphone set up from that used in the broadcast. (A monophonic tape, again never used for commercial releases, was also made.) The principal item of the first concert is the Pathétique. Had the engineers recorded it at the dress rehearsal, which I attended, they would have had a great performance, but the broadcast showed that the eighty-seven-year-old Maestro could not perform the same miracle two days running. Technically, the tape is a good example of early stereo engineering, as is the tape of the Wagner program with which Toscanini made his last bow. This performance too is flawed, but we might in time have at least a part of it (say Siegfried's Rhine Journey) as evidence of the energy Toscanini brought to even his farewell appearance.

Since I wanted to try the present examples of "electronic reprocessing" on an unprejudiced pair of ears. I played them anonymously to one of the most astute and knowledgeable record collectors residing locally. He took them for genuine stereo discs of recent vintage. When you consider that The Fountains of Rome was recorded in 1951 and the other titles date from 1953, this is indeed a tribute to Victor's engineers.

There are critics who regard the originals of the Toscanini recordings as a sort of holy writ which cannot be altered in any way. I am sure this release will send such people into an absolute frenzy, but I urge others not to join them. Improvements given to some of the Toscanini recordings in the past have not always been worthy of the name, but anyone with one of the new reverbération devices attached to his sound system can cause far more momentous havoc with a careless flick of the wrist. It seems to me that two questions want answering in connection with the new discs. First, taken by themselves, are these stereo-reprocessed Toscaninis satisfying records? The answer to that is yes, as one would infer from my friend's reaction. For good results they will have to be played at a higher volume setting than normal, and it will be noticed, of course, that the sound is never highly directional, but neither matter is of great importance. The truth is that these synthetic stereo discs are comparable to the average of the real thing as represented in the current catalogue. (This, it must be added, is an interesting commentary on the state of the industry.)

The second—and more important—question is how well these new discs stand up when played in direct comparison with the monophonic transfers of the master tape. It is obvious that re-recording of this type is possible only when the monophonic master is a first-class job with a great deal of information crammed into its single channel. The
engineer can only divide this information into two parts, and no amount of supplemental reinforcement can help him if there just isn't enough to go around.

In the climactic pages of the Respighi scores such a shortage is felt. The mono disc seems rock-solid in registration and filled with music, but apparently it cannot take the stretching. The two-channel version spreads out beautifully in the quiet pages (and the Toscanini devotee may want it just for them), but it lacks brilliance, focus, and weight in the full orchestral passages.

The Dvorák, on the other hand, is a success. It has grown in spaciousness without any loss of definition; indeed, small instrumental details now stand out with a sonic relief they did not possess before. The dynamics are wide-range. The quality is excellent. Naturally, in going from the mono to the stereo in A-B fashion, the listener will notice differences. (The point of the business is that there should be differences.) For me the merits of the new version exceed those of the old.

In the Mussorgsky recording, the issue is more open. Here again one finds greater spaciousness and some sharpened contours, but there are also some changes of tonal coloring—presumably from the intermixing of filtered and full frequency signals. The trumpet in the "Promenade" is plainly better in the monophonic set, but some people may be willing to accept its altered timbre in order to have the "Great Gate at Kiev" spread the width of their listening room.

RCA is selling these reprocessed discs for the same price as the mono versions—which presumably will remain in the catalogue. The obvious intent, and a worthy one, is to give some of the finer Toscanini performances an extra lease on life by allowing them to compete with newer recordings made in stereo. It's a depressing thought that a mediocre performance with spectacular sound will take sales from a great one with less striking sonics, but that's the way the money goes these days.

None of these Toscanini performances has been surpassed, or seems likely to be for a long, long time. Whether you choose to take them in one channel or two, you will be a lot happier for knowing them.

DVORAK: Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")
NRC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
- RCA Victor LME 2408. SD. $4.98.

MUSSORGSKY: Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel)
NRC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
- RCA Victor LME 2410. SD. $4.98.

RESPIGHI: Pini di Roma; Fontane di Roma
NRC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
- RCA Victor LME 2409. SD. $4.98.

Now More Than a Score of Seasons
by Nathan Broder

SINCE the advent of microgroove more than twenty performances of The Seasons have appeared on discs in this country. This is surely a remarkable record for a composer who seems to have been forgotten in his native city as soon as, and perhaps even before, he died. When Dr. Burney visited Venice less than thirty years after Vivaldi's death, he spent time in the conservatories—especially in the Pietà, where Vivaldi had been employed for many years—and questioned their directors on the history of these institutions and the men who had conducted the music in them. In his account of this visit he mentions many names of Venetian composers connected with the conservatories, but Vivaldi's name does not appear once. This curiously sudden neglect of a composer highly regarded in his own day lasted for more than two centuries. And it was almost complete: it was only when interest in Bach was revived, after sleeping for three-quarters of a century after his death, that musicians and scholars began to wonder about a composer that Bach had thought enough of to transcribe.

The Seasons were a success immediately upon their publication about 1725 as the first four concertos in the set of twelve called Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione, Op. 8. (For some time before that they had been favorites of Count Morzin, to whom Op. 8 was dedicated.) Spring was particularly popular. Pincherle tells us of various transcriptions of this concerto published in France, ranging from a large sacred choral work to an arrangement—by Jean Jacques Rousseau—for flute solo! Today this delightful set of pieces, with their naïve and graphic tone pictures woven into the structure of the baroque violin concerto as into a set of tapestries, is again a success, as is indicated by the number of recordings it has received. A large number of those recordings are of high quality. To that number must now be added two more.

Of the three new versions of The Seasons one is of the large-orchestra type while the other two employ chamber orchestras. To begin with the first of these, the Ormandy reading has a big, rich sound—a bit too rich for this music, it seems to me. Despite the apparent size of the group, however, it is extremely flexible and absolutely precise. It shows signs of ponderousness only in the finale of Summer. Ormandy does some of the movements very nicely, for example the opening one of Autumn and the Largo of Winter, and he sometimes brings out the viola line to good effect. But in other respects he is not always convincing, and his judgment is on occasion questionable.

This conductor has, for instance, the old-fashioned habit of making a big ritard and crescendo at final cadences. The slow movements of Spring and Summer are very slow indeed, especially that for Spring, where the listener is induced to follow the goatherd into slumber. The opening of Summer seems overexpressive, and in the course of the movement Ormandy inverts the piano-pianissimo succession of the printed score. There are passages in this movement where he seems not to trust the harpsichord to supply harmonic filling and allots it instead to the strings. At the beginning of Winter he omits the trills, and thus loses the stipulated effect of shivering with cold. The whirlwind finish of this con-
concerto seems to be evoked less by the program than by a desire to display the virtuosity of the Philadelphia strings. On the credit side of this performance is the work of the soloist, Anshel Brusilow, which, combined partly as violin playing, is the best to be heard on all three discs.

The Goberman recording, which like all the other Vivaldi releases in its series includes the Ricordi scores, is in some ways the most imaginative and the most thoughtfully prepared of the three. Appoggiaturas are interpreted according to eighteenth-century rules. In accord with the custom of Vivaldi's time, soloist is permitted, as in the Adr Summer, to elaborate on the p violin part (the double dotting in the accompaniment in that movement is persuasive musically, though progressively it has some excuse—it represents "furious" insects). As in the other Vivaldi performances of this group, the harpsichord realizations of the continuo (played by Eugenia Earle) are unusually lively and interesting. Only in the rhapsodic slow movement of Autumn does the continuo realization seem overdone: it is made so prominent as to achieve the status of a solo part, but the music improvised by the harpsichordist or written for her here is not substantial enough for that, and anyway everybody is supposed to be resting, sleeping off the effects of a harvest celebration.

One asset of this recording is shared by only one other stereo version of The Seasons that I have heard: the engineers (or Mr. Goberman) had the musical intelligence to record first and second violin tracks separately. This makes especially effective the sound of such movements as the finales of Summer and Winter, where separation of the two sections clarifies the proceedings. There are four soloists, one for each concerto: Ariana Bronne (Spring), Sonya Monosoff (Summer), Helen Kwalwasser (Autumn), Nadia Koutzen (Winter). All four are excellent, if not quite on a par with Brusilow or with Wolfgang Schneiderhan, soloist on the Archive disc.

This new version of the Neapolitan concerto, by Rudolph Baumgartner, is a first-class performance. The harpsichord is too faint in one or two spots, and the tempo of the first movement of Autumn seems a little rushed to me, but otherwise I could hear nothing objectionable. There are positive qualities, such as small touches that enhance the pictorial aspect of the music without departing from good taste—for example playing the opening figure of Winter with the bow near the bridge, to give it a nasty, icy feeling, or taking the Largo of the same work somewhat faster than usual so as to give the violin pizzicato the realistic plink-plonk of raindrops. Although Baumgartner is not so bold as Goberman and he and his soloist stick to the printed score, within that frame they do as fine-sounding, nuanced, and musical a job as any group on records.

How do these compare with the other available recordings of The Seasons? From the standpoint of performance, I should say that the Goberman and Baumgartner discs belong with the best—those of the Virtuosi di Roma and the Musici and the large-orchestra versions conducted by Cantelli and Giulini. From the standpoint of stereo, the Goberman and Musici are the most effective. As mono recordings, the loveliest sound, to my mind, is offered by the Baumgartner, the Virtuosi, the Cantelli, and the Giulini.

VIVALDI: Concertos for Violin and Strings, Op. 8, Nos. 1-4 ("The Four Seasons")
Anshel Brusilow, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
- COLUMBIA ML 5595. LP. $4.98.
- COLUMBIA MS 6195. SD. $5.98.

Solistos; New York Sinfonietta, Max Goberman, cond.

Wolfgang Schneiderhan, violin; Festival Strings Lucerne, Rudolf Baumgartner, cond.
- ARCHIVE AR 3141. LP. $5.98.
- ARCHIVE AR 7341A. SD. $6.98.

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CLASSICAL


ARNOLD: Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra, Op. 67
†Giuliani: Concerto for Guitar and String Orchestra

Julian Bream, guitar; Melos Ensemble.
- RCA VICTOR LSC 2947. LP. $1.98.
- RCA VICTOR LSC 2487. SD. $5.98.

Malcolm Arnold's new guitar concerto is a lively, accessible work composed in a conservatively dissonant idiom. There is a lot of lively concerto solo writing in the orchestral writing to supplement the strumming of the solo instrument, and for this reason, the piece is, in effect, a concerto for two instruments. The second subject of the first movement, instrumental, is suggestive of parts of Bernstein's Candide, both melodically and harmonically. The middle, "Blues" section, written in memory of the French guitarist Django Reinhardt, is a trifle long and uneventful in relation to the concise outer movements. But the piece is eminently likable. The composer-directed performance here recorded is presumably definitive.

Like the string quartet purity of sound furnished by the Melos Ensemble in the classical Mauro Giuliani (1780-1840) concerto. Bream's playing, too, is lovely here (as, indeed, in the Arnold composition). Aside from a tendency in the stereo version for the guitar to drift over to the right channel in the first movement of this piece, the recorded sound is of demonstration caliber.

H.G.

BABBITT: Composition for Four Instruments; Composition for Viola and Piano
†Bavicchi: Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Harp, No. 4; Short Sonata for Violin and Harpsichord

John Wummer, flute; Stanley Drucker, clarinet; Peter Marsh, violin; Donald McCall, cello (in the Composition for Four Instruments). Walter Trampler, viola; Alvin Bauman, piano (in the Composition for Viola and Piano). David Glaser, clarinet; Matthew Raimondi, violin; Assunta Dell'Aquila, harp (in the Trio). Robert Brink, violin; Daniel Pinkham, harpsichord (in the Sonata).

- COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CR 153. LP. $5.95.

Filton Babbitt, professor of music atinceton and a formidable figure among recent composers of modern music, here has his first important representation on records. Both Compositions employ the technique of total serialism. The one for four instruments falls into fifteen short sections each characterized by its own instrumental color. The overlapping progression of these sections is fascinating to hear, and the work as a whole has great dignity, strong dramatic tension, and at the same time a kind of lofty serenity as well. The Composition for Viola and Piano, however, eludes me; I find it desperately uninteresting, as I do the Trio by John Bavicchi, a young man who, one gathers, is not long out of Harvard. Bavicchi's Short Sonata for Violin and Harpsichord, on the other hand, is a rather fascinating piece, thanks in part to the curious color of the combination (for rather, the curious things he does with it), and the conciseness, and thrust of the music as a whole.

Performances throughout the album seem impeccable, and the recorded sound certainly is.

A.F.

BACH: Cantatas: No. 198, Trauer Ode; No. 131, Aus der Tiefe

Marni Nixon, soprano; Elaine Bonazza, contralto; Nico Castel, tenor (in No. 198); Loren Driscoll, tenor (in No. 131); Peter Binder, baritone (in No. 198); Robert Oliver, bass (in No. 131); American Concert Choir; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Robert Craft, cond.
- COLUMBIA ML 5577. LP. $4.98.
- COLUMBIA MS 6177. SD. $5.98.

One welcomes the initiative shown by Mr. Craft here in taking a fresh look at Bach and reinterpreting him in the light of the knowledge of baroque performance practice gained in recent years. (Some English musicians, notably Thurston Dart, have been doing the same lately, with considerable success.) In some respects Mr. Craft is convincing: the embellishments added here by solo singers and players usually sound natural and seldom seem
superfluous. In other respects, however, it is difficult to follow Mr. Craft’s reasoning. In the opening chorus of the Ode of Mourning, for example, Bach (if the printed scores can be trusted) carefully distinguishes between even and dotted sixteenths, but the orchestrations suggest a mixture of these in the orchestra against even sixteenths in the voices. Mr. Craft wipes out these distinctions and has the orchestra performing dotted sixteenths most of the time. That Bach did not want this in the chorus throughout is quite clear: in the few measures where he does want dotted sixteenths sung he writes them that way. The result of Mr. Craft’s interpretation is that the music slips along breezily and completely negates the meaning of the text. This is not Bach’s fault, as may be heard in Scherchen’s grave and powerful, if not as well recorded, performance on a Westminster disc.

The soloists, especially Messrs. Dresdencoll and Oliver, are satisfactory and the chorus is well performed. In the alto aria of No. 198 the gambus are sometimes too loud for the voice; in the baritone arioso of the same work and in the tenor-alto duet of No. 131 the harpsichord is faint, leaving a gap between voice and cello. Otherwise the sound in both versions is good. The works are sung in German; unfortunately, no texts are provided in the notes.

N.B.


BACH: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in A minor, S. 1041
†Mozart: Symphonic concerto in A minor (violin, orchestra, piano, and orchestra, E flat, K. 364)

David Oistrakh, violin; Rudolf Barshai, viola. Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai, cond.
* ARTIA ALP 165. LP. $4.98.

Oistrakh’s performance of the Bach is to be rated high. I think, among available recordings of that work, the tone is singing and pure, there is no sign of intonation or articulation; the harpsichord is faint, leaving a gap between voice and cello. Otherwise the sound is good. In the Mozart the approach is again entirely straightforward. Here, a little more imagination would have helped. Mr. Barshai’s command of the viola part is not, it seems to me, as complete as Primrose’s in the RCA Victor recording of this fine work, or Lillian Fuchs’s in the Decca, but his playing is acceptable nevertheless, and his rapport with his partner unexceptionable. The oboes are not well defined here, but otherwise the sound is good.

N.B.

BACH: Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in G, S. 564; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, S. 582 (arr. Ormandy)

†Bach, J. C.: Sinfonia for Double Orchestra, Op. 18, No. 1

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5580. LP. $4.98.
• COLUMBIA MS 6180. SD. $5.98.

I suppose there must be people who do not enjoy any music unless it is played by a large, lush symphony orchestra. Ant. Kostelanetz (or Mantovani) aus nihil. There does not seem to be any other good reason for conductors continuing to make, and record, transcription like these. Even the excuse that used to be given in their defense—that otherwise some of Bach’s great works would not be heard—is no longer valid: there are many good recordings of these compositions played on the organ, as Bach intended they should be.

The Sinfonia by Johann Christian Bach is another matter entirely. Here Ormandy follows faithfully a modern edition of the score, and the result is a delight, almost enough to make up for the rest of the disc. Although this work would seem to be made to order for stereo, it is effective in mono too because in the dialogues between the two orchestras the material given to one differs from the other’s in octave register or instrumenta-

N.B.


BACH, JOHANN CHRISTIAN: Symphonies, Op. 18: No. 2, in B flat: No. 4, in D
†Handel: Water Music: Suite

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Edvard van Beinum, cond.
• EPIC LC 3749. LP. $4.98.
• EPIC BC 1112. SD. $5.98.

Two lively and attractive symphonies are presented here in pleasing performances by the late Edvard van Beinum. Written by the youngest son of Johann Sebastian Bach, they resemble nothing composed by the father; instead, they are fine examples of the developed Italian three-movement opera overture (No. 2 did in fact start life as the overture to Bach’s opera Lucio Silla). They are consequently light-textured and full of singing melody. The Handel suite consists of eight movements from the complete work. The performance of the Air is lacking in grace, but in the Minuet, Van Beinum brings out the expressive secondary line in the bassoon, and in the remaining movements he does full justice to Handel’s splendid music. The sound in both versions is good.

N.B.

BAYVICCH: Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Harp, No. 4; Short Sonata for Violin and Harpsicord—See Babbitt: Composition for Four Instruments.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37
†Mozart: Rondos: in D, K. 382; in A, K. 386

Annie Fischer, piano; Bavarian State Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18607. LP. $5.98.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138087. SD. $6.98.

If you like the idea of Mozart and Beethoven played on a music box, this recording provides that effect. Miss Fischer strives for the even, tinkly-tinkle type of piano sound with enormous success. I do not like my Beethoven in lacy underpants, thank you, so my choice remains the Backhaus edition. Fricsay deserves a word of praise for a good accompaniment here. The engineering is no better than average.

R.C.M.


Amadeus Quartet.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18354/36. Three LPs.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 13853/36. Three SD. $30.94.

This set is a good buy. The five works have been fitted, without any handicap to the purchaser, on three rather than four records, thereby providing a complete edition of the most popular Beethoven quartets at a $3.00 saving over the customary price. Moreover the records are well made and silent-surfaced—which is exactly what chamber music records.

The Amadeus is a group with a well-deserved reputation. Their performances do not have the ultra high polish and crispness of tone one hears in the Budapest set, but they do have the firm pulse and cleanly drawn lines that project the strong musical substance of these works. In short, the quartet is self-effacing. It fixes your attention not on what it is playing but what Beethoven is saying, and that is the way it ought to be. I enjoyed their performances and look forward to returning to them. You will too.

R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5, in E flat, Op. 68 ("Eroica")

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
• LONDON CM 9249. LP. $4.98.
• LONDON CS 6189. SD. $5.98.

Ansermet’s edition of the Beethoven nine has been appearing gradually and now reaches its conclusion with an Eroica of impressive vigor and force. Indeed, if we look back through this Ansermet series, we find a number of exceptional performances and a consistently high level of interest in the conductor’s points of view and their development. The Eroica given us here shares with many of the other symphonies a fairly
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ANTONIO VIVALDI: GLORIA. Vienna Academy Chorus, The Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Mimi Coertse, Soprano; Ina Dressel, Soprano; Sonja Draxler, Contralto. Stereo WST 14139  Monaural XWN 18958

OTTORINO RESPIGHI: FOUNTAINS OF ROME; FESTE ROMANE, Fernando Previtali conducting the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome. Stereo WST 14140  Monaural XWN 18959

TORROBA; PONCE, A SPANISH GUITAR. John Williams, Guitar. F. Moreno Torroba: Sonatina-Noturna-Suite Castellana. Manuel M. Ponce: Valse Theme Varie et Finale:Twelve Preludes. Stereo WST 14138  Monaural XWN 18957

WELL, ALL REED: Byron Parker and his Orchestra. Liza (Gershwin), September Song (Weill), Blue Moon (Rodgers), Solitude (Elliott), With a Song in My Heart (Rodgers), Embraceable You (Gershwin), Body and Soul (Green), Tea for Two (Youmans), Maria la O (Lecuona), Dancing in the Dark (Schwartz), Who (Kern), Who Cares (Gershwin). Stereo WST 15067  Monaural WP 6133


BOURBON ON THE ROCKS, PLEASE: John de Cicle 93 ON READER-SERV.CE CARD

Maix, Piano. April in Paris (Duke), Spring is Here (Rodgers), September Song (Weill), The Last Time I Saw Paris (Kern), Autumn in New York (Duke), September in the Rain (Warren), Autumn Leaves (Kosina), A Foggy Day (Gershwin), Under Paris Skies (Giraud), Summertime (Gershwin), "I'll Remember April" (Raye, de Paul and Johnson). Around the World (Young). Stereo WST 15068  Monaural WP 6134

quick, lightly inflected type of performance, but Ansermet does not carry this approach to the point of austerity. There is breadth to the phrase when it is needed for expressive signifiers. What Ansermet is seeking is a golden mean between superficiality and bombast, and I think he finds it. If, among the older Éricons, your paradigm was that of Toscanini, this is the peak of the score most in sympathy with the late Maestro’s precepts. Naturally there are differences, Ansermet is not as fierce as the Maestro, but with this use of classicalism in the music and, in their respective ways, make its nobility felt. The recording is slightly heavy on the right channel (although this imbalance is easily corrected), and resonant to the point of losing some low frequency definition. The sound, however, is quite spacious and very pleasing to the ear, particularly in the full-bodied quality of the chords. R.C.M.

BORODIN: Prince Igor (highlights)
Valeria Heybalova (s), Yaroslavna; Du-
san Popovich (b); Igor; Zharco Tzveych (b); Galitsky and Konchak. Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Oscar Donan. cond.
• LONDON 5563. LP. $4.98.
• LONDON OS 25202. SD. $5.98.

A selection from London’s complete version of the opera, this recording is dis-
tinguished mainly by Popovich’s magnifi-
cent voicing of Igor’s monologue, and by a good version of the Polovtsian Dances—
with chorus, really the only way they should ever be performed. The chief drawback is some embarrassing belowing by Zharco Tzveych in Galitsky’s aria. It must be said, too, that some of the other selections—Konchak’s aria and Yaroslavna’s “I Shed Tears”—are mighty dull unless the singing is quite out of the ordinary, which is not so here. The sound is fine, except that the solo voices are recorded too close up.

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
• MERCURY LPS 5000. LP. $4.98.
• MERCURY LP 9000. SD. $5.98.

Having turned the Russian campaign of 1812 into a sonic smash, Mercury con-
tinues the struggle against Bonaparte with this climactic moment from the Peninsular War of 1813. That the Battle Symphony was ideal for stereo (and rather pointless otherwise) became clear when the Morton Gould version ap-
peared years back, who knowing a good set and haven’t heard this new one may doubt my word, but the truth is that Dorati and his cohorts have succeeded in making all previous recordings sound like pretty mild stuff. Wellingtons Sieg is not great music—and Beethoven would be the first to say so. It can be quite entertaining, however, and it is of lasting antiquarian interest as the only really surviving example of its genre. (Battle pieces were once a major item of mass entertainment, and Mercury is obviously out to revive them.)

Before we get lost among the artillery and small arms, it ought to be said that the fundamental advantage of this recording is that musically it’s a stronger, better-
paced, and more persuasive account of the score. Dorati plays it straight and plays it well in the same manner that he provides forthright statements of the two overtures on the other side of the record. Mercury once more went to West Point for some muskets, and this three cannon and a collection of mus-
kets provide the gunsmoke. The thing that impresses is that these additions added to the significance. Bennett wrote 188 cannon shots into his music, and they blend with the sinister rattler of the musket volleys to produce a strik-
ing intensification of the total impact. (If the wind machine and sheep in Don Quixote can be musical, why not patterns of firing?) In other words, Mercury has provided the significance because it has gone to the trouble to treat the work seriously and give it the kind of per-
f ormance Beethoven intended.

Quartetto di Roma.
• DEUTSCHER GRAMMOPHON LPM 18529/28. Two LP. $5.98 each.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138015/14. Two SD. $6.98 each.

Not very long ago, Deutscher Grammo-
phon issued highly commendable record-
ings of the three Brahms string quartets; now this same company has come out with equally fine disc interpretations of the first two of the three piano quartets. It is to be hoped that the third will fol-
low shortly. The ensemble playing here is of a very high order, perfectly bal-
anced at all times. The performances have a certain Italianate fluency which occasionally results in a bit too much speed, yet with this fluency also goes a tonal firmness and an understanding of the German and gypsy elements in mu-
ic. Sonics are commendable in both versions of both quartets, though stereo gives a definite place to each instrument on the aural stage—violin to the left, piano in the center, and viola and cello to the right. In the two-channel edition, the tenor tone seems a trifle brighter too.

A word about the Quartetto di Roma. Some years ago, there was a string quar-
tet bearing this name. The present group is made up of Ornella Puliti Santoliquido, piano; Arrigo Pelliccia, violin; Bruno Giuranna, viola, and Massimo Amfi-
theatros, cello. Those familiar with the personnel, past and present, of I Virtuosi di Roma and I Musici will probably be able to recognize these players as members of those two leading Italian string ensembles. P.A.

BRAHMS: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in E minor, Op. 34
Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Borodin Quartet.
• MK-ARTIA 1516. LP. $5.98.

These Soviet artists approach this im-
passioned Brahms score with warmth and considerable care. Their ensemble play-
ing is very well balanced, and they even take the trouble to repeat the exposition of the first movement. Although their interpretation would have benefited from a bit more incisiveness, particularly in the finale, it is a highly acceptable read-
ing, clothed in faithful, slightly resonant sound.

BRAHMS: Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68
London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Do-
ratii, cond.
• MERCURY MG 50268. LP. $4.98.
• MERCURY SR 90268. SD. $5.98.

There are many different ways to in-
terpret this heroic symphony; what may be moving to one listener may fail to touch another. Dorati’s approach is es-
entially muscular, full of rhythmic drive. Though it is eminently listenable, I myself found his conception a bit too ex-
troverted, a brilliant surface with too little substance beneath it. It must be gen-
erally agreed, however, that the Lon-
don Symphony plays here in top form, crisp and clean. Mercury has provided top-quality sound, in which even the resiny attacks of the strings may be discerned. In stereo, the orchestra is de-
ployed naturally and evenly. P.A.

BRUCH: Concerto for Violin and
Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26
Mozart: Concerto for Violin and
Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216
Jaime Laredo, violin; National Symphony
Orchestra, Howard Mitchell, cond.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2472. LP. $4.98.
• RCA VICTOR LV 2472. SD. $5.98.

According to Paul Hume’s jacket notes, this disc represents a meeting of three nine-year-old prodigies. The Bruch Concerto was written and the Bruch Con-
certo began when their respective com-
posers were nineteen, and the amazing Bohemian violinist Linhart was just two weeks short of his nineteenth birthday when he recorded these two works.

Young Laredo has already recorded some performances that have been as-
tounding for the technical virtuosity and—for much more important—stylistic maturity they have displayed. These qualities are again to be heard in his deft, delicate, often subtle handling of the Mozart Con-
certo. Portions of the Bruch, however, seem unduly heavy and often are square-

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
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*Audio Magazine*

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**CHESTER SANTON**

*Light Listening*

This special series by Riverside is the best one yet. The first feature you'll notice in these stereo discs is the fact that they play from the inside out. But that's only a very small part of the story. The tone arm starts right next to the label with a short band containing a 400-cycle test tone for channel balancing. Once the locked groove at the end of this band is hurdled, the pickup then proceeds toward the outer edge of the record.

Cutting the master disc from the inside out has long been advocated as a solution to the problem now encountered in classical recordings wherever a symphonic work closes with a loud finale at the end of a lengthy side. Unfortunately, the four initial releases in this series do not contain classical material. We won't know how the theory works until some one puts out a stereo disc with an "1812 Overture" that starts next to the label. The Fortissimo series anticipates playback equipment considerably better than what we have today. Their master tapes are recorded at 60 inches per second with the heads oriented horizontally. Of even greater significance to the record fan are the measures that have been taken to improve the transfer from tape to disc. These include a 92,000 cps tone superimposed over the regular signal while cutting the master disc. It seems that the conventional hot stylus technique cannot do as good a job in the harder material they are using for this series. The finished pressings contain a new and harder compound called Polymax. All these steps produce a stereo disc unlike any I've heard before.

Of the four translucent discs released so far, these two records offer the most convincing evidence of the changes this series could make within the industry. Conventional surface noise is totally absent and response is phenomenal. The pipe organ played by Paul Renard is the second Wurlitzer located in the Radio City Music Hall building. This smaller version of the main theatre organ is located in a studio atop the building that was originally intended for radio broadcasts. Miked at extremely close quarters, the sound of the studio organ has a gleam impossible to capture in the vast auditorium. The music is sure-fire stuff by George M. Cohan. The 27-year old Paul Renard doesn't have the polish and poise of the veteran theatre organists but he sails into these show stoppers with a complete quota of enthusiasm. This record won't be studied for the performance of the music. The attraction is the sound just as it is in the companion release of jet planes and a helicopter recorded at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. In high and low fly-by, take-off and landing, these jets have the "live" quality formerly available only on 15 ips professional tapes. Once the word gets around, these will be the test records in the months ahead.

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March 1961

**CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**
ly phrased. Either consciously or unconsciously, Mitchell and the orchestra reflect the soloist's strategy. They provide perfectly proper light accompaniment for the Mozart and a weighty one for the Bruch. The reproduction in both mono and stereo is clearly balanced. A printer's error on the labels of both editions lists the Mozart Concerto with its proper key signature and Köchel catalogue number, but credits that work to Bruch.

P.A.

CHANLER: Nine Epitaphs—See Trimble: Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales.

CHOPIN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11

†Mendelssohn: Capriccio brillant, in B minor, Op. 22

Gary Graffman, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

† RCA Victor LM 2468. LP. $4.98.

† RCA Victor LSC 2468. SD. $5.98.

The nocturne movement of the Chopin fares best in the present performance, for Graffman's tastefully reticent phraseology gives the music a fine, arching line. The first movement, however, lacks communicative appeal in this playing, and the finale too needs more spring and rhythmic vibrancy (as opposed to Graffman's intellectually precise attention to note values). While the emphasis on the composer and the music at hand is commendable, there is also a blank, rather objective relation here. Evidently, Wayward though it is, Stefan Askenase's recent DGG version of this concerto seems to me much more expressive and interesting. I also prefer the lovely and rarely played Chopin Krakovia which that disc offers to the Mendelssohn here.

Munch makes the unfortunately familiar cut in the opening tutti of the Chopin and adds little, otherwise to the total. The sound is rather clinical in sonority, but otherwise excellent. H.G.


† Liszt: Mephisto Waltz

Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano.

† MK-Artia 203. Two LP. $11.96.

Ashkenazy has little to fear from the extreme technical demands posed by these works. He can play with astonishing clarity and lightness, his pianistic endurance is seemingly limitless, and he seldom produces a percussive or otherwise unattractive tone in these performances. He does, however, tend to be tonally monotonous. The pianist is apt to disremember that these pieces are as much studies in touch as they are studies in stamina, and his super-legato, while effective and beautiful in those études requiring this approach, does tend to militate against his rendition as a whole. When crisp articulation of passage work is called for, or independence of part writing at high speeds. Ashkenazy's fingers are apt to "melt" into one another, a result is his occasional loss of clarity and blurring together of unrelated harmonies. This is most apparent in the Block-Key Etude, the Revolutionary, and Op. 10, No. 4 (both for the left hand) and the arpeggiation F major, Op. 10, No. 8.

In addition, there is interpretative inconsistency, to some extent, of the pieces are played with striking finesse, while others are treated metronomically and are quite lacking in subtlety. Moreover, there are such peculiarities as ending the double-sixth étude pianissimo and leggiero when Chopin plainly intended that he wanted fortissimo there. These more than occasional touches of preciosity are recurrent throughout these renditions; they are a new feature in Ashkenazy's work. I would like to have a temporary one. There are elements of greatness in these performances and one cannot do other than admire them. Nevertheless, I will continue to cherish the NBC Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Ashkenazy's performances for other companies. This Mephisto is a shade faster and more driving than the one on Angel. The improved definition of the piano on the one disc makes the performance of the Ballade sound a good deal more assured and convincing. The fine early Nocturne played with great precision on the pianist's discography. Sonatas are very satisfactory throughout, but the surfaces on these Russian-made discs are a bit noisy.

H.G.

CHOPIN: Fantaisie, in F minor, Op. 49


Adam Harasiewicz, piano.

† Epic LC 3744. LP. $4.98.

† Epic BC 1108. SD. $5.98.

These flowing, well-paced readings are, nevertheless, just a shade on the bland side. Harasiewicz is a strong technician and he plays with an admirable balance of voice lines, lack of sentimentality, and considerable forward movement. In fact, he goes such a long way in the right direction of architectural clarification that I wish he had thrown aside all the impediments of "traditional-salon style." Very often, as in the middle section of the B minor Scherzo, or in the alla marcia introduction to the Fantaisie, the artist will build boldly to an inevitable harmonic peak and then retreat from it, just before reaching the top. Similarly, Harasiewicz has a slight, but noticeable tendency to accelerate the tempo at climax, and this produces an inevitable weakening of rhetorical emphasis.

The E flat minor Scherzo holds together better than the other three big pieces here recorded; and since the Mazurkas require grace and can better withstand the softening effects of recording, they are this artist's basically lyric temperament best of all. The piano sound is not particularly colorful or sensuous, but pleasing nevertheless. H.G.

DVORAK: Slavonic Rhapsodies, Op. 45; Scherzo capriccioso, Op. 66

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Sejna, cond.

† Supraphon LPV 407. LP. $5.98.

It has been a long time since Dvořák's three rhapsodies have sounded on as pliable on one disc. It is good to have them back together again, to listen to the composer giving free rein to his imagination within the framework of the nationalistic music of his peers. One encounters appealing juxtapositions of narrative musical drama and the gay abandon of country folk enjoying a holiday. The later Scherzo capriccioso fits nicely into this program, too, offering as it does an effective blend of the darkly dramatic and the light, carefree elements of Dvořák's work.

Sejna and the fine Czech Philharmonic have captured the spirit of all this music admirably, and give performances of the highest order. The fidelity of the recording is not quite as high; it will pass muster, though it cannot compare to the more brilliant sounds that technicians on this side of the Iron Curtain have been producing in recent years.

DVORAK: Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")

NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.

† RCA Victor LME 2408. SD. $4.98.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 53.

ENESCO: Rumanian Rhapsodies, Op. 11: No. 1, in A; No. 2, in D

† Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies: No. 5, in E minor ("Héroïde-Élégaïque"); No. 6, in D ("Carnaval de Pest")

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann (in the Enesco), Anatol Fistoulari (in the Liszt) cond.

† Vanguard SRV 119. LP. $1.98.

† Vanguard SRV 119. SD. $2.98.

Shrewdly combining the appeals of the relatively familiar and relatively unfamiliar, the latest release in Vanguard's low-priced demonstration series is uncommonly attractive for its special musical values and now expected technical interest. The whirlsing first Enesco rhapsody has been recorded before with more breath-taking virtuosity, if seldom with more poignant tonal coloring and deliberate clarity; but to the still inadequately appreciated, hauntingly songful second, Golschmann brings unusually fervent nostalgia and vibrant sonority. And if Fistoulari's lusty drive in the sprawlingly episodic Sixth Hungarian Rhapsody (No. 9, in E flat, in the original series for piano solo) is much the same as that in his memorable set of Nos. 1 through 4 (VRS 108), he brings unanticipated poignance to the less often heard, darkly somber Fifth. Happily, the striking contrasts between one conductor's lyric grace and the other's dramatic power are
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March 1961
GRIEG: Peer Gynt; Rhapsody. Gershwin, though preserved both by the versatile Viennese players and by the Vanguard engineers whose brightly clean wide-range recording is admirable in monophony, while revealing still more authenticity in the expansive stereo edition. R.D.D.

GERSHWIN: Rhapsody in Blue; An American in Paris
Johann von Kurtz, piano (in the Rhapsody); Hamburg International Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm von Loden, cond.
- Tops 6001. SD. $3.85.

These performances are fairly literal for Gershwin, though the voices seem to have captured the spirit and tone quality of American jazz. Von Kurtz does a passable job with the piano solo in the Rhapsody. Highs are fairly bright in An American in Paris, but they're pretty mushy in the Rhapsody. P.A.


HANDEL: Concertos for Organ and Orchestra, Op. 4 (complete)
Johannes Ernst Köhler, organ; String Orchestra of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Kurt Thomas, cond.
- Epic 3734; 3737. Two LP. $4.98 each.
- Epic BC 1101; 1103. Two SD. $5.98 each.

Another excellent set of performances, worthy of a place alongside the Biggs (Columbia) and Kraft (Vox) sets. Köhler has a lively sense of rhythm and a crisp touch in the fast movements. In the slow ones he adds elaborations of line and texture that are discreet and in good taste. Thomas' style is once or twice, as in the opening movement of No. 4, a little heavy, and in portions of Nos. 5 and 6 the orchestra seems too loud: but generally speaking, the orchestra is first-rate, and balances and the quality of sound are good. My vote still goes to the Biggs set, but the present one deserves serious consideration. N.B.

HANDEL: Messiah
Soliots: J. Clifford Welsh, organ; Masterwork Chorus (Morristown, N. J.), David Ray, cond.
- Design Compatible Fidelity 3051. Three discs. $9.95.

"New Jersey," wrote Louis Moreau Gottschalk in his diary a century ago, "is the poorest place to give concerts in the whole world except Central Africa." I don't know about Central Africa, but I do know that all the virtuosos of the world excluding those from Central Africa, and even those who have been to Central Africa, would have been very surprised by the excellence of the performance that I heard last Sunday afternoon in the beautiful church on the outskirts of Morristown. The performance was given by the Morristown Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of the famous J. Clifford Welsh, who also conducted the performance. The program consisted of Handel's Messiah, which is considered by many to be the greatest choral work ever written. The choir was directed by Mr. Welsh, who is well known for hisparsimonious use of soloists. He used only a few soloists, all of whom were members of the choir, and they sang with great spirit and beauty. The orchestra, conducted by Mr. Welsh, was also excellent. The musicians played with great precision and enthusiasm, and the whole performance was a wonderful experience for all who were fortunate enough to hear it.

In its poignancy it is quite unexcelled. Technically this disc is unlikely to win any prizes, but the sound remains adequate, with the stereo preferable. R.C.M.

MARTINU: Fantaisies Symphoniques; Memorial to Lidice
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.
- Supraphon LPV 416. LP. $5.98.

The Fantaisies Symphoniques constitute Martini's sixth symphony. There are three movements, all of them laying special stress on brilliant orchestration, strong contrasts of sonority, and a general sense of improvisation. The rich stringing of the musical pot. It all comes off more impressively under Ancerl's inspired conducting; unfortunately, however, the recording opera above its normal level whenever she is in sight. On this recording, however, her controlled performance, though well sung, seems somewhat lacking in passion. The same might be said of Serafin's conducting, especially in the opening twenty minutes or so. He lavishes much care and affection on the villagers' choruses and the Italian instrumental passages. They are not worth it, and the music does not sustain itself. With the visual attractions of a good production, his slow pacing and occasional lack of tension would undoubtedly be welcome, but on records, it tends to bring things to a halt. This isn't music to linger over.

Del Monaco makes his way through the role of Turiddu in an especially graceful fashion, and his voice does not sound as fresh as it did on the previous London; Cavalleria Vittoria. Enheds brings his imposing instrument to Alfo's music, but the results are not quite what was hoped for; he betrays an insistent thrust on sustained tones — particularly in his entrance song—which does not augur well. His duet with Sanzetta goes well, though, and makes for the recording's most vital moments. The chorus and orchestra are both first-rate, the other soloists average.

The fourth side of the album, devoted to a selection of ten songs by Mr. del Monaco, adds nothing to the merits of the release.

C.L.O.


High Fidelity Magazine
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CIRCLE 66 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Almost every time the incidental music from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Rosenmunde* appears on discs it appears badly out of tune. These two suites miss the highly compatible groove-fellows, but this arrangement never allows us to hear either Mendelssohn's or Schubert's highly compatible groove-fellows, but his Schubert is completely in the proper vein. The sound is rounded, though the stereo effect is not very great. F.A.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 22, in E flat, K. 482; No. 23, in A, K. 488

Robert Casadesus, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
- Columbia ML 5594. L.P. $4.98.
- Columbia ML 6194. SD. $5.98.

The last word on K. 482 has not yet been said on discs, but while waiting for it we could do worse than accept the present recording; no better one is available. Casadesus turns in his customary clean, elegant type of performance, and in the great slow movement he and Szell achieve profundity and eloquence. In the finale the soloist fills in nicely some of the spaces Mozart left open.

In K. 488 Casadesus takes the marvelous Adagio rather fast (in the purest orchestral portions Szell slows it down a bit), and he sometimes ignores Mozart's legato marks. Here the orchestra sounds particularly beautiful, although the recording throughout this recording is very fine; only in one passage of the first movement of K. 482 is the balance imperfect. It seems to me, however, that both Casadesus's and Szell's readings of K. 488 are warmer and more poetic than this new version.


Samuel Baron, flute; Members of Fine Arts Quartet.
- ConcertDisc M 1215. L.P. $4.98.
- ConcertDisc C 215. SD. $5.98.

All of Mozart's flute quartets are here offered on one disc, for the first time in stereo. Baron's playing is first-class—accurate in pitch, practically noiseless in production, facile in technique, and pure, if rather cool, in tone. He is ably seconded by his string performers, and the recording is excellent. From the

standpoint of performance the Epic and Vanguard monophonic discs containing all four quartets are in competition with this one, but if it is stereo you want in this music, this is the disc for you. N.B.


Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
- Deutsche Grammophon LPM 18625. L.P. $5.98.
- Deutsche Grammophon SLPM 138125. SD. $6.98.

The E flat Symphony has been very well received on previous, well-recorded performances, finely recorded, by Klemperer, Böhm, Jochum, and Karajan, to which can now be added the present one. Fricsay conveys the dramatic character of the introduction and the mellow lyricism of the main body of the first movement. His Andante sings from start to finish. The Trio of the Minuet sounds like a sublimated peasant dance, and the finale has the proper wit and spirit. On the other hand, Fricsay's view of the work is so different that some other highly respected conductors, is one I cannot share. He takes both of the outer movements at a deliberately tempo, which certainly makes for precision and clean-cut playing in general but drains these movements of the sweep and fervor that they should have. G minor, it is well known, was Mozart's favorite key for passionate outbursts; but what we have here is gentle, well-behaved melancholy.

Aside from a scrabbling bassoon in the finale of the E flat, both works are played with technical finish. The balances permit the woodwinds to be heard when they have a part to play in the E flat Symphony, even with the bass controls turned up considerably more than usual, the basses seemed lacking in definition and presence. Otherwise the sound in both versions is good. N.B.

MUSSORGSKY: Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel)

N.B. Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
- RCA Victor LME 2410. SD. $4.98.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 53.

OFFENBACH: Les Contes d'Hoffmann (excerpts)

Rita Streich (s), Olympia; Hanna Ludwig (a), Cendrillon; Harry Kupfer (a), Antonio; Ursula Gunt (ms), Nicklausse; Rut Siewerk (ms), Voice of the Mother; William McAlpine (t), Hoffmann; Martin Hopner (t), Spalanzani; and Rüdiger Schuricht (t). RIAS Rundfunk Symphonie (bs-b), Lindorf, Coppellius, Dapertutto, Miracle. RIAS Chamber Choir; Radio Symphony Orchestra (Berlin), Richard Kraus, cond.
- Deutsche Grammophon LPM 19230. L.P. $5.98.
- Deutsche Grammophon SLPM 136230. SD. $6.98.

DGG has managed to get quite a bit of Hoffmann onto this disc, and the engineering job has been highly compatible with mono and stereo. The production's pleasant aura tends to compensate for the uninteresting vocalism, but it must be noted that Rita Streich's "Doll Song" is accurate but lifeless (no pun here); that the other women are just decent provincial-level singers; that William McAlpine is a competent but colorless tenor; and that Randolph Schuricht is uninteresting and unidiomatic. If a potted version is desired, however, this is the best disc currently available. C.O.

PERGOLESI: La Serva padrona

Renata Scotto (s), Serpina; Sesto Bruscanini (bs), Uberto. L’Iris, cond. Renato Fasano, cond.
- Mercury 50240. L.P. $4.98.
- Mercury 90240. SD. $5.98.

Pergolesi’s brief, sad life was distinguished by the fact that his comic works found a wide degree of acceptance from his contemporaries, while his serious operas over which he labored were nearly all flat failures. Today his most popular work is still the delectable intermezzo (or intermezzi, really, since *La Serva padrona* is made up of two interludes) which took all Europe by storm within a few months of its first performances as intermezzo to his own *Il prigionier superbo*.

The only important happening in the plot is the capture of Uberto by his scheming maid, Serpina. Musically, it is a succession of delightful arias and duets in which Serpina alternately defies and cajoles, and Uberto turns from severity to bewilderment to capitulation. The present performance is as good as we are likely to hear. Fasano and his orchestra can’t be bettered in this sort of music, and the two roles are played with boundless ends. Scotto manages to convey all of Serpina’s suavity and a good measure of her pathos, real or affected; her two best-known arias, “Stumbling on Eggs” and “A Serpina peneitente,” go extremely well. Bruscanini is an experienced hand at the buffo game, and while he is a bit uncomfortable at the bottom of the scale, he is more at home on top than most basses, and he has the character well in hand.

Mercury’s sound is a trifle harsh and close-to in both versions; the stereo edition contains some nice effects of coming and going that are naturally absent from the monophonic record. Endorsed. C.L.O.

PROKOFIEV: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C, Op. 26

MacDowell: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 23

Van Cliburn, piano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Walter Hendl, cond.
- RCA Victor LME 2417. SD. $4.98.
- RCA Victor LSC 2507. SD. $5.98.

As John Briggs points out in his notes for this first album, there is something especially appropriate about a recording of this Prokofiev concerto by the Chi-
PROKOFIEV: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 63

Saint-Saëns: Havanise, Op. 83

Tchaikovsky: Serenade mélancolique, Op. 26

Leonid Kogan, violin; State Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., Kiril Kondrashin, cond.

These performances present Kogan in an unusually lyrical vein. One is not likely to encounter any more songful recorded interpretations of any of these three predominantly lyrical works. The violinist’s approach causes him to broaden the tempos throughout most of the Prokofiev concertos, but this treatment is eminently suited to the nature of the music, and there is sufficient bravura in the last movement to put it across effectively. The two shorter pieces are marked by warmth and stylistic elegance. Kondrashin’s accompaniments are sympathetic, if not very polished, and the recorded sound is satisfactory. P.A.

PROKOFIEV: Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67


Leonard Bernstein, narrator (in the Prokofiev); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

The twenty-fourth Peter and the Wolf and the forty-fifth Nutcracker Suite now available on American discs, both skillfully, warmly, and richly performed and beautifully recorded. A.F.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18

Rimsky-Korsakov: Easter Overture, Op. 36 (“Grande Pâque Russe”)

Raymond Lewenthal, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond.

This strikes me, I’m afraid, as a thoroughly routine record. The tempos
are fast (which is all for the good), but the rhythm and phrase contours are flat and tensionless (which isn’t). The orchestral playing is not the best either; the attacks are flaccid and some of the first-desk playing is mighty shaky. Nor is the engineering distinguished: an exces- sive amount of hall resonance clouds the balance, obscuring much instrumental detail.

H.G.

RESPIGHI: Pini di Roma; Fontane di Roma

NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.

- RCA Victor LME 2409. SD. $4.98.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 53.

RIEGGER: Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello; Quartet for Strings, No. 2

John Covelli, piano; William Kroll, violi- lin; Alexander Kougoull, cello (in the Trio); Kroll Quartet (in the Quartet).

- COLUMBIA ML 5589. LP. $4.98.
- COLUMBIA MS 6189. SD. $5.98.

Issued to commemorate Wallfording Riegger’s twenty-fifth birthday, this record presents works selected from highly contrasting periods in his career. The Trio was written in 1920 and reminds one much of Fauré: its idiom is classi- cally inspired, sweetly melodic, often exquisitely tender and gentle in expres- sion, but without sentimentality. The quartet dates from 1948 and takes us close to Bartók. It is consistently atonal, forceful, pungent, and aggressive, but with profound reserves of feeling behind it. For both cases the texture of the music—its forms, its build, its relationship to the instruments—is altogether masterly; both works indicate clearly why Wallfording Riegger is one of the major Americans. He could not ask for more sympathetic interpretation than he receives here, and the recording is in harmony with the performance. A.F.


SCHUBERT: Rosamunde, Op. 26; O- verture; Entr’acte after Act II; Echo; overture to the Ballet Music No. 2—See Mendelssohn: Midsum- mer Night’s Dream: Overture.

SCHUMANN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54 +Bach: Concerto for Clavier and Or- chestra, No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052


- MONITOR MC 2050. LP. $1.98.

Richter has made better versions of both works for other companies. In these

bargain-price reissues of recordings proc- essed from inferior Soviet tapes, the pianist and his orchestral playing in the Schumann is shabby and insensitive, with careless attacks, un- sympathetic phrasing, and incredibly poor intonation. Richter’s playing be- gins with characteristic sensitivity, but before very long he starts to hustle along with what appears obvious an- noyance at his inept accompaniment. At the reduced rates, the Bach will pass muster provided one is not too fussy about the niceties of baroque ornamenta- tion and phrasing. Faced by the overlarge orchestra. On the whole, the disc seems to me an unfortunate exploitation of the pianist. H.G.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 11, Op. 103; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in F, Op. 101


- MK-ARTIA 201B. Two LP. $5.98 each.

Shostakovich’s Eleventh Symphony is a huge descriptive affair, filling three LP sides. A sweeping overview of the events of the Revolution of 1905 in some detail. In reviewing earlier recordings of it by Leopold Stokowski and André Cluytens, I suggested that its “program” be taken less than seriously and that underneath all its surface rhetoric and descriptive effects lay a work of genius. That opinion is very difficult to sustain in face of the present performance, which is practically all rhetoric and nothing else.

In reviewing previous records of the Second Symphony, I suggested that the old razzmatazz is beginning to sound a bit tired, and that view is com- pletely borne out by the composer’s own interpretation.

A.F.

SIBELIUS: Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7; Kuolema, Op. 44; Valse triste


+Alfen: Midsummarvaka (Swedish Rhapsody, No. 1, Op. 19)

Mormon Tabernacle Choir (in Finland- ia); Philharmonia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5596. LP. $4.98.
- COLUMBIA MS 6196. SD. $5.98.

These four popular works from Scandi- navia, here issued in an album called “Finlandia,” are all given rather heavy- handed treatment. Ormandy has been far more expressive in earlier recordings of the Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 and Midsummarvaka, while this Finlandia be- comes distorted in a strange version that has the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sing- ing the hymnlike portions of the tone poem. The reproduction, however, is impressive, especially in the well-sepa- rated stereo edition.

P.A.


Suk Trio.

+ SUPRAPHON LVP 302. LP. $5.98.

Smetana’s chamber music is inspired by tragic events in his own life—the two

Quartets by his deafness, and this, his only Trio, by the death of his daughter Franta. aged ten. He was searching for a way to find paths here, but for the most part the music rises above personal feel- ings to achieve heights of beauty and purely musical drama. The work as a whole is immensely attractive, and one wonders why it is not more frequently performed.

The short Elegy by Josef Suk, origi- nally written for small instrumental en- semble without piano, was intended to accompany a tableau celebrating the mythical musical capital of Vyšehrad (also pictured in Smetana’s tone poem of that name). Later, the composer arranged it for violin, cello, and piano, the form in which it has been recorded. In con- trast to Smetana’s heroic conception of Vyšehrad, Suk’s is quiet and contempla- tive.

The Suk Trio, a Czech ensemble com- prising Josef Suk (the composer’s grand- son), violin, Josef Chuchro, cello, and Josef Hála, piano, plays both works in glowing fashion, and the well-balanced reproduction is faithful—considerably better than that of most recent Supra- phon releases I have heard.

P.A.


TCHAIKOVSKY: Pique Dame (high- lights); Eugene Onegin (highlights)

Valeria Heybalova (s). Liza; Melanie Bugarinovich (ms). The Countess: Alex- ander Marinkovich (t1), Hermann (Pique Dame). Valerie Heybalova (s). Tatiana; Drago Staritz (t1), Lenski; Dushan Popovich (b). Onegin (Eugen Onegin). Chorus and Orchestra of the Belgrade Opera, Kreshimir Barovich, cond.

- LONDON 5567. LP. $4.98.
- LONDON OS 25205. SD. $5.98.

A highly pleasurable selection from Lon- don’s complete versions of these two interest- ing operas. The sound is not quite the company’s best, but the Belgrade Opera orchestra is not a choice ensemble (the Onegin Polonaise, perfunctory and ragged, is the one disappointing part on the record). But the singing is all very good. Heybalova is especially fine as Tatiana, with a bright, steady tone and intelligent phrasing; despite a few gusty moments, her passionate rendition of Liza’s scene on the overside is also splen- did. Popovich is in fine, mellow voice for Onegina’s aria, and Staritz puts his lovely lyric tenor to good use. Among the female roles, Bugarinovich’s is a good one; Marinkovich’s is sufficiently beautiful, but he lacks the best of that name). Onegin (Eugen Onegin). Chorus and Orchestra of the Belgrade Opera, Kreshimir Barovich, cond.

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- LONDON OS 25205. SD. $5.98.

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The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66
Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Anatole Fistoulari, cond.
* Richmond BA 42001. Two LP. $3.96.

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake, Op. 20
London Symphony Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond.
* Richmond BA 42003. Two LP. $3.96.

Now reissued on the inexpensive Richmond label, these albums were the first “complete” recordings of Tchaikovsky’s two popular ballets. Actually neither is complete in the strict sense of the word, though each contains the major portions of the evening-long ballets as they are performed today. More extensive versions of the composer’s scores, and more balleteic recorded performances, have appeared since London Records originally released these discs; but if you don’t mind Fistoulari’s tempo—which seem to me excessively fast in some of the movements, great ballet bargains, especially in that their recorded sound is still of very high quality.

P.A.

TRIMBLE: Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales
†Chanter: Nine Epitaphs

Adele Addison, soprano; Robert Conant, harpsichord; Charles Russo, clarinet; Martin Orenstein (in the Trimble); Phyllis Curtin, soprano; F. Ryan Edwards, pianist (in the Chanter).
* Columbia ML 5598. LP. $4.98.
* Columbia MS 6198. SD. $5.98.

Seldom in a long life of record reviewing have I been so utterly beguiled, captivated, seduced, entertained, and generally delighted by a new piece on discs as by Lester Trimble’s “Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales.” The cycle begins with the nature painting in the first lines of the prologue and goes on from there to the portraits of the “verray parfit gentle knyght” and his “yong squier”; the fourth fragment is the wife of Bath’s meditation on “bigamye and octogamye” in the opening portion of her own prologue. The musical setting is neither archaistic nor self-consciously modern, although the harpsichord provides an archaistic tinge; one feels, rather, that the composer has followed no program but that of good sense and good taste, has responded to Chaucer’s magnificent poetry with a rich, subtle, and sensitive flow of music, and, in general, produced one of the real masterpieces of modern American song. Part of this impression is due to the pianist. Miss Addison sounds, like Chaucer’s squier, “as fresh as is the month of May,” and so do the very lively instrumentalists with her. The interpretation is as beautiful as the work which the poet and the composer have provided, and the recording leaves nothing to be desired in either the stereo or mono version.

Before commenting on the Chanter songs one must, unfortunately, observe that Columbia has here reverted to the inexcusable policy of issuing sound cycles without printing their texts in the notes. Trimble does not suffer from this because Chaucer’s text can be found anywhere; but the text of Chanter’s Nine Epitaphs is taken from an obscure book.

Whoever is Who is on

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Love in Bath (an English spa, not a tub) is the pure spirit of Handel, with the inimitable stamp of Beecham. “The world’s wittiest musical peer” (High Fidelity) has arranged 20 arias, dances, and choruses from Handel into a delightful ballet. Beecham wrote the scenario, Gainborough painted the lovely Elizabeth Lindsay portrait which graces the cover. The Royal Philharmonic plays to match.

Angel (S) 35504

March 1961

CIRCLE 6 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

67
by Walter de la Mare. Miss Curtin sings very well, with beautiful tone and fine phrasing, but her enunciation is not clear enough to project the poems as they should be projected. This is doubly regrettable because Theodore Hanley has long been known as one of the finest song writers in the United States, and the Four Fragments is the first recorded example of his work. The nine epitaphs constitute, one gathers, a kind of satirical English Spoon River Anthology. They have been set very simply, deftly, and atmospherically. They would, one is sure, be marvelous if one could understand them. That one cannot understand them is the fault of somebody in the Columbia organization who richly deserves to be spanked. A.F.

VERDI: Rigoletto
Renata Scotto (s), Gilda; Fiorenza Cossotto (ms), Maddalena; Alfredo Kraus (t), The Duke; Ettore Bastianini (b), Rigoletto; Ivo Visco (bs), Sparafucile; et al. Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond.

* MERCURY OL 3112. Three LP. $14.94.
* MERCURY SR 39012. Three SD. $17.94.

Yet another entry in the Rigoletto donnybrook (the second in stereo), and one of the wildest operatic recordings ever made by a major company. It has moments of thundering melodramatic excitement; unfortunately, some of them occur in passages properly reserved for a warm tenderness or resigned sadness.

Let no one accuse any of the participants of niggardliness. This is the most complete Rigoletto (complete, that is, a performance bearing the Ricordi imprint), including some bars usually cut in the Gilda/Duke "Addio"; the duet begins "Pentametri amor," with chorus, but without the repeat called for by the score); and some music in the final scene that is sometimes cut. Most of the directions in the score are followed—for once the baritone adheres to the specification that he not cry out after the abduction of Gilda—though many of the musical ideas of the performance are preserved, particularly with regard to interpolated high notes and holds where none are marked. Indeed, the only omisions of significance occur in the accompanying booklet, which for some reason does not list the singers who take the roles of Monterone, Ceprano, Manullo, Borsa, Countess Ceprano, Giovanna, the Page, or the Usher. I suppose this doesn't matter much, except that the Monterone is quite exceptional, delivering his curse with a plentiful voice and impressive fury.

Gavazzeni's rhythms are not slack, but they are in general a bit slower than customary. There are two notable exceptions: the "Quel'questa o quell'L," which plumps along so rapidly as to be nearly graceless, and the Vendetta duet. The usual practice with this last number is to start rather slowly, quickening the beat steadily to the climax. Gavazzeni leads into the opening bars at a headlong clip, leaving the singers to build their own climax. This would work if the singers were highly skilled at variation of color and volume, but they are not, and the piece is to some extent spent before it is half over.

Bastianini and Scotto both have their problems with this music. The baritone is splendid when dramatic punch is called for—the first scene. the first section of Cortigiani, and most of the last act are fine. He seems unable, however, to scale his vibrant voice down below a mezzo-forte, or to bring much variety of color to it. Consequently, the dialogue with Sparafucile is totally lacking in atmosphere: the long second-scene duet with Gilda is lost in shouting; the cantabile of Cortigiani ("Miei signori, pieta") is rough; and many individual lines, such as "Ma in altr'occhio, qui mi veggio" (in the "Pari siano") are treated as so many lumps of notes to be hacked over. Scotto, too, is much too muscular, and frequently sounds edgy and short of breath, though it is good to hear a Gilda who can stand up during the Vendetta duet and the last-act ensembles.

The best of the cast is, in fact, a new tenor, Alfredo Kraus. Reports of his European engagements had certainly not prepared me for the sort of singing heard here; it may be that his voice carries less well than it would seem. For Mercury, however, he is a magnificent Duke, the most elegant on records since Dino Borgioli on the wonderful old Columbia set. His voice is a true lyric tenor, with no hint of the robusto on one hand, or the tenorino on the other. It is steady and resonant throughout its range, blessed with a lovely quality. Kraus seems quite a sensitive and lively artist, and fills his work with a measure of grace otherwise missing from this production. He completes a ringing D flat at the end of his duet with Gilda, and to a beautiful, forward D
natural to round off the "Possente amor." His "Purim" variations is melilngly done, and he leads the Quartet in memorable fashion. Altogether, a most exciting disc debut (or rather, recorded opera debut, for Kraus, who is himself Spanish, has recorded Spanish music for Montilla)—this may be the tenor we have needed to do justice to Bellini and Donizetti.

Fiorenza Cossotto is an excellent Maddalena. Ivo Volpe a solid, but not extraordinary, Sparafucile. The chorus sings well, and the orchestra does its job; I have a hunch that some of Guazzetti's tempos are due to consideration for his rather stiff-voiced baritone and soprano, though even Kraus's "La donna è mobile" is a bit more deliberate than usual. (I have not checked the metronome markings.) Mercury's sound is, to my ears, quite fine, the orchestra being particularly well captured. It is certainly superior to its only stereo competition (Columbia), even if it once or twice seems to place the singer in one speaker, the orchestra in the other. The mono edition is perfectly adequate, but the stereo has considerably more impact. All in all, an interesting, frequently imposing release, though far from the most polished of performances. Now come on, Mercury; who sings Monterone?

C.L.O.

VIVALDI: Concertos for Violin and Strings, Op. 8, Nos. 1-4 ("The Four Seasons")

Anshel Brusilow, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
- Columbia ML 5595. LP. $4.98.
- Columbia MS 6195. SD. $5.98.

Soloists; New York Sinfonietta, Max Goberman, cond.

Wolfgang Schneiderhan, violin; Festival Strings Lucerne, Rudolf Baumgartner, cond.
- Archiv ARC 3141. LP. $5.98.
- Archiv ARC 73141. SD. $6.98.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 54.

WALTON: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

†Lalo: Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21

Zino Francescatti, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (in the Walton); New York Philharmonic, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. (in the Lalo).
- Columbia ML 5601. LP. $4.98.
- Columbia MS 6201. SD. $5.98.

It is difficult to understand why the Walton is not the most popular of modern violin concertos. It has everything—romantic long lines, softly caressing orchestral color, tunes, a big symphonic structure, and plenty of display for the soloist. Yet one never hears a live performance of it and this is its only extant recording, at least in the United States. Perhaps Francescatti's splendid performance and the excellent recording which Columbia's engineers have given it here will help to establish the concerto as it deserves to be established.

A monophonic version of the Lalo on the other side, long a specialty of the house of Francescatti, has been in the record catalogues for some years. Now we can have it in stereo too.

A.F.

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MUSIC OF HANDEL

Alcina: Torna a vagheggiai and Ombre pallide (also includes excerpts from Esther, Jephtha and Rodrigo).

Stereo SOL-60001

Miss Sutherland also appears as a Guest Artist in London's Fledermaus Gala recording, singing Il Bacio.

Stereo OSA-1319 (3 records)

MONO A-4347

CIRCLE 56 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

FERNAND ANSEAU: Recital


Fernand Anseau, tenor; Tikkin Servais, baritone (in the Auber); Orchestra.
- ROCOCO R 26. LP. $5.95.

Fernand Anseau was what could honestly be described as an exemplary singer. The tone was steady and brilliant, evenly modulated from a melting half-voice to a heroic forte. The diction was simply perfect, the attack true, the temperament strong but never exaggerated or out of good taste. In a career that spanned twenty-seven years, he sang roles ranging from the French lyric repertoire to the early Wagner operas.

The recordings here are all taken from the period of Anseau’s greatest vocal prowess; they are acoustical, except for the early electrical recording of the Mute of Portici number. Every excerpt here is distinguished by Anseau’s amplitude of voice and soundness of musical and stylistic instinct, and no one interested in good singing will want to be without his exquisitely turned “Le Rêve,” the trio Werther excerpts, or the L’Africaine and Carmen arias. In the lively Auber duet he is rousingly abetted by the baritone Servais. The quality of the recording is surprisingly good, with a minimum of surface noise, and the voice well forward.

C.L.O.

DIMITRI BASHIKIROV: Piano Recital


Dimitri Bashkirov, piano.
- MK-AKTA 1531. LP. $5.98.

A pupil of the noted Soviet piano pedagogue Alexander Goldenweiser, Caucasian-born Dimitri Bashkirov was the twenty-five-year-old winner of the Marguerite Long Prize in Paris in 1956. Since that time he has concertized widely, although it was not until this winter that he appeared in the United States. To judge from the present disc, Mr. Bashkirov is definitely a “pianistic” pianist. His treatment of the instrument stresses personal charm and exquisite sound. But while this artist places emphasis on whether a given effect will sound aesthetically convincing when played on the piano, he appears to be an admirable musician who varies his personal style according to the material.

Thus, Liszt’s Valse oubliée No. 2 has piquant charm and silvery shimmer. The group of Prokofiev Visions fugitives is given with a sharp “Policeman’s Whistle” exactitude of rhythm, and the Scriabin has an appropriate langueur in contrast to the more mellifluous, singing quality on evidence in the Schumann Romance.

The record also contains the only available version of Schumann’s outstanding Intermezzi (the catalogue in a performance by Grant Johannesen). Here Mr. Bashkirov is not quite as successful as he is in the other selections. For one thing, the double-dotted notes in the first piece are not quite as precise as they could be, the pianist overlooks some of the attacca markings linking the pieces, and he occasionally exaggerates the tempo, especially at points where Schumann has indicated sharp, and sudden, contrasts between loud and soft. Also, some of the pianissimos have a dry, “choked-off” quality, as if the pianist were producing them with the soft pedal instead of with his fingers. (But this effect might also be due to distant microphone placement; an example occurs in the alternativa section of the last intermezzo.) In spite of these flaws, however, this performance does do justice to one of Schumann’s very finest, and inexplicably neglected, compositions, and it is good to have a recording of the work available once more.

The sound is a bit congested in spots, but otherwise is satisfactory.

H.G.

INGE BORKH: Operatic Arias

Dvořák: Rusalka: Song to the Moon. Gluck: Alceste: Divinités du Styx. Mas-
Fennell's Rhythm: "Marches for Orchestra"


Eastman-Rochester "Pops" Orchestra, Frederick Fennell, cond.
- • MERCURY MG 50271. LP. $4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90271. SD. $5.98.

Fennell's pops-orchestral releases have been fewer and generally less consequential than those in his deservedly acclaimed Eastman Wind Ensemble series but the present March program is so formidably recorded—in blazing monophony as well as more broadspread, if almost too realistic stereo—that it is sure to achieve popularity as a sonic spectacle. Indeed it may be overspectacular for some tastes (I should prefer more warmth and less razor-sharpness), yet the sensational engineering further galvanizes the nervous verve of Fennell's readings of the familiar

Beethoven, Schubert, and Sibelius marches in particular, while it gives the super-Elginian Orb and Sceptre overwhelming weight and power. Definitely not a safe choice for apartment dwellers, this will tempt less inhibited audiophiles to crash new sound barriers. R.D.D.

ELISABETH RETHBERG: Recital


Elisabeth Rethberg, soprano; Orchestra.
- • Asco A 115. LP. $3.98.

This disc makes an excellent companion to Camden's "Art of Elisabeth Rethberg"; between the two, we get a fine cross section of the famous soprano's art. Everything here is done with the bright, even tone that characterized her singing at its best. While a bit more dark shading might be desired in some of the Italian arias (I find her later Victor electricals more satisfying in this respect), there could hardly be any improvement in her singing of the three Mozart arias or the two by Wagner on this record, or in her version of Saffi's song from Ziegenber-

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baron. Her impeccable musicianship and instinct for appropriate style are very much in evidence in all these selections. The sound, considering the acoustic origin, is satisfactory.

**AKSEL SCHIÖTZ: Recital**

Schubert: *Liesbesbotschaft; Ganymed; Der Wanderer an den Mond; An die Laute. Bellman: *Fredeman's Epistles: No. 25, Blasen nu allu; No. 30, Drick ur ditte glas; No. 31, Opp. Amarantus: Wolf: *Hab auf dein blones Haupt; Der Tumbour; Verschwiegene Liebe; Auf dem grünen Balkon; Anakreons Grab. Brahms: *An die Nachtigall; Salzamander; Im Waldeinsamkeit; Mein Mēdel hat einen Rosenmund.

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**LIANG TSAI-PING: "China's Instrumental Heritage"**

**Maurice Sharp, flute; Cleveland Sinfonietta, Louis Lane, cond.**

*High Fidelity* MAGAZINE

**CIRCLE 91 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**
The appeal of Oriental music—as with Oriental art—lies in a spare beauty of line rather than in chromatic opulence. Yet, on the emotional plane, the impact of an understated, time-polished theme plucked out on the zitherlike Cheng can be as devastating as the Berlioz Requiem in full cry. Lyrichord’s third release in the realm of Chinese instrumental music features, in addition to the Cheng, the Hsiao, or bamboo flute; the gourdlike Sheng; the Hsuan, resembling an ocarina; and the fiddelike Nan-Hu. The music is exotic, but lovely. Anyone willing to meet the fascinating world of the Orient halfway will be thoroughly beguiled by Wild Goose Alighting on the Sandy Shore, the haunting Farewell, and the 1,300-year-old Spring River in the Flower Moonlight. Professor Liang and his fellow musicians provide definitive performances, and the reproduction is superb. O.B.B.

EVA TURNER: Operatic Arias


Eva Turner, soprano; Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham and Stanford Robinson, cond.

* ANGEL COLC 114. LP. $5.98.

Eva Turner’s large, screechy voice is well caught here, and delivers its knockout punch in the Turandot excerpt—no one would care to belittle the record, even presuming his ability to get up off the floor at its end. By and large, though, she strikes me as an amazingly uninteresting performer, with almost no sense of color or proportion, still less of character or even mood projection. Her only noticeable effort in these directions here is the dismaying sob at the conclusion of “Vissi d’arte.”

I don’t doubt that the voice and temperament must have made considerable impact in the opera house; singers do not achieve Turneresque reputations with a “good field, no hit” supply of endowment. But on records, in these unheard selections? Well . . .

It should be observed that Angel has done its usual painstaking job on the processing and on the accompanying literature; seven arias for nearly six dollars is a dubious bargain, though.

C.L.O.

ROGER VOISIN and JOHN RHEA: Music for Trumpet and Orchestra, Vol. 3

Roger Voisin, John Rhea, trumpets; Kapp Sinfonietta, Emanuel Vardi, cond.

* * KAPP KC 9050. SD. $5.98.

Fanciers of the prince of brass instruments will find here more of the admirable playing we have come to expect of Roger Voisin, first trumpeter of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In an attempt to build up a repertory where very little exists Mr. Voisin and his colleagues have had recourse to arrangements. Of the ten works on this disc, at least seven—by John Stanley (1713-1786), Purcell, Legrenzi, Telemann, and Daquin—are either transcriptions from keyboard pieces or highly doctored editings. Purcell’s Overture to the Duke of Gloucester’s Birthday Ode seems not to have been tampered with much; it is a delightful piece, with an animated, dance section in which telling and idiomatic use is made of the trumpet. The other two genuine trumpet pieces are interesting curiosities. One is a march for three trumpets and timpani by C. P. E. Bach and the other a piece for seven trumpets and timpani by J. E. Altenburg, an eighteenth-century trumpeter who wrote a valuable treatise on his instrument. Good sound.

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
In Good King Arthur’s Days

“Camelot.” Original Cast Recording. Columbia KOL 5620, $5.98 (LP); KOS 2031, $6.98 (SD).

After listening to Columbia’s original cast recording of Camelot, I simply cannot reconcile myself to the generally negative reviews this musical received. Certainly the music does not strike me as the inept, feeble collection of tunes so many critics alleged it to be. If they expected Loewe to produce a score superior to that he provided for My Fair Lady, or for that matter even to equal it, that surely was whistling in the dark. The music for a My Fair Lady or for a Show Boat comes along once in a lifetime, and one should be thankful that both these scores came in our lifetime.

In my opinion, Loewe has written in Camelot a gay and altogether charming collection of melodies, distinguished for the elegance of the writing, for the tremendous variety of mood and pace the composer achieved, and for his refusal to succumb to the temptation, which would have been very easy, to introduce “period” music into his score. What a relief ... not a madrigal, or even the suggestion of one, included. Although Lerner’s lyrics seem to me to be in general prosaic or even pedestrian, I will go on record as saying that I think Loewe’s score quite the best written for a musical since My Fair Lady; I ask for nothing better.

In a cast which is a little short of vocal strength, the always dependable Julie Andrews must carry most of the load. Needless to say, she does so to perfection. Most of the time she sings like an angel (or as I assume angels sing) and always sounds like the lady Queen Guinevere should be. Loewe has provided her with some very graceful songs, particularly The Simple Joys of Maidenhood, I Loved You Once in Silence, and the lightly tripping Then You May Take Me to the Fair, in which she is utterly captivating. Her vis-à-vis Richard Burton is a mu-
sical comedy lead in the Rex Harrison tradition, but Burton can muster up more voice than Harrison. What’s more, in How To Handle a Woman he proves that he knows how to use it, as he does also in I Wonder What the King Is Doing Tonight, which he fills with a sort of questing melancholy. Marjorie Smith doesn’t really do justice to a particularly lovely Loewe number, Follow Me, but Robert Goulet makes a manly Lancelot and in If Ever I Would Leave You shows himself to be a baritone of some considerable stature.

I was also particularly attracted by the brief orchestral interlude Parade, which has a touch of Prokofiev about it that is decidedly piquant. (I might add that this appears on the printed program as being on Side 1, whereas it is on Side 2 of my review copy—an error which may have been rectified in later pressings.) Sonically, Columbia has lavished considerable care on both versions; the monophonic edition is excellent, but the stereo, with a reasonable exploitation of movement, is even better. This disc is also one of Columbia’s best albums from the point of view of visual appeal, with its double-fold album, excellent art work, fine photographs (in color) of several striking stage settings, and portraits of the cast.

J.F.I.

An Intimate Revue —
And Nothing’s Sacred


Julius Monk, entrepreneur.

With intimate revues no longer capable of making the grade on Broadway, the task of keeping this once popular form of entertainment alive and available to the public seems to have devolved upon Julius Monk. Since 1956, Monk, an intrepid entrepreneur and colorful Manhattan Boniface, has presented for the pleasure of habitués of his Off-Broadway bistro a series of postprandial entertainments, which in form and substance have all been revues intimes. The first three revues were housed in The Playgoers, which Monk once described as a subterranean passage and street level bar, then situated at 51st Street and Sixth Avenue. In 1958, Monk acquired the one-time town house of John Wanamaker on West 56th Street, and since then his charades have been presented there, either at Upstairs at the Downstairs or Downstairs at the Upstairs (though how one makes certain which of these rendezvous is which has been something of a mystery). Over the years, a number of artists whose names are now more familiar to the public than they were when they first appeared under the Monk banner have appeared in these revues. Among the more illustrious alumni are Dody Goodman, Ronny Graham, Annie Ross, Ellen Hanley, Blossom Dearie, Nancy Dussault, and Tammy Grimes, all of whom have gone on to bigger things.

For Dressed to the Nines, Monk has again assembled a bright and talented cast, building it around veterans Cell Cabot and Gerry Matthews, and has corralled a group of lyricists and composers to provide gay, satirical material and pleasant tunes. The result is a bright, funny, and spirited romp that takes a swipe at everything from teen-age dope addicts to the college crowd at Fort Lauderdale. If you’ve wondered why, as the ad has it, “You’ve been smoking more and enjoying it less,” Gerry Matthews and Mary Louise Wilson give you the answer in Smoke. For Names, Jack Wilson has written an extremely funny lyric, and Miss Wilson indulges in the name dropping with very obvious relish. Radio program sponsors, D. H. Lawrenee, and that tiny town off the Merritt Parkway all serve as butt for the humorous shafts aimed in their direction. In fact, hardly anything is considered sacrosanct, which is just as it should be in an intimate revue.

If Monk continues to present these gambols so successfully (Demi-Dozen, an earlier production, ran for more than five hundred performances), his example may prod some adventurous producer to present them where they really belong, on Broadway. With twin pianists William Roy and Carl Norman nobly providing the necessary musical accompaniment and M-G-M engineers recording the entire program in bright, live sound (including all that audience appreciation), this is an excellent disc of nonparochial entertainment.

J.F.I.
One Gay Hoyden Carries the Show

“The Unsinkable Molly Brown.” Original Cast Recording.
Capitol WAO 1509, $5.98 (LP); SWAO 1509, $6.98 (SD).

Tammy Grimes and cast.

This is just about the most old-fashioned musical to appear on Broadway since the days of George M. Cohan, who, as a matter of fact, might well have written the book, with an assist from David Belasco. Meredith Willson’s score, though not as ancient-sounding, adds up to little more than a rewrite of his music for The Music Man. Yet despite these handicaps the show sounds like wonderful fun, thanks mainly to the presence of a Boston hoyden, Tammy Grimes. Without any previous musical comedy experience, this remarkable artist sings and acts with all the aplomb and command of an Ethel Merman. In fact, Molly Brown is kept aloft only by the extraordinarily vital and versatile performance of this enormously gifted girl.

Two years or so ago, I enthusiastically reviewed her only previous recording, but even that did not prepare me for the devastatingly brilliant work she produces in this otherwise ordinary musical. Miss Grimes is not content to play the role of Molly Brown, a girl from the wrong side of the Denver tracks who has ambitions to become someone of importance, in the usual superficial manner of musical comedy leading ladies. She really lives it, as you may hear in I Ain’t Down Yet, and again later in the wistful wonder of her delight in owning My Own Brass Bed, a number which many singers would turn into something offensively mawkish. As Molly’s career takes a turn upward and she acquires a certain amount of social status, Miss Grimes invests Bea-u-ti-ful People of Denver with a charming insouciance that is entirely in character. The same sort of amused indifference is heard as she sings Bon Jour, where she has an opportunity to display her newly acquired, if rather limited, linguistic talents. And so it continues, with Miss Grimes determined to project every facet of the personality that is Molly Brown.

For a change these days, we have a leading man who can sing, although I find Harve Presnell’s performance of Leadville Johnny Brown rather wooden. (But anyone stacked up against the tremendously vibrant Miss Grimes could suffer this plight.) In any case, Willson has not really given the hero much in the way of songs. I’ll Never Say No is a tediously old-fashioned number, and If I Knew Better, Presnell does, however, rise to the challenge of Leadville Johnny Brown, a soliloquy of some substance. There is practically nothing provided for the remaining members of the cast, although they do their best with the little that comes their way.

Capitol has expended great care on this production, even if it has hardly taken fullest advantage of the stereo possibilities offered. Once again this company has followed its custom of including a separate booklet giving complete details about the careers of everyone associated with the production. This is an excellent innovation and one I would recommend to become general practice.

J.F.I.
ing the confirmed addict's craving for such powerful stimulation. In fact, we don't doubt that he'll fully share the zestful relish with which we suspect Sid Frey assembled this collection.

R.D.D.

"An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May." Mercury OCM 2200, $4.98 (LP).

With these thirty-one-and-half minutes of enerupted sentiment, the team of Nichols and May again prove themselves to be, as they did in their earlier recording Improvisations to Music (Mercury 20376), two of the most creative humorists of today. Three of the sketches, highlights from their current Broadway show, are based on situations at familiarity. The problem is solved, but I doubt that they have ever before been so brilliantly exploited. If you've ever tangled with the telephone company or its operatic conductors, or are the wayward nickel (sorry, dime), then Telephone will hit you until the chuckles hurt. New York residents will readily recognize, in Dick Jockey, the now departed impresario who conducted aftermidnight radio interviews with visiting nonsensists and will relish the current setting of his program. Mother and Son is a six-minute telephone conversation capable of convincing all but the staunchest adherent of the telephone problem (Adultery) is solved, I would leave you to discover for yourselves. Everything adds up to a real feast of genuine humor.

J.F.I.

"I Believe." Mahalia Jackson: Chorus and Orchestra. Johnny Williams, cond. Columbia CL 1549, $3.98 (LP); CS 8149, $4.98 (SD).

Mahalia Jackson is so immersed in the meaning of her songs that the effect of her singing is always inspiring. In this particular collection, a moving statement of her personal credo, her belief in God, she sings with her usual ardent and dramatic conviction. As is customary on her records, she sings with a slightly shortened and chorused, providing a very effective accompaniment, include members of Mahalia Jackson's church. Columbia's sound is faultless, clearly recorded, and the harmony is in one of the most monophonic versions, but it seems to me that Miss Jackson's voice is better delineated on the mono disc.

O.B.B.

"Tambú." Tito Puente and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2257, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2257, $4.98 (SD).

Puente, whom I've known mainly by his hard-driven Latin-dance performances, surprises me with the "pro vocative-percussion" purveyors stiff competition) by the sheer energy and thunderweight of his present showpiece program, topped by an all-percussion Rumba-Timbales, fast and intricate Cuero Pelao, fascinatingly antiphonal Ritual Drum Dance, and vibrant Son Montuno. There are many conventional screaming-brass bits and some pieces of the piece break down in raucous chaos, but there also is a prodigal wealth of original timbres, combinations and arrangements in as dramatically full-bodied and realistic recordings as I've ever heard in a pops disc. The LP has no less sonic impact but there is such tumultuous music making the air spacing and panoramics of stereo are incomparable advantages.

R.D.D.

"Romantique." Capitol Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. Capitol P 854, $4.98 (LP); SP 8542, $5.98 (SD). This is one of Carmen Dragon's quieter excursions into the realm of light classical mood music, which is his most successful. In general, "Romantique" is the appropriate title for the program of concert miniatures he has selected, including delongiova's If Symphonies for Samuel Barber's and the one really substantial piece of music in this concert. The conductor's string arrangements are discreet and tasteful, and make no effort to inflate these little pieces beyond reasonable limits. They are played to perfection by the string section of the Capitol Symphony Orchestra, and the whole project is greatly benefited by the very considerable warmth and crystalline purity of Capitol's recorded sound.

J.F.I.

"Folk Songs of France." Monitor MF 339, $4.98 (LP).

A bright array of songs and dances from French provinces steeped in rich and original folk tradition. Songs sung in the provins of the region and to the accompaniment of frequently heard instruments—like the lute, a flute with three holes—handed down with one hand, and the abuel, a drum played with one stick—these old folk songs still retain the primitive overtones of a popular art not yet dead. High spots of the record are the tender Magnili from Provence, a droll version of Mon père m'a donné un mari from Champagne, and a lovely Aguer Maria (Ave Maria) from Pays Basque. Texts and translations are enclosed, and jacket notes sketching the history of each song lend added interest.

O.B.B.

"Perscussion Orientale." David Carroll and His Orchestra. Mercury PPS 2002, $4.98 (LP); PPS 6002, $5.98 (SD). As his first release ("Latin Percussion Orientale") which seemed completely successful, Leisure's materials may have little ethnic authenticity, but they rise well above the usual pseudoexotic and "spectacular percussion" lack of affectation (in performance as well as scoring), their interpretive verse, and of course by the crystalline quality of their recording. The present dance band divertissement on the Ballet Egyptien, In a Persian Market, Saint-Saens Bucchaneur, Scheherazade, Cui Orientale, Beethoven, Rossini, Haydn, etc., are amusing translations rather than tasteless caricatures; and apart from finger cymbals, sponge-hammered piano strings, bangs, etc., completely odd Bakoula (shell trumpet?), the prime aural attractions are provided by more conventional instruments. The monophonic edition is excellent, the stereo better.

R.D.D.

"Rosie Solves the Swingin' Riddle." Rosemary Clooney; Nelson Riddle and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2265, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2265, $4.98 (SD).

In her two previous recordings for RCA...
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Götterdämmerung!
for sound bugs who love great entertainment

Victor, Miss Clooney, usually one of the most unruffled of vocalists, often seemed to me to sound uncomfortable with the hip arrangements of Bob Thompson and the blatant ones provided by Perez Prado. Only on a song in which she is not such feeling in listening to these two totally swinging performances of some great songs in which the singer is admirably supported by Nelson Riddle and his orchestra. Riddle's ability to keep things interesting and unusual arrangements tailored to fit a singer's individual style has never been more handsomely showcased, and Miss Clooney seems inspired by what he has provided for her. Her simple and honest way of selling a song is admirably displayed in the fine version of "Get Along Without You, Very Well, I By Myself," and April in Paris, in which Riddle's orchestral writing for the Clooney vocal is completely fascinating. As a matter of fact, the entire record is such a joy that I can even forgive Miss Clooney for tampering with Douglas Fairber's original lyric for "Lullaboo Blues." J.F.I.

"Italian Songs and Dances." Monitor MF 345, $4.98 (LP). Moving up and down the Italian peninsula in a whirl of tarantellas, ma-zurkas, wallerquadrilles. Monitor's program is a sparkling and fast-moving one. These are the songs and dances of the people performed in every city and village, in the streets and at home, on every festive occasion. Popular tunes set to lively rhythms, they are easily reflective of the warmth and exuberance found in Italian folk music. O.B.B.

"The Scots Guards at the Opera." Regimental Band of the Scots Guards, Lt. Col. S. Rhodes, cond. Angel 35789, $4.98 (LP); S 35789, $3.98 (SD). It's surprising how good such familiar opera overtures as Zampa, Cenerentola, Pique Dame, Orpheus in the Underworld, Mignon, and Barber of Seville can sound in expertly scored transcriptions, at least when these are played by an ensemble as large and skilled as the forty-four-man Scots Guards Band. Interpretatively these performances may be a bit routine, but sonically they are delightfully piquant as well as impressively sonorous. They are impeccably recorded in both monophony and stereo, but of course enjoy a more appropriate openness in the latter. R.D.D.

"Tonight in Person." The Limeliters. RCA Victor LPM 2272, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2272, $4.98 (SD). The Limeliters (who after a successful record debut for Elektra have now switched their allegiance to RCA Victor) are a trio of artists who obviously have a tremendous potential. Whether this potential will ever be realized depends mainly on their ability to develop more individual manner of handling their material, both vocally and stylistically, than they now possess. Until this is achieved they will continue to sound like The Weavers and to resemble The Kingston Trio in the manner of presentation. Since they are so successful with their folk-orientated versions of The Far Side of the Hill, Seven Daf-fodils, and Molly Malone, it is evident that they do not need to fall back on the glit of commercialism and the too hearty attempts at humor that disfigure some of their songs here. The recording comes from a live performance at Hollywood's Ash Grove, where the trio's performances, on this evening at least, were received with boisterous acclaim by the audience. J.F.I.

“Written in the Stars," Dick Jacobs and His Orchestra. Coral 757339, $4.98 (SD). This suite of twelve orchestral vignettes typifying the signs of the zodiac is the work of Robert McKeen, who according to the liner notes writes not only serious music but also double entendre (sic!) songs for Elsa Lanchester. His Zodiac Suite seems to hit neither of these categories, being a series of short mood pieces that are long on pretty melodies but rather deficient in character and originality. This is pleasant, light listening; however, with an admixture of music from Dick Jacobs' artful and sonically imaginative arrangements. This is easily one of the best examples of Coral's stereo engineering I've heard. It presents the orchestra in perfect balance, with adequate but not overemphasized directionality and in a sound clean as a whistle and smooth as velvet. J.F.I.

"Wandering with the Obernkirchen Children's Choir." Edith Mueller, cond. Angel 35839, $4.98 (LP); 35839, $3.98 (SD). With considerable charm, the Obernkirchen Children's Choir present a program of traditional and children's songs. They sing with a purity and fullness of tone quality that is all loveliness, and a skilful use of choral effects enhances their performance. My only criticism is that conductor Edith Mueller chooses to sing inevitably the same type of song —always in the upper ranges and always Alpine-sounding. The same dynamic level is maintained and the choice of voices. A venture into a more varied repertory with an occasional dramatic entry would help dispel this monotony. The stereo version emphasizes to the crystalline qualities of the recording with finer, brighter sound than its monophonic counterpart. O.B.B.

"Brass Band Goes Hollywood." Henry Jerome and His Orchestra. Decca DL 74085, $4.98 (SD). As in his earlier "Brass Band" (DL 74056), Jerome's skilled techniques for antiphonies between open (left) and muted (right) brass choirs, and the extreme stereophonic recording makes the most of the contrast-and-combination potentialities, as well as of some fine growing trombone pedal tones, Donald Butterfield's tuba contributions, and the glitter of an effective chime-linking centered rhythm-percussion section. The program itself is devoted to film score hits, which seldom have sounded as excitingly sonorous as they do here. The modulation level, however, is far too high for comfort and must be drastically lowered in playback for one to relish these varicolored timbres at their best. R.D.D.

"Face to Face." Pete Martin interviews great entertainers. Decca DXD 166, $4.98 (2 LP). The features that meet here are those of a dozen great people in show business and that of the Saturday Evening Post's Pete Martin interviewing each with a microphone, a much better one with a pen.
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March 1961
In these brief interviews, actually carefully screened excerpts from lengthier conversations Martin held while gathering material for his Post articles, the star's farewell to Edmundo to comment on some aspect of show business. For me the most interesting sequences were Mary Martin's account of how she got her start, how Crosby and Como's opinions of today's pop singers, Hope's concern for the rising comedians, and Danny Kaye's affectionate tale of his friendship with Carroll.

By the merest coincidence, all these stars record for Decca, which has retrieved from its vaults recordings made by Decca long ago. Some stars that well have been permitted to gather a little more dust, while others will be as welcome today as they were when original issued. Among the latter are: Danny Kaye's delightfully demented The Lobby Number, Hope and Crosby in Road to Morocco, and Hope with Shirley Ross in their original version of Thanks for the Memory. The rest seem like very small beer these days.

"Banjos Back in Town." The Banjo Barons, Jimmy Carroll, cond. Columbia LP $3.98 (LP); CS 3831, $4.98 (SD).

Old-time tune-favorites are so often fancied-up or percussively atomized nowadays that it is refreshing to hear Carroll's frankly corny treatments dominated by two or three lusty banjo strummers. To be sure, an electric organ has atmospherically snuck in, but it's pretty well drowned by the rest of the energetic little orchestra, which also includes, appropriately, what sound to me like kazoo. These kazoo players here include no fewer than thirty-six tunes (of the Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie and Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Re genera) and they never have been packed with more rowdy gusto. The more cleanly focused LP edition is less coarse-toned, if also less expansive, than the SD, but in either case be sure to turn the volume way down in playback or the closely miked overamplified banjo explosions are likely to burst your eardrums.

R.D.D.

"On the Swingin' Side." Vic Damone; Orchestra, Jack Marshall, cond. Columbia CL 1573, $3.98 (LP); CS 3833, $4.98 (SD).

Two of the most somnolent of today's pop singers tried to blossom forth as addicts of vocal swing recently, though neither Perry Como nor Dean Martin could really make it. Now Vic Damone tries to make the same transition, and though he is perhaps a little nearer the mark, his is not a completely successful venture either. When, as in Falling in Love with or Swingin' Down the Lane, Damone establishes a free-swinging feel that carries it throughout, he is pretty convincing; but too often he seems to slip back, perhaps subconsciously, into his more accustomed role. In several cases he was up against an impossible task, I think, for neither Speak Low nor Deep Purple lends itself to any sort of swinging manipulation, not even by Ella Fitzgerald. Presumably the arrangements are by conductor Jack Marshall, since they carry the stamp of his usual busy style. But any conductor can serve as an admirable prop to the Damone voice, which, on this occasion, is in excellent shape.

J.F.I.

"How To Bowl Your Best." Joe Wilman.

Epic LB 2700, $3.98 (LP).

1946 Champion and ABC Hall of Fame Wilman doesn't try to make it seem easy: bowling is a pretty serious business and his pupils will sweat hard as he goads them on through endless drills in fundamental foot- and arm-work. But his procedure seems at least plausible—that the novice bowler willing to follow directions, and indifferent to looking ridiculous as he practices swing his fingers, actually can improve his game by home study with a phonograph record. As a non-kegler, however, it all sounds to me far more work than play.

R.D.D.

"Great Music from European Operettas." Halina Mickiewicz; Polish, Radio Orchestra, Stefan Rachon, cond. Bruno 50165, $3.98 (LP).

These are such indifferent performances of the operetta music and they are offered in such dismal sound that my interest was neither aroused by the familiar nor interested by the more obscure excerpts. Only the two arias from Malutin's operetta Unquiet Happiness are sung through sung by Krystyna Bodalska, held in top form. Completing this curious assortment of music are several coloratura show stoppers, Arif's Polka from Dell'Aqua's Vilanelle, Benedetto Carrere's Lui L'amoro and La Capinera among them, all sung in Polish by Halina Mickiewicz, purportedly "The Nightingale of Warsaw." Chivalry demands silence.

J.F.I.

"Tenderloin." Original cast recording. Capitol WAO 1492, $5.98 (LP); SWAO 1492, $6.98 (SD).

Having experience in Fiorello the cause of The Little Flower in his attempt to clean up New York politics, the team of Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick now take up the cudgels in support of the late Dr. Brock's crusade to remove the iniquitous Tenderloin district from the face of New York City. This begins to look like a flamboyant case of escapism which might, heaven forbid, involve them in musicals on Samuel Seabury or Joseph McCarthy. Unfortunately, Dr. Brock has not proved the inspiration that La Guli was to composer or lyricist. Although Bock's score contains a few good tunes—notably The Picture of Happiness and Good Clean Fire—it is not a very good one, and it seems to me that Harnick has fallen down rather badly in his lyrics.

Most of the better songs fall to the men in the cast, and both Maurice Evans, making his American debut in a musical, and Ron Husmann, a refugee from Fiorello, make the most of them. In voice and acting Evans is very much like Marty Green—which is to say that the voice is serviceable and used very knowledgeably. In view of the importance of the ladies in the plot, they seem to have been shortchanged. Only Wynn Murray and Eileen Rodgers are given a solo apiece; and since neither song makes much of an impression (the fault of it lies less in the score and should be unfair to judge them by these efforts. LP and SD are very similar. J.F.I.

"A Bundle of Bongos." Willie Rodriguez; The International All-Stars. Grand Award GA 33-421, $3.98 (LP); GA 253 SD, $4.98 (SD).

Crest-riding Command evidently has decided that its lower-priced alter-ego label, Grand Award, warrants a "Provocative/Persuasive" series too, and many of the same instrumentalists, including here Billy Rodriguez, are no less sensationally and stereotypically recorded in the present strenuous batch of cha-chas, mambos, sambas, and rhumbas. As superficial set has been set forth in too many racous, but the best of them communicate their gusto to listeners only scarcely less effectively than to avaid dancers. Regardless, the music here, more than most as impressive, sonically, in everything save the stereo version's spaced anticipations.

R.D.D.

"Blazing Latin Brass," Nick Perito and His Orchestra. United Artists WWS 8150, $5.98 (SD).

Newest and gaudiest of all the current sensationalist series, United Artists' also boasts the most inspired of title slogans, "Wall-to-Wall Sound," an effect achieved by the use of almost every recording technique known to modern engineers. There is a deliberate exploitation of intentionally wide separation and channel switching, and the listener who does not object to thirty-five minutes of almost continuous head-swiveling will find this a feast of sound. Whether the unusual sounds that the team summon from their prepared pianos will be musical will be a matter of personal taste. One can hardly object to their "overachievement," since the original is written expressly to demonstrate their sound theories, but the well-known standards take a severe beating at the hands of these dynamic pianists. The double fold album is handsome, the liner notes refreshingly frank both as to the recording techniques and the manner in which the pianists achieve the immensely variable sounds. The question is exactly how the latter should emerge from your speakers.

J.F.I.

"Ireland, My Ireland." Eileen Donaghy; Orchestra. Epic LP 18004, $3.98 (LP).

Miss Donaghy possesses a bright, fresh voice and, in its flaws, she is incomparable. She could well be the soprano equivalent of the famed "Irish tenor." Girl with the Brogue, Honeys of Donegal, and Glenwhilly stand out in an unpretentious, unhackneyed array of songs. Avoiding both burlesque and bathos, Miss Donaghy's recital should raise an echo in any displaced Irish soul.

O.B.B.

High Fidelity Magazine
"Patachou Sings Hit Songs from Hit Broadway Shows in French and English." Patachou; Jo Basile; His Accordion and Orchestra. Audio Fidelity AFSD 5948, $6.95 (SD).

Patachou's program of a dozen Franco-American comedy songs is an enterprising venture, but one that is only partially successful. The French side, which includes four of the best songs from 'Irma La Douce,' is a complete joy, while the American side is only intermittently pleasurable. The fault lies mainly with her choice of songs, which—though all excellent numbers—are not particularly well suited to her style. Her voice is too heavy for so lighthearted a song as 'I Could Have Danced All Night,' and so wistful a number as 'Hello, Young Lovers;' and her version of 'Just in Time' lacks the lilt necessary to bring this song to life. Her most successful efforts are reserved for a sardonic account of 'Mock the Knife,' and a quite charming version of 'I Could Write a Book.' J.F.I.

"Game Calling in Hi-Fi," Vol. 1. Russ Caude, caller; Art Mercier, narrator. Mercury GC 100, $4.98 (LP). The most singular and specialized instruction record yet, but much more impressive (to non-Nimrodian listeners at least) for its raucously realistic "calls" for fox and coyote, crow and hawk, squirrels, geese, and ducks of both the pudder and diver species than for its somewhat high-powered and overdramatized narration. Perhaps actual hunters will better relish the Mercier pep talks on how to kill wildlife more efficiently and extensively; my own sympathies are all with the hapless animals and nuns now at the mercy of today's technologies. R.D.D.

"Swingin' Spirituals." Delta Rhythm Boys. Coral CRL 57358, $3.98 (LP); CRL 757358, $4.98 (SD).

The appeal of these souped-up spirituals will vary with the tastes of the individual listener. Suffice it to say that the Delta Rhythm Boys bring their customary tight harmonies and free-wheeling style to bear upon the likes of 'Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho and The Old Ark's A-Moverin.' The results are jazzy rather than reverent—which seems precisely what the group intended. Excellent sound, with the neatly separated studio edition placing the Delta Rhythm Boys in their customary squad-front formation. O.B.B.

"The Exciting Eloise Trio." Decca DL 74077, $4.98 (SD).

Eloise Lewis and her two vocal sidemen, Bucky and Bert, swing their way through eleven exemplars of Caribbean song, ranging from easygoing calypso to torrid cha-chas. The trio keeps a collective weather eye on mainland audiences. As a result, their style is closer to New York than to Kingston: however, they command their material well enough to adapt it without deforming it. Marianne, for example, emerges in a fast, low-down arrangement that barely relates to the calypso-type original. Yellow Bird and Jamaica Farewell display still other facets of this versatile, skilled, and highly attractive group. Decca's sound is warm and polished. O.B.B.

"The Shearing Touch." George Shearing, piano; String Choir, Billy May, cond. Capitol ST 1472, $4.98 (SD).

Although Billy May's string arrangements are full of treacle, George Shearing is always in superb form. It is not easy to single out any one number for special commendation, but I particularly liked his diaphanous treatment of 'Misty,' his rollicking, humorous statement of 'Honeysuckle Rose,' and the lightly jazz-inflected version of 'Like Young.' In the last the string choir suddenly comes to life in an equally brilliant effort, and the unnaminess of musical ideas produces what is probably the finest band on the record. J.F.I.

"Spectacular Harps." Robert Maxwell, His Harps and His Orchestra. M-G-M E 3836, $3.98 (LP); SE 3836. $4.98 (SD).

The glittering but overclose and sharp recording, the extremely high modulation level, and the exaggerated stereosisms here are characteristic of the whole new M-G-M "spectacular" series (which also devotes a disc each to accordions, brass, percussion, and harmonicas). My main objection, however, is to the glassy unnaturalness of the sonics than to the fanciness of the scoring, in which harps are used more like super-guitars and glockenspiels than themselves. When Maxwell relaxes a bit, as he does in his own more songful 'Ebb Tide' and 'Chopin in the Pines,' or swings with verve in his jumping arrangement of 'Little David Play on Your Harp,' there is less meaningless juggling and a lot more real musical interest. R.D.D.

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CIRCLE 7 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
Count Basie, Joe Williams: "Just the Blues." Roulette 52054, $3.98 (LP); S 52054, $4.98 (SD).
No one else can tease the blues from a piano with the sly effectiveness of Count Basie, but lately he has rationed his blues solos more than reason would seem to demand. Here he makes up for this with solo spots on almost every selection. And his band shakes the stiffness out of its muscles in these pieces, too, sneaking and sliding around with cunning effect both in ensembles and solos. Even Joe Williams, a rather wooden singer, warms up occasionally, notably on Mean Old Woman. His performance is proof that the best of everything from Williams, Basie, and the band. Williams is at his worst on ballads and fortunately there are only a couple of the sort. But Basie and the band are heard sufficiently—particularly on the first side—to make up for Williams' ubiquitous presence.

Oscar Brown, Jr: "Sin and Soul." Columbia 1377, $3.98 (LP); CS 8377, $4.98 (SD).
Brown is not strictly speaking a jazz performer. However, many of the songs he sings in this remarkable collection of his own compositions come directly from jazz (he has written words to three jazz instrumental pieces, Nat Adderley's Work Song, Bobby Timmons' Dat Dere and Bob Bryant's Sleepy) or draw on some aspect of it. "Being a Negro," Brown remarks in the liner notes, "is not always pleasant but it is vigorous exercise for the soul. The melodies I make up grew out of tunes, rhythms, chants, calls, and cries that have always sung to me. My lyrics are verses about feelings I've felt and scenes I've dug.

And what a wonderful, meaningful mixture he has made of these basic materials! His songs are skillfully drawn vignettes, each with a sharply focused point of view—poignant, ironic, humor- ous or glaringly bitter. He makes especially effective use of street cries and work songs. His humor is Rabelaisian in an essay on the importance of staying "cool."

"Hep" he creates a gentle lullaby that gives dignity and strength to a sentiment that was once expressed mawkishly by Irving Berlin in Russian Lullaby. And he builds a brilliantly chilling and vivid portrayal of a slave auction in Bid 'Em In. As a performer, he projects with tremendous authority, and he is given unusually good accompaniment. The words and the songs in this collection hit the mark square. What is amazing is that most of them do, and that they treat with freshness and honesty themes usually considered only in terms of stereotypes.

Dave Brubeck: "Brubeck à la Mode." Fantasy 3301, $4.98 (LP).
Brubeck's arrangement with Fantasy Records where he is able, apparently, to record with anybody except his regular quartet (which is under contract to Columbia) seems to have a happily relaxing effect on him, as though he were playing for his own kicks instead of trying to impress the Brubeck cult. This time he is heard with two regular members of his quartet (Joe Morello, drums, and Gene Wright, bass) plus clarinetist Bill Smith in a group of airy, swinging originals by Smith. With Morello and Wright providing a tenderly lifting, propulsive foundation, the entire set moves with an infectiously rhythmic quality. Smith plays his clarinet more for the sound and less for the notes; in fact he sometimes gets a pleasantly ripe, seasoned sound, and Brubeck's piano solos are blessed with simplicity and an absence of the pretentiousness that clouds so much of his playing with his own quartet.

Stan Getz and Strings: "Cool Velvet." Verve 68379, $5.98 (SD).
Getz's long stay in Europe appears to have given him a tremendous lift musically. His playing on this disc is so richly serene, so full of calm assurance and strength, that one scarcely recognizes him at times. This is a mood album, but in place of the wispiness that has sometimes characterized his playing, Getz expresses himself with quiet guts. He takes greater advantage of the full range of the tenor saxophone than he used to, occasionally reaching down into its nether regions for a rough-toned, baritone-like grunt to give momentum to a lyrical flight. The accompaniment, however, is the usual big string orchestra business—swoops of violins and trickling harp glissandos. It would smother a less assertive performer than Getz has become. But he manages to rise above it as he goes through a generally well- selected program—Round Midnight, Born to Be Blue, It Never Entered My Mind. However, Whisper Not, which should be right down Getz's alley, is strangely limp.

Freddie Hubbard: "Open Sesame." Blue Note 4040, $4.98 (LP).
Freddie Hubbard is in the forefront of the new school of young jazz trumpeters who combine virtuosity and an essentially melodic solo conception with a gorgeous, word-blown tone that takes advantage of the fact that this is a brass instrument they are playing. For some reason, this disc is split between three pieces that show off Hubbard's prowess splendidly (Side 1) and three on Side 2 which make one realize that he is not yet quite the polished and assured musician that he at first appears to be. He is, however, a magnificent young trumpeter. Clifford Jarvis, who churns up an exuberant stream of excitement that complements Hubbard's buoyant style, is beautiful on the faster selections. The other members of the group are Tina Brooks, an occasionally provocative tenor saxophonist; pianist McCoy Tyner; and Sam Jones, bass.

Franz Jackson and the Original Jazz All-Stars: "A Night at Red Arrow." Pinnacle 103, $4.98 (LP).
There is nothing wrong with traditional jazz. The real problem lies with those who play it and those who pay to hear it. There have been a number of American traditionalists who are capable of overcoming the performance problem. But even this fine group has to bow to modernism. On this disc, which is presumably representative of the band's evenings at the Red Arrow, a club outside Chicago, there are magnificent performances by trumpeter Bob Shoffner and bassist Sam Jones, abetted to an only slightly lesser degree by Jackson on clarinet, and John Thomas, trombone (recorded check by jowl with some of the tiresome comic (?) vocal routines that the customers apparently insist on. But the good portions of this disc are so good that one can easily overlook the trite sections.

I haven't heard a trumpetist develop a solo with the casually moving assurance that sixty-year-old Bob Shoffner shows on Red Arrow Blues since the unaffected days of Louis Armstrong in the Twenties. The man is magnificent all through the set—crisp, clean, un hurried, and exactly right. And Dixon plays the tenor with the driving lift that makes it a marvelously effective rhythm instrument, instead of plodding along with the dull thump common to the young revivalists. There are times when the band has trouble getting together, but once Shoffner takes command; with Dixon pulsing exuberantly under him, it swings irresistibly. Traditional jazz becomes a vivid, vital, current reality. Now if they could get rid of those vocals. The millennium might be with us.

Don Jacoby and the College All-Star Dance Band. M-G-M 3881, $3.98 (LP).
Notice the word "dance" in this band's title. It is important because this seventeen-piece group, representing as many different colleges, is not a show-off band, but to demonstrate that, despite its youth, it can sound just like a Herman Herd or
a Basie Brigade. It is a dance band with jazz colorations but, unlike professional jazz bands making a dance album, this group does not equate dancing with sleepwalking (vide the recorded efforts of Count Basie or Maynard Ferguson). These players have life and spirit and, considering that they were brought together for the first time for this recording, they form a remarkably clean and bright ensemble. This is easily one of the best jazz-tinged dance albums that has come along in quite a while.

Budd Johnson: "And the Four Brass Giants." Riverside 343, $4.98 (LP); 9343, $5.98 (SD).

Although Budd Johnson has been an important contributor to a steady string of consequential jazz groups for more than thirty years, he has managed to remain in relative obscurity (even to many jazz fans) until quite recently. A product of Kansas City in the late Twenties, a member of Louis Armstrong's big band in the early Thirties, the right-hand man in Earl Hines's band from 1935 to 1942, a colleague of Dizzy Gillespie's in the Forties and, last year, one of the standout members of Gil Evans' twelve-piece band, Johnson has been in the jazz vanguard all these years and has constantly made his influence felt. But it is only in the past few years that he has received recognition as a strong and distinctive soloist on tenor saxophone (he also played, with Evans, soprano saxophone). On this disc he has assembled a magnificent brass section (Ray Nance, Clark Terry, Nat Adderley, and Harry Edison), and has written arrangements for this quartet, his tenor saxophone, and a rhythm section that sparkle with vigor and zest. The brass team really roars when it gets together, its individual members are all fascinating soloists, and Johnson himself plays in a clean, surging style that cuts through the accompanying horns like a sharp knife. This is an exciting, swinging group heard in a varied set of arrangements (Nance switches to violin on two of them) that allow everyone to appear in his best light.

Ramsey Lewis Trio: "In Chicago." Argo 671, $3.98 (LP).

The Lewis trio shows more honest, swinging spirit in this set than in any of its earlier discs. Lewis, the pianist, has a light, tickling style that can be worked up into a strong head of steam (Old Devil Moon), and he even ventures to make a direct, forthright attack occasionally (Delilah). But along with this the trio continues to dish out pretentious nonsense (the prime example here is a thing called Folk Ballad), and to resort to such unrecordogenic gimmicks as long hand-drum solos. Still, for that twilight audience that wants something meatier than Liberace but lighter than Brubeck, there is no doubt that Lewis has worked out a highly viable pastiche.

Little Brother Montgomery: "Tasty Blues." Prestige/Bluesville 1012, $4.98 (LP).

Eurreal Montgomery is one of the blues

Continued on page 88
COMING NEXT MONTH . . .

Tenth Anniversary Issue

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A dialogue with the most controversial conductor of the twentieth century.

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Major Armstrong's problem child, coming out of the kinks, now is threatened with a split personality—stereo. What are the prospects?

Confessions of an Ex-Claqueur
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by Charles Fowler

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The Jazz Dilemma
Good-Time Music—or Pure Art?
by John S. Wilson

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Great Recordings of the Decade
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CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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

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

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.  
- RCA Victor FTC 2032. 38 min. $8.95.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92

Symphony of the Air, Leopold Stokowski, cond.  
- United Artists UATC 2215. 34 min. $7.95.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125; Leonore Overture No. 2

Joan Sutherland, soprano; Norma Proctor, contralto; Anton Dermota, tenor; Arnold van Mill, bass; Chorale de Brussel; Choeur de Jeunes de l'Eglise Nationale Vaudoise; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.  
- London LCL 80051. 80 min. $9.95.

Throughout the whole recorded repertoire it would be hard to find a more dramatic Fifth than Reiner's, a more richly romantic Seventh than Stokowski's, or a cooler or more classical Ninth than Ansermet's. And each of these efforts is so powerfully visualized that the listener can find little room for improvement, either because the performers themselves themselves split widely in their evaluations of the earlier stereo disc versions. You'll just have to hear them for yourself to decide whether (for you) Reiner's vigor is exciting or repellent; whether Stokowski's somewhat feminine grace is or isn't beguiling; whether Ansermet's lucidity enhances or minimizes the grandeur of the Ninth.

About the only features here I can be reasonably objective about are the recording characteristics. Somewhat coarse and hollow in the louder passages of the Fifth; purer and more luminous in the other two, although I personally crave greater sonic weight and more of a big auditorium ambience in the Ninth. This last tape has the advantage, however, of eliminating the inner-groove distortions of the too crowded disc sides. Ansermet's performance is also notable for its exceptionally fine vocal quartet; Van Mill is perhaps a bit overexpressive in his solo recitative, but I don't know of any other version. old or new, in which all four voices are as freshly attractive and as well matched in ensemble. And the "filler" overture is one of the most tautly dramatic readings I've ever heard of Leonore No. 2.

**DVORAK:** Symphony No. 4, in G, Op. 88

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.  
- Epic EC 806. 36 min. $7.95.

I may have been unduly kind to Perlea's Teutonically romantic Fourth (on Vox) in my anxiety to win as wide a tape audience as possible for music as endearing as this. In any case, Szell's deservedly famous, far more idiomatically "Czechish" performance completely overshadows Perlea even at his best, and its appearance now provides a Dvořák Fourth that I cannot merely recommend but assert to be quite mandatory for every serious tape library. Not only is the processing ideal, with an absolute minimum of background noise and optimum channel separation, but the smooth expansiveness of the stereo, the airy acoustics, and the luminosity with which the Clevelanders' inspired playing has been captured. Give this first Epic tape release a top technological rating. I stress these sheerly sonic virtues because they are likely to be taken for granted by auditors spellbound by the wondrously songful music itself.

**HAYDN:** Symphonies: No. 94, in G ("Surprise"); No. 101, in D ("Clock")

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.  
- RCA Victor FTC 2030. 47 min. $8.95.

The Frenchman's restraint, lucidity, and piquancy reveal a Haydn considerably different from the more relaxed and expansive "Papa" of Viennese-colored conductors, but his individual approach is one I find invigorating, though—in the Clock Symphony—scarcely as searching as Waldteufel's. The Vienna Philharmonic's vibrant timbres and warm sonorities are revealed here in the unflawed transparency of the original master recording.

**MOZART:** Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, in A, K. 622; Concertos for Horn and Orchestra: in D, K. 412; in E flat, K. 447

Gervase de Peyer, clarinet; Barry Tuckwell, horn; London Symphony Orchestra, Peter Maag, cond.  
- London LCL 80053. 54 min. $7.95.

At last we can supersede the competent but never wholly satisfactory Goodman/Munch Clarinet Concerto taping of 1957 with what is surely the finest version. in performance as well as sound, which has yet appeared in any medium. De Peyer's is a new name to me, but he plays like an angel here, and his own relaxed yet resilient grace is matched to perfection by Maag's tender, appropriately small but sturdy little orchestra, and by the most translucent and air-borne of stereo recordings. Barry Tuckwell's performance in the two horn concertos has many of the same qualities; more romantically suave than Stagliano, he lacks some of the Bostonian's brava; and of course neither he nor Stagliano ever can efface the memory of Dennis Brain's unapproachable monophonic versions. Yet there is ample enchantment here, and De Peyer's work alone is irresistible.

**SAINT-SAENS:** Symphony No. 3, in C minor, Op. 78

Berj Zamochian, organ; Leo Litwin and Bernard Zighera, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.  
- RCA Victor FTC 2029. 34 min. $8.95.

As the enthusiastic author of the liner notes for the disc version of this work, the farthest I can decently go here is to claim that the Philharmonic's taping approaches my memory of the original master tape I heard even more closely than the stereo disc edition. Even after long and close familiarity I can find nothing in the recorded performance that might make me want to revise my initial estimate of it. But it behaves me to state that Paul Affelder (May 1960) and other reviewers have been less unreservedly enthusiastic—some of them noting an excess of half resonance, others finding that the organ and brass tend to overwhelm the strings in the finale, and at least one comparing Munch's performance unfavorably (except in the finale, ironically) with the famous old monophonic one by Toscanini. Fortunately there is an alternative choice: the generally praised Mercury version conducted by Paul Paray with the great Marcel Dupré as organist. And there may be some tape listeners who will still cling to the out-of-print Urania 2-track reel by Swarowsky and Eiter, which remains the most poetic of all, although it is less sensationally stereophonic.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphonies: No. 2, in B flat; No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished")

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond.  
- London LCL 80038. 50 min. $7.95.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 9, in C

London Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.  
- London LCL 80043. 50 min. $7.95.

Münchinger's Unfinished will appeal most...
strongly to listeners of romantic temperament, who are not likely to be disturbed by its somewhat exaggerated tempo and dynamic contrasts. The lovely Viennese playing and warm stereo recording are shown off to even greater advantage in the beautiful "Trotteur Souple." In a first tape edition which in itself makes the whole reel a rewarding investment, Krips' Ninth, however, is a shade more refined than Schubertians only, for it is music of universal appeal. This first tape edition is happily the most engaging and invigorating of all available stereo versions. I long cherished the 1952 monophonic LP by Krips and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, but his newer reading is more mature, more dynamically robust in the imperious finale, and yet—thanks in part to the soundingly expansive stereoism—even more radiant and heart-moving. If you've ever wondered why the work itself, and especially its symphony in C miniaturist of the sort which always set the Hegelian meandering of "Trotteur Souple," don't let this recording pass you by.

VERDI: La forza del destino

Renata Tebaldi (s), Donna Leonora; Mario del Monaco (t), Don Alvaro; Ettore Bastianini (b). Don Carlo: et al. Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome). Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond.

LONDON LOV 90009. Two reels. approx. $85 and 31 min. $25.95 (with libretto).

VERDI: Il Trovatore


LONDON LOR 90005. Two reels. approx. 51 and 77 min. $21.95 (with libretto).

Here are two of the favorite Verdi standards in the extensive London catalogue, both notable for more nearly complete scores than competing versions on discs, and both exhibiting characteristic merits (and defects) of London's star singers and its recording engineering. Technically the shortcomings are few and minor: if we never get the thrill of the more recent Rheingold and Aida, the less markedly stereophonic technology is still sufficient to provide authentic opera house breadth and immediacy.

Although Tebaldi and del Monaco are in fine voice throughout the former, as always, singing beautifully; the latter at least robustly, if with scant refinement), neither brings vivid characterization to his role. The honors go to lesser luminaries: Bastianino and Corena in La Forza; Tozzi in Il Trovatore. Simionato's Preziosilla and Azucena both have been highly praised. But a certain vocal unsteadiness prevents my enjoying them wholeheartedly. Perhaps it is simply musical prejudice which colors my personal reactions to the over-all performances. Il Trovatore only paradoxically approaches full dramatic conviction, it seems to me, whereas the freshness of imagination of the stage and the more marked craftsmanship (on the part of both composer and conductor) hold me spellbound for the full two and three-quarter hours the present reading runs. In the Trovatore, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: one may quibble a bit about details, but these detract only infinitely insignificantly from the force of the music drama itself.

WAGNER: Tristan und Isolde: Isolde's Narrative and Curse: Prelude and Liebestod

Birgit Nilsson (s), Isolde; Grace Hoffman (c). Brangine: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond.

LONDON LOR 90022. 38 min. $7.95.

Pendine's receipt of the just announced complete Tiranrod reels from RCA Victor, the present work gives tape-ophiles their first chance to hear a superb Miss Nilsson. It is no disappointment, for the soloist lives up to her great reputation for both vocal and dramatic virtuosity. In addition, she is given superb support both by the well-contrasted and scarcely less attractive voice of Miss Hoffman and by a sumptuously rich orchestra under the veteran Knappertsbusch. Yet even the tender loveliness of Nilsson's singing in the quieter passages and her magnificently ringing high tones in the climaxes must share honors with the stereoenginnering here, which is true opera house depth as well as lateral spaciousness. As in Das Rheingold, the Wagnerian orchestra is never belittled, yet a more delicate account is not submerged by it. A promising augury for future—and hopefully more extensive—Nilsson and Tristan tapings!

"G. I. Blues," Sound Track Recording with Elvis Presley and the Jordainers. RCA Victor FTP E 70025. $7.95. The one and only Elvis, echo-chambered here to overthesize proportions but more personally-packed than ever, sings a lusty Frankfort Special and the title song, a heavily rocking Blue Suede Shoes and Shoppin' Around, even a quite straightforward Pocketful of Rainbows, in addition to other songs from his current film hit. You may not like him, but it's impossible to deny that he commands a powerful magnetism of a distinctively individual kind.

"The Great Sound of Les Elfgrard." Les Elfgrard and His Orchestra. Columbia CQ 695, 28 min., $6.95. These big-band performances, in broad stereo, have enormous energy, weight, and brilliance. They lumber cumber- somely at their most brassy points, yet for all that they are spun out with a smoothness that is a perfect complement to the inprint on the marchlike Ginger Snap and a sonorous If I Could Be with You One Hour Tonight they are infectiously swinging.

"Hits from the Hills." The Merrill Sta- tion Choir. Epic EN 606, 34 min., $6.95. This somewhat misleading title actually refers not so much to the country-styled music as to the predominance of compositions by Bill Hill (Wagon Wheels, In the Chapel by the Moonlight, etc.) augmented by Percy Johnson and a richer You're the Only Star. But what gives these lightweight materials real distinction is the charming and graceful singing of the ensemble, buoyant accompaniments. Expansively and brightly recorded, in rather close miking, these variations are a far better "sing along" program than most issued specifically for that purpose.

"Soul of Flamenco.": Sabicas and En- semble. ARC Paramount ATC 817, 39 min., $7.95. Sabicas is incapable, I think, of ever producing an uninteresting or a sonically ineffective record. This all-flamenco pro- gram (in which he is supported by his guitarist-brother Diego and an unnamed singer and dancer) is likely to have a stronger appeal for aficionados, however, than for listeners unfamiliar with the subtle idioms and intricate techniques of this genre. As always, his performances are distinguished by enormous vi- tality and virtuoso bravura, and the closely miked, well-spaced stereo recording is dryly brilliant. Even so, some of the rhapsodies are spun out to what seems to a nonspecialist unconscionable length. Yet even in the newness of these rhapsodies, the spellbinder by the originality and variety of the spirited Farruca del Camino for guitars alone.

High Fidelity Magazine

Like many other "spectaculars," this most interesting of M-G-M's entries struck me as painfully strident in its excessively high- level and closely mixed stereo disc edition, but the tape proves to be far less sonically sharp and intense, and at the same time more authentically glittering. And if Maxwell is too often determined to make his sound more like super guitars, mandolins, and glockenspiels than like themselves, he also is capable of less jangling music making when he relaxes a bit, as he does with his own songful Ebb Tide, and Chapel in the Pines.


Pure folklorists may legitimately criticize Belafonte for some softening of the rough edges of his prison- and work-song materials here; but if he does tend to dramatize them, he is careful never to sentimentalize their essential pathos and irony. The moving lament Look Over Yonder, the rollicking Grizzly Bear, and the vigorous Rocks and Gravel are first-rate songs, yet what gives this expansive- ly recorded program its distinction is the long concluding jailhouse evening scene, Talkin' and Signifyin'. It is an extraordinary spoken and sung sound-picture of Negro prison life which surely must rank among the most authentically evocative of all documentaries which have been given us on records.


These are abridged versions of Ansermet's celebrated complete Nutcracker and his extensive Swan Lake recordings, and they provide intoxicating introductions to the musical delights and technological splendors of those releases. Yet I can recommend them only to those tape buyers who are convinced they cannot afford the longer reels. Fine as the more familiar excerpts may be, they can give no more than tantalizing tastes of the unbounded treasures to be heard in the complete works.


This reel edition reveals even more impressively than the magnificent stereo disc both the inspired bravura of the Schory Ensemble performances and the magnificent authenticity of this big auditorium. Lou Wills, Jr., taps buoyantly in Dancing on the Ceiling, and a broken-field runner staggered catastrophically in Stamblik. And as always, Schory also explore the more delicate and poetic potentialities of percussion and brass timbres and of stereo technology: hear the French horn sonorities of Till There Was You, the echoing multi-trumpet pyramids of The Peanut Vendor, and above all the haunting sym- bal surges and evocative French horns in a musical realization of Beyond the Sea.
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High Fidelity Newsfronts

by RALPH FREAS

Tape Turntables. Ampex has added two units to its tape recorder line—well, not really, because the new Models 934 and 936 are not recorders. Actually, they are tape "turntables." Both are two-speed (7 1/2 and 33 1/2 ips) units for playing four-track stereo, two-track stereo, full-track and monophonic tapes. Neither of the new units can be used to make recordings.

"There are a lot of fine recorded tapes on the market," an Ampex executive, John Larson, told us, "and plenty of people who just want to listen to them."

Tape player without preamps.

The 934 and 936 differ in one major respect. Whereas the 934 ($199.50) feeds the recorded signals to an external preamplifier, the 936 ($249.50) has self-contained preamplifiers.

The deck and playback heads in both are the same as those included in the Ampex record/playback units, Models 960 and 970. The new units possess a reasonably full complement of controls (fast wind, play, stop, speed, and a headshift lever to change from two to four track). The 936, with its built-in preamplifiers, also has listening level and on-off controls. Until April 30, purchasers of any Ampex 900 series playback or record/playback unit will receive at no charge six four-track stereo recorded tapes, along with a brass-finish metal rack for tape storage.

Arms Against Distortion. Dynaco has introduced a 16-in. version of the B & O tone arm and cartridge. In so doing, the manufacturer underscores the longer arm’s stereo advantages. "You wouldn’t think," Dynaco’s David Hafler told us, "that you could hear the difference between two per cent and one per cent distortion; the difference between a 12-in. and a 16-in. arm. But it is audible."

The fact that tracking-error distortion diminishes with an increase in tone arm length should come as no news to any reader of this magazine. Less well known perhaps is the contention that, with stereo, the longer arm also offers greater accuracy in channel balance and greater equality in crosstalk.

Hafler calls the new TA-16 arm the "Isodyne" (Iso, equal; dyne, work, unit of work or force). By means of a ten-degree offset in the lateral pivot of the arm, the TA-16 is supposed to counteract the rotational force inherent in a spinning disc. This force inclines the stylus to work slightly harder against the right side of the groove than the left. "Isodyne" (the ten-degree offset) cancels out the rotational force and makes the stylus work equally on both sides of the groove.

Also new from Dynaco is a viscose-damped arm-lifter, or cueing bur, to be sold "for under $10" as an accessory for both the 12-in. and 16-in. arms.

Poluurethane Pocket-fuzz. Some component buyers incline to a curiosity that runs them smack into trouble with their purchases. This thesis was aired by University’s Victor Brociner as he explained the finer points of the firm’s new "Spheron Super Tweeter" (Model T-201). The unit’s diaphragm is tiny—about the size of a nickel. To disperse its sound over a wider area, a "diffractor sphere" sits directly in front of the diaphragm. This sphere, with an assist from the "conoidal ring" around the diaphragm, disperses the sound—says Brociner—120 degrees in all planes.

How does the customer run into trouble? "See this gap between the sphere and the diaphragm?" Brociner asked. "We insert a little piece of damping material here to smooth out the response. Let me show you."

With tweezers, Brociner extracted from the eighth-of-an-inch gap a minute square of plastic foam (poluurethane isocyanate, we learned). reminiscent of the bits of fuzz one often finds in one’s pockets.

"Just as a car’s shock absorbers smooth the ride," Brociner explained, "this bit of plastic foam smooths the tweeter’s frequency response to plus or minus two db from 3 kc to 22 kc."

"Fortunately, the tweeter operates almost as well without it. You’d be surprised how many people write to ask if the bit of plastic is packing material. I’m astonished that they are able to find it, and I’m sure that many others simply take it out without considering what it’s for."

Then Brociner brightened and placed a small plastic case with a metal mesh front on his desk.

"This is our new model T-203 for people who don’t want to tear apart their old enclosure to install it," he said. "The crossover is built in, and the tweeter can be connected right to the amplifier terminals or across the main speaker connections. Simple? Makes it easier for the user, and we’ll cut down the number of queries we get about that little piece of plastic."

Ultrasensitive. Avery Fisher buzzed for his secretary and asked for a special file.

"Anyone can make fancy claims for a piece of equipment," he said. "I prefer to have my customers speak for our new FM-200 tuner."

When the file came, Mr. Fisher plucked out a letter and tossed it across the desk. It bore the signature of a delighted Milwaukee listener who had, among other things, pulled in a station in Cleveland, 325 miles away.

"FM has now gone well beyond AM for enjoyable listening," Avery Fisher maintains. "If you live in New York City and tried to bring in an AM station from Philadelphia, the noise would be unbearable. With a sensitive FM receiver, on the other hand, we can pull in distant stations with ease and without noise."

Reverb Reducer. So much has been said about reverberation-inducing devices that one reads with a sort of perverse pleasure about a product that rejects it. The product? A microphone, Electro-Voice’s "664" cardioid dynamic unit. Not new (it has been around for about two years or so), the 664, in the manufacturer’s words, "features highly directional sound selectivity that reduces pickup of reverberation and ambient noise up to fifty per cent." E-V spokesman Larry Le-Kashman emphasizes that directionality is by no means the only virtue of the 664; but he points out that, for many amateur recordists attempting stereophony at home, a directional microphone makes two-channel effects easier for the amateur recordist to control.

March 1961

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Charles Sinclair asks and answers—stereo on the air waves: how much and how soon? R. D. Darrell gives you 10 "sonic spectacles on stereo discs" and lots more information to assist in more active listening.

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High Fidelity Magazine
A Prescription For Housing Components

By applying a bit of craft to $126 worth of materials, you can shelter your audio gear in fine style.

Constructing the complete component cabinet (shown above) was, for RCA engineer Doug Climenson, a necessary afterthought to assembling audio gear. After getting the rig that suited his tastes and pocketbook, one end of his living room was a tangle of "spaghetti" and hardware. Let's admit right away that component manufacturers have come far in the aesthetics of design. The wires and cables that link these attractive pieces of equipment together, however, still pose a problem. The fact that the three Climenson children—all under seven—live an active life in the listening room added still another complication. Cabinetry was indicated.

Commercial cabinets didn't suit Mr. Climenson for several reasons. As he tells it, "Few I examined gave adequate speaker separation. The hanging shelf idea, used successfully by many, was considered and discarded. Shelving didn't solve the exposed wire problem. Nor did I think it rugged enough."

Do-it-yourself cabinetry seemed to be the answer, and a series of drawings he made brought the project into reasonable perspective. Power tools weren't needed since the local lumberyard agreed to do the cutting from four-by-seven-foot sheets of walnut veneer plywood. A local carpenter gave assurance that cleat-reinforced butt joints would provide desired strength. The trickiest problem Climenson faced was the place to build it.

"Joining the two horizontal and four vertical pieces for each half of the cabinet was done in the kitchen in one evening," Doug Climenson explains. "Thereafter, I did the detailed work with the frame in place in the living room. Gluing veneer strip to the exposed plywood edges took the most time."

The entire job, at a relaxed pace in spare time, took Climenson about a month. Periodic oiling of the surface, the only finishing needed, followed.

"The cabinet has been in use," he estimates, "for about six months—subjected to child and party hazards—and I don't think I would change the design if I had to do it again."

The principal material costs totaled $126. The over-all dimensions of the cabinet are: 10 ft. 4 in. long, 27 in. high, 24 in. deep. Detailed construction notes and drawings of the Climenson cabinet are available to High Fidelity readers. Send requests to the Audio Editor, High Fidelity. The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass.

March 1961

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![Model 7 Stereo Console](image-url)

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![Model 8 Stereo Amplifier](image-url)

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THE MIXTURE THAT IS MILHAUD

eccentric offshoot of Satie, was far too full of genuine musical ideas to succumb to an image created by journalistic sensation seekers. He had begun composing during his student days at the Paris Conservatoire, and had already a substantial number of large-scale works behind him. Furthermore, he believed that the musical language did not really lend itself to an expression of the comic. The production of Le Boeuf sur le toit had been a hilarious affair, it is true, but this early score is not really comic: it is a brilliantly orchestrated fantasy on popular South American tunes (Milhaud had spent some twenty months in Brazil as secretary to the French Ambassador Paul Claudel), one of which happened to have this faintly amusing title.

With the success of Le Boeuf, Milhaud began to pour out a vast quantity of works, which over the years were to embrace examples of all forms of secular, sacred, and dramatic music and which he was to conduct in many parts of the world. He must be the most widely traveled of contemporary composers. Several of his major works have been written on journeys across the Atlantic and the Pacific—he writes with incredible speed—and although, as we shall presently see, he is deeply rooted in the traditions of an ancient Jewish family from Provence, travel has constantly excited his musical imagination. Impressions of the East and of the folk music of North and South America are echoed in his music; folk songs from France jostle with Hebrew tunes. Milhaud is able to tackle anything—operas, oratorios, symphonies—but he is not in any way immodest in his outlook. On the contrary, he approaches certain of his bigger tasks with true humility. While in chamber music he boasted that he could rival the production of Beethoven, he announced that the symphony for full orchestra (as opposed to his “symphonies” for chamber orchestra such as the early Printemps and Pastorale) requires maturity and that he would not attempt to write in this form until the age of fifty. His first large-scale symphony was in fact written when he was forty-seven, for the anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

This was the work, together with the suite Kentuckiana and the Opus Americain No. 2, that he conducted in London on his first appearance there after the War. I was at that time in charge of his studio concerts for the BBC Third Programme, and our difficulty was to arrange for him to proceed without discomfort from his wheelchair to a comfortable seat on the rostrum. It is a piece of bitter irony that this most active and energetic of composers had become almost wholly crippled by arthritus.

From 1940 there were periods when even his arms and hands were affected and music then simply couldn’t be written. The wonderful thing was that throughout this time his musical mind seemed to become all the more alive and acute. I shall never forget the impression made at the London concerts by his brilliantly vivacious Kentuckiana suite. This was a new Milhaud, jaunty, jocular, and alive with fantastic rhythms. “The poor man may have lost the use of his legs,” my neighbor whispered to me as we watched Milhaud conducting from his armchair, “but they go on dancing in the relentless rhythms of his music.”

Dear Darius! Anyone else so afflicted would certainly have been forgiven for resting on his laurels. Not so with Milhaud. When he was not actually laid up, his activities were redoubled. Nor did he travel any the less. His devoted wife, the cousin Madelaine whom he had married in 1925, looked after the wheelchair, and the journeys went on as before all over Europe and across the Atlantic. It was about this time that he began to return for several months each year to Mills College, California, where he had taught during the War and until 1947, as well as to teach at the Paris Conservatoire.

It was in Jerusalem that I next saw him. He was there with his lifelong friend, the poet and philosopher Armand Luneau, to make arrangements for the opera David which he was to write for the three-thousandth anniversary, in 1954, of the founding of Jerusalem. Milhaud is a devout Jew, and I could see that this visit to Israel had aroused deep associations. In his memoirs Notes Without Music, Milhaud gives a fascinating historical account of the old Jewish communities in Provence, of which he is

Continued from page 43

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Continued on page 100

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**MILHAUD**

Continued from page 98

a descendant. Jews, he explains, had settled in this region as traders long before the Christian era. In remote times there were persecutions, but in the later Middle Ages the Provencal Jews lived peacefully as subjects of their benevolent overlord, the Pope at Avignon. Strange as it seems to us today, the Pope's portrait normally hung on the walls of ancient Jewish homes in Provence, facing an engraving of Moses and the Tablets of the Law, and in the picturesque old synagogues prayers were offered for the Pope as head of state. One of these papal prayers of the Jews, Milhaud set to music. It is one of a series of works inspired by ancient Provengal texts, another being the cantata *Couronne de gloire* ("Crown of Glory") written to commemorate the founding of the modern synagogue at Aix-en-Provence by Milhaud's great-grandfather. On his maternal side there are similarly fascinating records. One of the Jewish patriarchs among his maternal ancestors had been the Pope's doctor. Like many of the Jews of this community Milhaud remained closely attached to his family and its traditions.

The opera *David* was first given in Jerusalem in concert form with the Kol Israel Orchestra augmented by the Israeli Police Force band. The following year it was magnificently produced at La Scala under Nino Sanzogno. It was not, of course, the first of Milhaud's works inspired by Jewish subjects. His two magnificent song recitals, the *Poèmes juifs* (1916) and the *Chants populaires hébraiques* (1925), for instance, were psychological interpretations of Jewish scenes and characters. It is illuminating, I think, to compare these rather somber song recitals with the *Quatre chansons de Ronsard*, written for Lily Pons, an unmistakably Gallic work sparkling with guile. Behind such works of Jewish and French associations is an ancestral background built from the merging of two cultures. Milhaud is a Frenchman and a cosmopolitan, a Jew attached to ancient religious practices and a twentieth-century sophisticate.

It was thus natural that Milhaud should feel himself perfectly at ease in cooperation not only with Armand Lunel but with writers closely associated with the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths. He collaborated over many years with Paul Claudel, the great Catholic writer who provided him with the text of his opera *Christophe Colomb* and the scenario of his ballet *L'homme et son désir*. Milhaud also wrote the incidental music for several of Claudel's religious plays, among them *La Sagessesse* and *L'Annonce faite à Marie*, and set his translation of the 129th Psalm. The correspondence between Claudel and Milhaud, covering a period of forty-three years, is shortly to be published. Likewise Milhaud has been inspired by the Catholic poet Francis Jammes, the author of the text of his first opera, *La Brebis égarée*, and his long friendship with André Gide.
overrated. Milhaud sees Berlioz in an utterly different light. On a recent visit to him at his apartment in the Boulevard de Clichy in Paris I observed that Berlioz is one of the two composers—the other is Erik Satie—whose portraits hung on the walls of his music room. The unexpected sight of this portrait intrigued me, and I was anxious to know more about Milhaud’s admiration for a com-

Continued on next page

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MILHAUD
Continued from preceding page
poser who, though his genius cannot be denied, was guilty. I suggested, of certain harshnesses or extravagances. The passage in Berlioz’s Requiem for flutes and trombones alone seemed to me a case in point; I find it a self-conscious effect. Milhaud insisted that this was a hair-raising piece of instrumentation, and he made it clear to me that Berlioz was altogether a composer after his heart—he could do no wrong. Mahler, similarly, is a composer he greatly admires, though not uncritically; Schoenberg too, though not Bruckner and certainly not Brahms.

Gradually, I began to have a new light on Milhaud’s musical personality. What he stands for is music that must on no account be precious. Preciosity, he maintains, an excessive attention to prettiness of detail, a supersensitive response to the beauty of sound for its own sake—this “decadent” aesthetic as it used to be called, and rightly so, as Milhaud believes—can lead nowhere. He is the enemy of Impressionism, “which caused music to be scattered into pieces,” as he put it, “or to vanish away like smoke or a show of fireworks.” Here, I believe, we may begin to understand Milhaud’s phenomenal fertility. If musical Impressionism, where the color of every note must be carefully pondered and assessed, where a refinement of sensibility brings to the surface all sorts of ambivalent feelings which ultimately cancel themselves out and leave music to vanish into thin air—if all these ravishments can be forgotten, then indeed the way may be opened for a sturdier and more vigorous type of music. Milhaud believes that once Impressionism has been abandoned, music will again be written fluently and abundantly.

What, in this context, had Milhaud to say of the two idols of the golden age of French music, Debussy and Ravel? Debussy had been the greatest revelation of Milhaud’s youth, and he maintained that his admiration has not diminished over the years. He did not mean this in any contradictory sense. Debussy, in Milhaud’s view, is not essentially an Impressionist composer: the poetic reverberations in his work go far beyond the fleeting Impressionist aesthetic. With Ravel it was another matter. Though the two composers were rather close friends—at the beginning of his career Milhaud received much encouragement from Ravel—the latter’s artistry and refined workmanship, his preoccupation with dainty filigree work, is precisely

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
what Milhaud feels to be so sterile. There are only a few pages of Ravel that genuinely move him. Significantly, they are the big dramatic effects in the Concerto for the Left Hand and the tenderness of the final scene of L'Enfant et les sortilèges. Milhaud denounced La Valse as “an overelaborate work in the style of Saint-Saëns shot through with memories of the Russian ballet.”

I have been privileged to know Milhaud’s music over many years. I have followed his evolution and observed the response to his music in many countries. But it was in this close scrutiny of his own personal reactions that I felt I had come nearest to an understanding of his musical mind. In the end I felt that the choice of those pictures of Berlioz and Satie told me as much as anything about Milhaud. He has the idealism, the vigor, and the rough-hewn qualities of the one and, deep down, the naïveté and poetry of the other.

As for his theory that the musical language does not lend itself to an expression of humor, this may very well be. But a fantastic story Milhaud told me about Satie and Schoenberg proved that he himself has a very keen sense of humor. I had not known that the works of these utterly dissimilar composers were known to each other. Incredible as it may seem, Schoenberg, during the time he was lionized in Vienna, was much attracted to Satie’s tiny pieces and planned to have them performed there. A difficulty arose, however, over the inscriptions that appear in Satie’s works. His pieces, as is well known, are covered with all sorts of droll remarks, printed in red, intended for the private amusement of the performer. This point had completely escaped Schoenberg, who arranged to have Satie’s freakish remarks translated into German and declaimed in a rhetorical manner from the platform during the performance. “Ah, le fourneau!” (“the fathead”) Satie burst out when told of this ponderous project. And as he told me of this untoward episode, Milhaud laughed heartily.

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CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

COMPRIMARI

Continued from page 46

eight a week. She remembers all too vividly the time in the middle of her career when she sang ten performances in a row. Nowadays the pace is not so hectic, nor, for that matter, so exciting. Basically, the difference is due to AGMA, which has established a maximum of four appearances a week per artist in return for the weekly paycheck. Beyond that, the management must pay an extra fee, which the artists often would welcome but which is seldom forthcoming. Managerial foresight and an extensive network have reduced the average number of performances for even the most sought-after comprimario to a relatively quiet two or three a week.

Miss Votipka has used this uncustomed leisure not only to teach, but also to reflect a little on the pleasures and vicissitudes of her way of life. She refers to her repertoire as "Western Lovers parts"—not many lines, but usually important ones. "What's more, it's all the job I want or can really handle. Leading parts? No, I never had such great ambitions, because I never thought I'd be better than Flagstad or Traubel. Those women and others like them were born for star roles. I had a nice voice, and I was always a good musician and a quick study, so I've stayed right in my little nest, I do my little part, and I love it there. It's warm and comfortable."

And from that nest Tippy and her colleagues have been insulated from the Sturm and Drang of the prima donna world. It has given them all delight to see the ascent to fame of one-time members of their league—Harshaw and Votipka were fellow Valkyres more than once, and Paul Franke was often a Messenger to the Verdi King of Egypt whom Lucine Amara served as a Priestess—but essentially they remain content away from the uncertainties of stardom. As Votipka says, "the star's dressing room is right next to the exit."

The rewards of a comprimario career are not for everyone, though. "It depends on your personality. If you're always wishing for the top, then it's rough. But if you enjoy your little bits, without that consuming desire to be bigger than anyone else, then it's marvelous."

There are others who appreciate this attitude, and not the least of these are the opera managers. Among those who most fervently bless the availability of a flexible roster of comprimario is young Robert Herman, Artistic Administrator of the Metropolitan (and son of Brookyn Dodger baseball immortal Bibe Herman, an unlikely but evidently effective heritage). Generally speaking, Herman, together with Rudolf Bing and other members of the managerial staff, has the leading singers for most productions set well over a year in advance—subject only to the vagaries of whim, weather, and viruses. Final complete casts for the majority of the operas are not promulgated until five weeks in advance. The complexities of scheduling and running rehearsals so that all the space and all the artists are efficiently utilized is the
responsibility of Company Manager Frank Paola, but the initial headaches are Herman's. With seven and sometimes eight works to mount each week of the season, the headaches can be profound.

The stars, though, and not the myriads of small parts, give the trouble. "The comprimario are no problem at all," Herman claims. "The Metropolitan has the finest group in the world, soloists to rich and flexible that we can without hesitation substitute one for the other and be assured of high standards. If De Paolis has sung a role one night, then Paul Franke could do it the next, or Charles Anthony the third."

Perhaps things were easier in the preAGMA days, when a good leather-jungled comprimario could be used until he dropped for not a dime more than his weekly salary, but Herman doesn't yearn for the past. More often than not he tries to use his casting assets in a sparing and careful manner. "If an artist sings roles like Guillot, Remendado, and L'Increible, then three performances a week is the absolute maximum I'd ask for him." There's no sense in squandering hard-to-come-by riches.

The requirements of drama being what they are—very few Western Union messengers are female—active male comprimario outnumber their sister artists by close to two to one, with tenors and baritones predominating. The Met's roster book has three pages devoted to men, two to women. This disparity is one of the guides Herman and the Met staff must use in hiring new talent. Another and more cogent criterion is established by the Association's long-term plan to develop new stars. Harshaw and Amara were not accidents. The chance for growth and development is most definitely offered, and talent and ambition are nurtured. As Herman puts it, "We don't engage a comprimario as a general rule unless we feel that the artist has potential. And an artist will usually have the opportunity to sing major roles, at least at the student performances, to exhibit that potential on the stage.

"There are, though, those wonderful few, such as De Paolis, Cehanovsky, Lawrence Davidson, Calvin Marsh, and Thelma Votipka, who are happy doing the tiny roles and who make a real artistic performance out of them."

Backstage at opera houses and recording companies the wheels turn and plans are made and schedules are published, but for any managerial operations to make sense, the basic need must still be human artistry and, more particularly, human devotion. To labor beautifully in relative obscurity is the comprimario's lot; that there are enough opera singers to whom this is reward enough is one of the wonders of this irrational art.

MARCH 1961

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CIRCLE 77 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
RECORDING HALLS
Continued from page 33

violinist took precipitous flight.

Often musicians are turned around to aim the sound at some part of the hall (usually made of wood) which reflects. On the other hand, when Everest records in Pittsburgh, the engineers remove the wooden shell in the Syria Mosque. This reflector supposedly enhances sound, but Everest finds that it actually soaks up the lows of the double basses, timpani, and big drum. The brick wall at the back gives those instruments "something to push against."

Walthamstow Town Hall, a British auditorium much favored for recordings, has a big balcony which the engineers must decide either to cover up or leave open. The problem is solved according to the taste of those working there or the requirements of the situation at hand. Curved ceilings are notorious for slapback, and at Manhattan Center in New York (a difficult hall to work with in spite of its popularity) gobos—"an acoustical shield—are sometimes placed on the ceiling to prevent sound from leaking into the balcony.

Most engineering triumphs have been achieved over exceptionally lively halls. Excess reverberation can be damped and brought under control with drapery and careful miking, but there is relatively little that one can do with a dead hall where the sound is blotter-dry and high frequencies die aborning. The result: most engineers prefer an overlive hall.

But wait: the choice is not always clear-cut. Once a recording has been made, reverberation cannot be eliminated. It can, however, be added. Some engineers would rather risk an overly dry recording, knowing that a nice, round echo can be added later. The classic technique for this is the echo chamber. The recorded sound is simply played into the chamber and re-recorded on route from its resonant walls. The echo chamber is de rigueur in the pops and semi-pops field; it produces a poly-voiced-Presley or créamy-Melachrinou effect—the sort of i-love-you-even-though-i'm-way-out-here kind of sound. Pop records, so the story goes, are made by setting up an echo chamber and then deciding whose voice will be sent into it.

The echo chamber apparently saw more use in recordings of classical music some years ago, when skills to bring about consistent sound at the recording session were lacking. To this day Columbia has a famous stairwell in which very well-known recordings have bounced up and down stairs picking up some needed reverberation. A while back, Scherazade was sent down the stairwell, awakening a stray dog who sought refuge from Seventh Avenue. The dog was, it turned out, something of a music critic. His opinions may be heard occasionally on the finished recording.

Columbia, Everest, and Capitol acknowledge the use of the echo chamber and electronic reverberation devices, arguing that any means of improving sound is legitimate and desirable. Many others, however, feel that their effect hardly ap proximates the resonance of a real hall. The discovery and exploitation of halls with fine acoustics thus remains a subject of major concern.

Any list of recording locales in common use has to begin with London and Vienna—the two major international recording centers. In London the halls most prized and used are Kingsway Hall in the building of the West London Mission of the Methodists and Walthamstow Town Hall. From the plethora of recordings made by many companies at these places one can mention as examples from Kingsway Hall the London Daphnis and Chloe under Pierre Monteux and the Angel Der Rosenkavalier, Abduction from the Seraglio, and Falstaff; the London Peter Grimes and the Angel recordings of Delius and Sibelius under Beecham tell what is being done at Walthamstow. One or the other is ranked first by nearly every company recording in London. When they are unavailable, the Town Halls of the suburbs of Wembley, Hornsey, and Waltham are often used. The only other really important recording site in London for orchestral music (the Royal Festival Hall is virtually never used) is the EMI studios in Abbey Road. St. John's Wood (the Handel-Beecham Saloon is an example of EMI studio sound).

Vienna's halls are many. The Musikvereinsaal (home of the Vienna Philharmonic) is popular; its elaborate baroque interior produced the quality sound of Beethoven's Ninth under von Karajan (Angel). The Sofiensaal (a ballroom in which Johann Strauss used to conduct) is used exclusively by London, and was the scene of the Rheingold, Aida, and Fledermaus stereo recordings. And, of course, the acoustics of a Konzerthaus has three different halls that are frequently employed by the smaller companies (see "Night Lights in the Konzerthaus," High Fidelity, November 1959).

In Paris, the Salle Wagram (a big, barnlike convention-hall structure that was the scene of Capitol's Carmen under Beecham), the Salle Pleyel, the Salle de la Mutualité (favored by London's engineers), and the Théâtre de Champs Elysées have been used but without really exceptional results. In Milan, the Scala theatre is commonly used for operatic recordings but it has drawbacks—its plushiness eats up the brilliance of the sound, and streetcars bang and rattle.

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outside. An abandoned basilica is sometimes used as an alternative but it too has the streetcar problem—solved only by recording in the dead of night.

The lobby of the Brescia Opera House served for Mercury's recent recording of Paisiello's Barber of Seville. The theatre itself was deemed unsatisfactory; as the engineers were on their way out, dejected and discouraged, one of them took note of the lovely resonance produced by their footsteps in the lobby!

In Rome, the small hall of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, the Rome Opera House, and the Foro Italico concert hall of the Italian Radio are used. Victoria Hall in Geneva (for the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande) and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam are two fine European concert halls which hold up as recording studios—their rich, mellow sound is distinctive. Germany has many new halls and studios—the old ones were gutted during the war. Good results have been obtained in Berlin and Cologne.

In New York, ballrooms are the thing: Manhattan Center (favored by RCA), the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn (favored by Columbia), and the Great Northern Hotel (favored by Mercury). All provide spacious quarters well adapted to stereo recording. Elsewhere in this country, the big concert halls are commonly used: Boston's Symphony Hall and Chicago's Orchestra Hall (noted for its proscenium which radiates out into the hall itself, obviating the usual proscenium problems) are considered particularly good. The Syria Mosque in Pittsburgh, Northrup Memorial Auditorium, Minneapolis, and the Eastman Theatre, Rochester, are used in recording the orchestras of those cities. Other locales include a ball hall in St. Louis, the Capitol Tower in Los Angeles, and the Broadwood Hotel Ballroom in Philadelphia. In Detroit, what with the shortcomings of the Ford Auditorium, a dilapidated old theatre and a high school auditorium have been used. Several years ago Columbia/Epic abandoned Severance Hall in Cleveland in favor of the more resonant Masonic Hall; but the former has since been renovated, the acoustics are now satisfactory, and the recording engineers have moved back in.

According to the people who ought to know—recording directors—stereo has not signaled any fundamental change in recording philosophies. But it has enormously magnified old problems and introduced some new ones. Stereo demands more room to work in so that directionality can be achieved. Even more important, it demands optimum reverberation for its sense of depth. Columbia's move from the Academy of Music to the Broadwood Hotel Ballroom for their Philadelphia Orchestra recordings was prompted by the need for better stereo separation.

The ultimate choice of a hall for recording and the use made of it rests on a subtle combination of taste and technique. "Realism" is a relative and subjective term, and recording acoustics is still more art than science. Like any art, it demands skill, knowledge, taste, and discretion; it is certainly not the easiest to master.
EQUIPMENT REPORTS
Continued from page 50
tweeters. In a "live" listening room, the diffusion of high frequencies effectively compensates for this rise, resulting in what sounds like a flat response. Above 11 kc, where our microphone response begins to roll off, the Ionovac continues to hold forth without change. With due allowance for the 6 db/octave slope of the characteristic, the response of the tweeter could be said to be within plus or minus 1.5 db from 3 kc to beyond 12 kc, with the upper end limited by our microphone.

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Typical burst (with "reflections").

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TOSCANINI IN STEREO
Continued from page 41

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equally, with one side in antiphase to the other in order to increase the reverberance of the sound and produce greater spatial realism. At appropriate levels these signals also add filler to the potentials gaps left by the filter system.

In the early days of my work I found that certain repertoire lent itself more readily to successful stereophonic simulation than did other kinds: music of massive quality with wide tonal contrasts, orchestrations with long and frequent solo passages where solo instruments emerge clearly from the accompanying orchestral colors, slower movements offering greater time opportunity for adjustment—all these offer excellent potentialities for conversion. Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, Respighi's Pines of Rome and Fountains of Rome, with their massive colors and programmatic nature proved ideal. Contrapuntal works with little tonal contrast (in terms of separation of instrumental ranges) represent much more of a problem. This is not to say that their conversion is not possible or desirable, merely that it is more difficult.

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In the recordings now released—Dvořák's Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 (From the New World), Musorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, and Respighi's Pines of Rome and Fountains of Rome—the essential content is the music the composers wrote and the performance Arturo Toscanini gave it. In its reprocessing I have had the good fortune to have the advice and counsel of Richard B. Gardner, the RCA Victor engineer who spent many years as the Maestro's personal engineer and who generously slapped my hand when he heard any non-Toscanini sounds emanating from my equipment, and of the conductor's son, Walter Toscanini. It is hoped that through our work the Maestro will live on, not just in the memory but in the active hearing of his music.

March 1961
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CABINET COMPONENTS

COMPONENTS CABINETS
Continued from page 39

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Cabinart, Inc., 35 Geyer St., Haledon, N.J.—new line to be announced.

Country Workshop, 95 Rome St., Newark, N.J.—ready-to-finish line of lift-up top cabinets.

Design International, 17 East 53rd St., New York, N.Y.—basic cabinet that may be divided and arranged as needed.

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Furniture Craftsmen, 3596 Alpine Rd., Comstock Park, Grand Rapids, Mich.—cabinets in various styles and woods; chair-side type cabinet; “floating” speaker enclosures for shock-mounting.

Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich.—equipment cabinets, assembled and finished, assembled and ready-to-finish, or in kit form.

Homewood Industries, 26 Court St., Brooklyn I, N.Y.—ready-to-finish equipment cabinet; also some kits.

Kates Case Co., 828 S. Los Angeles St., Los Angeles, Calif.—individual component housings; storage cabinets.

Kersting Manufacturing Co., 504 S. Date Ave., Alhambra, Calif.—equipment cabinets; record storage cabinets and record filing system.

Lafayette Radio, 165-08 Liberty Ave., Jamaica 33, N.Y.—equipment cabinet in kit form; record storage cabinet and add-on units in kit form.

McCobb, Paul, c/o B. G. Mesberg Corp., 160 East 56th St., New York 22, N. Y.—various cabinets in space storage system or as individual pieces.

Miller, Herman, Inc., 305 East 63rd St., New York, N.Y.—new line of cabinet equipment; also basic storage units that may be divided and arranged as needed.

Mills-Denmark, 227 East 56th St., New York, N.Y.—equipment cabinet; also basic cabinets that may be divided and arranged as needed.

Radio Shack Corp., 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, Mass.—equipment cabinets, finished and ready-to-finish; record storage units in kit form.

Risom Design, Inc., Jens, 444 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y.—basic cabinet that may be divided and arranged.

Rockford Special Furniture Co., 2024 23rd Ave., Rockford, Ill.—equipment cabinets, various styles and finishes; matching record storage cabinets.

Ruxton Electronics Co., 11168 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 25, Calif.—equipment cabinets; various sizes, finishes.
Scott Radio Laboratories, Inc., 241 West St., Annapolis, Md.—basic cabinets that may be divided and arranged as needed.

Seiler Design Projects, 10460 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, Calif.—"stereo module" units using single cabinets or complete set all in kit form, walnut or teak woods.

StereoCraft Division, Twentieth Century Woodworking Co., 79 Clifton Pl., Brooklyn 38, N.Y.—ready-to-finish equipment cabinets, bookshelf-type case for equipment and/or records.

Structural Products, Inc., Charlotte, Mich.—"Omni" line of cabinets for individual use or as part of wall storage system; new Audax equipment cabinet; line marketed by Rek-O-Kut.

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