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**VOL. 19 NO. 2, FEBRUARY 1969**

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Who the Devil Wrote This Nonsense?

DEAR READER:

Although I am universally renowned for my gentle, sweet disposition, a mere written statement recently ignited my temper. If it appears innocuous to you, then you either are unfamiliar with standard violin literature, or are so familiar with it that you understand that the statement is in fact true. (When my temper goes, it is an almost sure sign that I am wrong.) Elsewhere in this issue, in his review of Wanda Wilkomirska's recording of the Wieniawski Violin Concerto No. 2, Robert Schaaf suggests that it "should be in the repertoire."

Should be in the repertoire? When I read the manuscript, I froze in disbelief that one of our knowledgeable critics should have written such an idiocy. Everyone knows that the piece is in all violinists' repertoires. Ever since Joachim and Auer gave lessons, every budding violin virtuoso has gotten the Wieniawski No. 2 under his fingertips. It came after the Spohr No. 8, just before the Mendelssohn, as one of the first concertos the student learned which he could look forward to hearing in the concert hall. In the days when violin recitals included piano-reduction-accompanied concertos, the Wieniawski seemed to be on at least every other one. Who could have written such a statement? I did not even bother to turn to the last type-written page to examine the reviewer's initials, but shouted to my Music Editor, Peter Davis, "Who the devil wrote this nonsense?"

Now, you have to know that Peter Davis is one of those Harvard graduates who knows, if not everything about music and records, at least anything anyone else is likely to know, in order to appreciate my reaction to his reply: "What's wrong with it?"

"If anything is in the repertoire, the Wieniawski is."

"No it isn't. Look in Schwann."

The Schwann Catalog listed only Michael Rabin's recording (and Rabin even recorded the practically unknown No. 1) and the thirteen-year-old mono Heifetz. Was it really possible that this once so popular concerto had died? I called up my local orchestra. In the past ten years, the New York Philharmonic had played it only once. I called my other local orchestra (one of the advantages of having offices in both New York and Massachusetts). The Boston Symphony Orchestra gentleman's finding ("Could you please hold the phone a little longer?"

... long pause...

"We have to recheck our files because it's simply not possible."... long pause...

"It's apparently right, though nobody here can believe it."

... was that the BSO had last performed the Wieniawski in 1912?

With trepidation I checked Schwann for other at-least-once-warhorse concertos. Vieuxtemps No. 5? Two: Heifetz and Kogan. Spohr No. 8? A little better: Heifetz again, the old mono; Hyman Bress; and somebody named Barries. Viotti No. 22? Never much of a repertoire piece, but here were Stern and Suzanne Lautenbacher. On the other hand, one could find not only six recordings of The Bartók Violin Concerto, but four of the recently uncovered "No. 1." Stravinsky, Berg, Schoenberg, and Barber each have three recordings of his violin concerto.

So that's where the repertoire had gone. Now if some young fiddler could still light up those nineteenth-century musical firecrackers, why, he'd make a name for himself as a performing musicologist.

* * *

The closest Hector Berlioz ever got to a concerto was Harold in Italy, for viola and orchestra, which Paganini rejected for not being firecracker enough. Still, we will devote a major portion of next month's issue to Le Grand Hector. Composer/conductor Pierre Boulez will discuss "Berlioz and the Realm of the Imaginary," conductor Colin Davis will give his views on "The Trojans," which he will soon record; Roy McMullen, whose picture book about Marc Chagall became one of last Christmas' most popular coffee-table gifts, will present a photo essay on "Berlioz' Paris"; and Contributing Editor Bernard Jacobson will let us know what he thinks are "The Best Berlioz Recordings—and the Worst."

Leonard Marcus

EDITOR

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The Induction Motor...most popular, least accurate. Most automatic turntables are built around induction motors. Some are given special names (usually describing their pole structure or starting torque). When well designed and manufactured, they have high starting torque...get the platter up to full speed quickly...and are relatively free from rumble. But, the rotor of the induction motor "slips" in relation to the magnetic field and varies the motor's speed with changes in power line voltage, turntable load and temperature. Under less than ideal conditions, as in your home, these speed changes can raise or lower not just the tempo, but the pitch of your recorded music.

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There are, of course, other benefits which stem from the Synchro-Lab Motor, notably the elimination of the need for variable controls to obtain proper speed, and of heavy turntables which tend to cause rumble through accelerated wear on the important center bearing over a period of use in your home. The Synchro-Lab Motor powers five Garrards, priced from $57.50 to $129.50 for the SL 95 Automatic Transcription Turntable shown above. These units incorporate other Garrard-engineered innovations such as anti-skating compensation; cueing and pause controls; highly advanced, low-mass tonearm systems. Feature-by-feature descriptions of all models are to be found in a complimentary Comparator Guide. Let us send you one. Write Garrard, Dept. AB2-9, Westbury, N.Y. 11590.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Homemade Opera

I have just finished reading John Culshaw’s article in the October High Fidelity (“The Record Producer Strikes Back”), and at the same time I happened to be reading his book, Ring Resounding, which also propounds his philosophy of record making. I want to say that I enthusiastically agree with Mr. Culshaw. I own more than thirty complete opera recordings, as well as about 1,000 other records, and I have never been inside an opera house. I have only recently reached the economic position in life where, if I wanted to, I could travel the sixty or seventy miles to Chicago to attend opera performances, paying for tickets, parking, etc. In the meantime I have already been digging the sounds for about ten years.

There are not many opera lovers in Kenosha. My parents wouldn’t be caught dead listening to an opera. I got hipped on it more or less accidentally—probably by reading magazines such as Hit or Fiendly more than any other way. I question whether or not I would be as interested in opera as I am if it were not for the immediacy that a good recording provides. I think Mr. Culshaw gets to the heart of it when he writes that an opera recording should not be a Mr. Venier. (Movie sound track recordings are “souvenirs,” and that’s why most of them are not worth owning.)

When I slid a record onto my turntable, I don’t want to be reminded of a huge hall and a relatively small stage. An opera is certainly more than music, and the more immediacy that can be provided, the more the drama becomes real to the listener. (Not to mention the other advantages of recordings—no coughing, no latecomers, etc.)

Personally, I think Wagner would be tickled to death with Mr. Culshaw’s Ring. But what it boils down to, it seems to me, is whether or not opera is going to be just for the cognoscenti, and whether or not productions like the London Ring are going to justify themselves in terms of sales. In his book, Mr. Culshaw predicts that some day we will have opera on our living-room wall, in wide screen, color, and three dimensions, to say nothing of stereo sound. When that happens, your Mr. Osborne will probably lock himself up in a closet. But not me. I can hardly wait.

Donald M. Clarke
Kenosha, Wis.

Department of Amplification

Dr. Garry D. Whitlow in December’s “Letters” column asks if there is any chance that Orchestra Hall in Chicago will be restored acoustically to regain its past stature as a recording room. In the Musical America section of High Fidelity (January 1968) I observed that work in the summer of 1967 had largely compensated for miscalculation in the original project to improve the hall, and I may now add that further modifications (including a new stage floor) have made the hall better than ever from the standpoint of the listener.

The first recording to reflect this situation will be the Ozawa/Chicago Symphony disc of the Tchaikovsky Fifth Symphony. After listening to the edited master tape, I think the kind of Chicago Symphony recordings recalled from the Reiner period are again possible.

With respect to Warren Kronemeyer’s comments about the writing of Conrad L. Osborne also in the December issue (and the article by John Culshaw which prompted this reply) please note only that the international jury of the Montreux International Record Award, by voting the Gold Prize to the London recording of Elektra, disdained from Osborne’s evaluation of the set.

Constructive diversity of opinion can be the key to progress. I have always regarded criticism as a forum in the Socratic spirit that encourages vigorous intellectual exchange. In that context, Osborne has always been an interesting writer. I have followed his work and admired the way in which he develops his point of view.

The problem at High Fidelity is that in the field of operatic recordings, Osborne has had the floor pretty much to himself. Alfred Frankenstein, who reviewed resident opera in San Francisco for decades, rarely discusses this literature in the magazine. When I was on your roster of critics, I got to review an operatic album about once in two years, although I was discussing opera regularly in my newspaper columns.

Meanwhile, my vote of confidence to Osborne, who is never more deserving of attention than when he has maneuvered himself to the end of a long and whippy limb. It is, after all, one of the classical positions in criticism.

Robert C. Marsh
Music Critic
The Chicago Sun-Times
Chicago, Ill.

Hardly a month goes by without a spate of letters to the editor complaining that there are not enough operatic reviews signed C.L.O. It’s refreshing to hear from the other side. In point of fact, Mr. Osborne has shared the operatic floor pretty generously of late: among the thirty-six complete and excerpted opera

Continued on page 8
This is a photograph taken immediately after our final test of the prototype of the AR-5. The speaker system was measured while buried in a flat, open field, facing upward, its front baffle flush with the ground. This technique provides more accurate information than indoor tests, especially at low frequencies, where the precision of such measurements is adversely affected by the limited size of an anechoic chamber.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 6

recordings considered in High Fidelity during 1968, Mr. Osborne reviewed fourteen and eight other critics divided the remaining twenty-two.

War Songs

Gene Lees was way off base in his recounting of the Pete Seeger/CBS Big Muddy controversy in his article "Fifty Years of War Songs" [November 1968]. According to Lees, "Pete Seeger caused a scandal when he sang 'Waist Deep in the Big Muddy' on the Smothers Brothers television show, using a last line that accused Lyndon Johnson of getting America into that predicament [Vietnam]. Network officials bleeped the line out. . . . the Smothers Brothers. . . invited Seeger back. He sang the song again—including its last line."

Lees's recollection of the facts is as muddled as that stream. Seeger taped the song for that first Smothers show, which aired September 10, 1967, but the entire performance was cut out when CBS objected to the last verse containing the thinly veiled swipe at LBJ. Seeger did the song in toto on the Smothers' February 25, 1968 program; only one CBS affiliate, apparently, WJBK-TV in Detroit, engaged in any bleeping, fading to a commercial after the next-to-last verse.

The "last line" that Lees refers to—". . . the big fool says to push on"—is more accurately the last line of each verse, and is thus heard six times during the course of the song, not, as Lees implied, only at the very end.

George Friedman
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Gene Lees's article on war songs of the past fifty years pricked a vein of nostalgia. I swear that two songs I remember quite well to this day were taught to music classes at Junior High 210 in Brooklyn in 1943-44.

The first song is Meadowlands, the Russian anthem. But we also learned the Soviet Air Force Song: "Fly higher, and higher, and higher. Our emblem is the Soviet star. . . . I can't say whether the New York Board of Education suggested this, or whether the music teacher was employing academic license. We were, at any rate, rather tepid allies of the Soviets.

Gerald M. Plevin
Stony Brook, N. Y.

No One's Perfect

As one of the commercially unimportant minority of audiophiles who notice the failings of currently available equipment and recordings, it disturbs me to see the perennial pursuit of the "best" receiver (for instance, the letter from Guy Welch in November's "Too Hot to Handle" column).

I can assure Mr. Welch and the thousands of others who want to be told

Continued on page 10
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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

they have the "best." that their receivers occasional transgressions of the half per cent distortion level will not bring down wrath from above, or, for that matter, even notice from the owner. When even the best commercial LPs and tapes have noticeable hiss and distortion, not to mention the gritty tapioca emitted by car stereos and cassettes, it's adding insult to injury to insist on a distinction between 1.7 and 1.8 µV FM sensitivities. While such considerations are important to the designers, to Mr. Welch and me they are useful only in the preliminary phase of selecting a system. The final test is how does it sound. If you can't hear it, don't buy it.

Allen Watson III
Redwood City, Calif.

The pursuit of perfection is a hallmark of the audio field, and certainly a buyer has a right to expect that he's getting the best value for money spent. However, we must agree that quibbles over a tenth of a microvolt need not concern the average listener—regardless of the white heat such discussions may generate among inside circles.

Good Old (German) Soul

Bravo to Peter G. Davis and the other American critics who greeted DGG's excellent recording of Pfitzner's Von deutschen Seele. Bravo also to him and the other reviewers who suggested that Pfitzner's centenary year of 1969 should be commemorated by a complete recording of Palestrina.

My suggestion for a performance to be issued is one from the 1963 Munich Festival, of which the Bavarian Radio very likely has a good-sounding stereo tape. Since DGG seems to occasionally dig actual performance recordings (their Daphne from the 1964 Vienna Festival was a good enough job to win a Grand Prix du Disque), it would be worth investigating—especially since the performance by the immense cast was on such a high level as to bring tears to my eyes—and I am not so easily moved.

Perhaps the great length of this opera and the obtuse machinations of the Act 11 Council Scene (very difficult to comprehend unless one knows German well) have mitigated against its general acceptance outside Central Europe. However, the music itself counts on a record and the opera is for the vast majority of its playing time magnificent.

Since DGG has begun its noble work so well, it would be a pity if Pfitzner's most famous (and greatest) work should languish in recorded limbo in 1969.

William Zakariasen
New York, N.Y.

Stokey in Stereo

Now that the Philadelphia Orchestra has returned to RCA, could someone arrange for Leopold Stokowski and his Continued on page 12

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
JVC Stereo Components — the most formidable line of top-of-the-line components from powerful stereo systems, to all-in-one combos. To individual components, there is a model designed for everyone from the most avid stereo enthusiast to the casual listener.

Model 5102 — Deluxe Automatic 6-Speed Stereo Turntable and 2-Track Stereo. Large 11-inch platter for work and flat-top characteristics. Less than 0.5% distortion at 2000 Hz. Mass-balanced tone arm with moving magnet cartridge. Large 8-inch woofers, 6-inch midrange, and 1-inch tweeter. Excellent sound quality at a competitive price. With Model 5102 you'll have peace of mind and soul.

Model 5103 — Powerful Spectrum Speaker System—Non-Directional Sound. JVC's non-directional Spectrum Speaker System makes the listener feel like the speaker is right in front of them. It's been designed for optimal sound diffusion—a full 360 degrees. Four high-efficiency drivers and four horn-type tweeters are carefully positioned in special hermetically sealed metal enclosures to handle up to 80 watts in each channel. Frequency response range from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Full-floating stereo with a crossover point at 8,000 Hz. Speakers may be pedestal-mounted or suspended from the ceiling. Diameter 13 1/2". 26 lbs.

Model 5105 — Automatic 4-Speed Stereo Turntable with MagWave Cartridge. This is one of the finest turntables offered anywhere. At any price. With JVC's new 4-pole outer rotor induction motor, a large 11-inch platter delivers crystal-clear unswerving speech at 15%, 30%, 45%, and 78 rpm. Precisely eliminates all traces of wow and flutter. Expensive tubular-type tonearm features a magnetic cartridge and diamond stylus. Up to 6 minutes can be stacked and played automatically. Breathtaking walnut finish with metal trim and sanded acrylic dust cover. 8 - 3/4" W, 16 lbs.

Model 5107 — Handcrafted 2-Way Bookshelf Speaker System. Delivers sound way out of proportion to its compact size. Handles a full 25 watts with 8-inch woofers and 3 1/2-inch tweeters. Sound reproduction in superb throughout an entire 43 to 30,000 Hz frequency response range. Special tweeter level adjustment control to match room acoustics. Butters are included on all sides for vertical placement. Incredibly lightweight, only 14 lbs.

Model 5105 — Compact 2-Way Stereo Speaker System. Slightly larger than the bookshelf-sized 5107, this model is at home in any interior size. A set of stereo systems. Its large 8-inch woofers and 3 1/2-inch tweeters are carefully positioned within their enclosure for full-range sound reproduction. Bass is as tight as the tweeters are controlled. Butters are included on all sides for vertical placement. Incredibly lightweight, only 14 lbs.

Model 5108 — Powerful 4-Way Stereo Speaker System with Multi-Channel Input. Designed for use with larger stereo components, this powerful system easily handles 40 watts of input with four specially designed speakers: a large 10-inch woofer, 51/2-inch midrange, 3 1/2-inch cone tweeter, and a 2 1/2-inch horn tweeter. It features a 50 to 20,000 Hz frequency response range with crossover points at 8,000, 3,000, and 200 Hz. To access each satellite's front level control, wooden enclosures feature exceptional acoustic qualities. 24 lbs. 1 3/4" H, 13 1/2" W, 13" D. 25 1/2 lbs.


CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

It's good to hear from Standard. Again.

At $69.95, nothing in the world is better to hear from than Standard's stereo amplifier (the 157S) or stereo tuners (the A100T or A200T).

The SR-157S amplifier generates 20 watts of continuous music power (10/10) at 8 ohms. Harmonic distortion is less than 0.5% at 1 KHz, frequency response 20 to 30,000 Hz at 8 ohms.

The SR-A100T is an AM/FM/FM multiplex tuner, with full flywheel tuning. FM signal-to-noise and cross modulation ratios are 60 dB, harmonic distortion 0.5% at 1,000 Hz. FM image rejection is 50 dB, stereo separation 35 dB.

The SR-A200T is an FM/FM multiplex tuner, with a 5-dial, pre-set pushbutton tuning system. Frequency response is 30 to 20,000 Hz ± 1 dB, harmonic distortion 0.3%. Cross modulation and signal-to-noise ratios are 60 dB.

Any one for $69.95. Very good to hear from indeed. At your Standard dealer. For the one nearest you, just drop us a line.

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STANDARD RADIO CORP. ...electronic years ahead!

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CIRCLE 76 ON READER SERVICE CARD

LETTERS
Continued from page 10

one-time orchestra to recreate in Dynagroove some of those memorable performances which Stokowski devotes still treasure in their old 78-rpm format? We would love to hear the Maestro in brand new stereo performance of the Brahms First, Stravinsky's Rise of Spring, the Franck Symphony, or even Schoenberg's Gurrelieder. Alternatively, may I suggest some recordings of music which Stokowski gave with the Philadelphia but never recorded with them—such as Elgar's Enigma Variations, Sibelius' Second Symphony, or Mahler's Second and Eighth Symphonies. It would be wonderful to hear the old magic again—but in really up-to-date sound!

Edward Johnson
London, England

Manual Versus Automatic

I would like to commend your campaign against electronic stereo, and say that it is largely through journals such as High Fidelity that the record buying public can be educated to refuse such discs, and hence bring pressure to bear on the manufacturers to cease such practices.

For this reason let me recommend to you another campaign that you might lend your voice to. This is an attempt to persuade the record companies to revert to the old practice of issuing sets, particularly operas, in a manually coupled form—i.e., sides 1 and 2 on the first disc, 3 and 4 on the second, and so on—instead of the current automatic coupling form: 1 and 6, 2 and 3, 5 and 4 for a three-disc set. I find it hard to believe that there are many people who want to stack the six discs of Götterdammerung on their changer. Conversely, an automatically coupled set played on a manual turntable is not only very inconvenient, but also involves greater handling; more frequent putting in and pulling out of sleeves, and hence increases the risk of scratching the disc.

Perhaps your other readers might like to express their views. If American practice would change, we in Australia would reap the benefit on RCA and CBS discs, and possibly on DGG also.

A. Watson
Newtown, Australia

Angel Records has already taken a step in this direction. The new Gilels/Szell recording of the five Beethoven Piano Concertos is manually coupled.

A Mono Repository

The genocidal warfare against the mono disc is tragic (as was the disappearance of the 78-rpm "golden age" before it). What can be done? Is there any way that the minority voices of the collector with specialized tastes can be satisfied? A number of record libraries and scholarly collections have, I understand, gotten together to try and preserve large sections

Continued on page 16

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
Now...The First All-Label, Discount Record Service to Offer All These Advantages

BIG DISCOUNTS! Generally at least 33½%; in some cases up to 75%!

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Note: Since stereo records may now be played on monaural (regular high-fidelity) phonographs...and cost no more than monaural records...all of your records will be sent in stereo.

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CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

FEBRUARY 1969
After reducing the top-rated ADC 303A to $81.95, what do you do for an encore?
You introduce the 303AX.

The new 303AX speaker system represents an improved version of the top-rated, award-winning Brentwood. It has the same famous ADC wide dispersion 1½" mylar dome tweeter, rich, handsome oiled walnut cabinetry, five-year warranty on parts and labor and the same lack of coloration and distortion that tend to bug other speakers in the same category.

This new speaker is characterized by higher sensitivity, particularly in the extreme bass, where increased power handling capacity in the critical 30 to 45 Hz region effectively extends the useful response by one half of an octave.

To get this performance, we have designed a new, high compliance 10" bass unit using specially developed cone and surround materials. The crossover frequency is 1500 Hz and the drivers are critically matched to provide a smooth transition without irregularities.

The net result is a system of exceptional accuracy. It provides the listener with open, transparent, and above all, thoroughly natural reproduction.

Which 303 is the best buy? You should have this decision every day of your life.

Audio Dynamics Corporation, New Milford, Connecticut 06776

The new ADC 303AX $99.95
of the recorded repertoire in central locations over the country, with provision for the public (or at least the student and specialist) to listen.

This laudable aim does not, however, begin to attack the question of making available for purchase old recordings that have been deleted through lack of consumer demand. Here it would seem that better systems are needed. There are several possibilities: 1) The major companies could, at the point of discontinuing a record, press or otherwise keep in stock a modest inventory of that number on a permanent basis, to be specially ordered by the customer either directly or through a dealer (RCA, for one, has made sporadic efforts in this direction at various points). 2) A sizable stock of cut-outs from all labels could be sent to a central repository, perhaps a foundation or other socially responsible agency, which could then issue an "archival" catalogue to interested collectors, run audition facilities in major cities, and share the profits (if any) with the record companies. 3) Some combination of the above plans could be instituted, but with tape as the major vehicle (assuming that the collector whose curiosity extends beyond the stereo era of today would have tape equipment). Thus, the man interested in finding out which, if any, of the prestigous Brahms First Piano Concertos was worth his while to get could hear them at some central library facility. Then he could pay the library, or foundation, to make a copy for him, with part of the proceeds going back to RCA. London, Decca, as the case may be. Surely, the legal roadblocks to open and above-board tape copying would not exist under these arrangements.

All of the above sounds terribly utopian and there are a thousand practical objections to any such plan. But something must be done to prevent the continuation of what is currently happening whereby the enormous legacy of the past half century’s music making is falling into limbo because of our deafness to anything that is not the latest in technical fidelity or in promotional marketing. I would enjoy hearing other readers' views on this matter.

Abram Chipman, Ph.D.
Boston, Mass.

**Under Pressure**

In "Too Hot To Handle" [November 1968] you advise a reader to use just under 2 grams stylus force for his Shure V-15/II cartridge in the AR tone arm. You comment also that CBS laboratories found 1 gram to be enough when they tested this cartridge, but that their tests were conducted with the SME tone arm "with its numerous adjustments, ultra-fine balancing, and anti-skating." You noted further that you had found the V-15/II to work beautifully at 1.5 grams in the AR tone arm and turntable. I feel obliged to make two points concerning this reply.

Shure recommends a maximum of 1.5 grams stylus force for the V-15/II. I would not disregard their recommendation; surely they would not set an upper limit without good reason.

AR recommends 1 gram stylus force for the V-15/II in the AR arm. We use this value consistently at audio show demonstrations and in the AR Music Rooms. If a higher stylus force offered even a slight improvement in the quality of sound available to us for demonstration of our products, you can be very sure that we would use the higher force.

Without getting involved in technical arguments about arm performance, I make this categorical statement: if a Shure V-15/II does not track the most difficult record grooves at 1 gram in the AR tone arm, then the arm is defective. The stylus assembly is defective, the record is defective, or there is a serious misadjustment of the arm.

Roy F. Allison,
Vice President
Acoustic Research, Inc.
Cambridge, Mass.

Norman Eisenberg replies: We agree that under ideal or optimum conditions, the AR turntable can accommodate the Shure V-15 Type II at less than 1.5 grams vertical stylus force. However, the conditions described by the reader in his letter were obviously not ideal. He talks of record defects, including warpage. Further, we have no way of knowing
The first cassette deck with the guts to talk specs.

Most high fidelity buffs have been, at best, amused by the notion of a fine quality cassette deck. And perhaps with good reason. Many cassette recorders have been little more than toys. We, on the other hand, have always felt that a component quality cassette deck was a totally viable product.

And we've proved it. Conclusively.

Our new CAD4 delivers a frequency response of ±2 db 30-12, -500 Hz with less than 0.25 RMS wow and flutter. Signal to noise is better than 49 db. And record and playback amplifier distortion is less than 0.5% THD @ zero VU. Crosstalk is better than 35 db.

These specifications compare favorably with those of the most popular reel-to-reel recorders. They were achieved by developing a revolutionary new narrow gap head with four laminations per stack. This head, combined with specially designed low-noise solid state electronics makes it possible for the CAD4 to deliver wideband frequency response and virtually distortion-free performance.

The CAD4 also features electronic speed control and carefully balanced capstan drive with precision mechanism for precise tape handling and minimum wow and flutter.

It has two large illuminated professional type VU meters; over-modulation indicator light on the front panel that ignites at ±2 VU on either channel; unique electronic automatic shutoff and pushbutton switches for recording and shuttling functions.

Unlike most other cassette decks on the market, the CAD4 is solidly crafted in steel (walnut end caps) to assure rigidity and mechanical alignment of all moving parts. It weighs 10 pounds and is 12½” W, 9” D, 3½” H.

The CAD4 is at your Harman-Kardon dealer now. It's only $159.50. And we guarantee it will change your mind about tape cassette recorders.

For detailed technical information on the CAD4, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Dept. HF2.
LETTERS
Continued from page 16

whether or not the arm is defective. But, assuming that nothing is wrong with his equipment, the best solution to the problem would be to increase the tracking force to the maximum recommended by the pickup manufacturer, which in this instance is 1.5 grams.

Tapes for Troops

We would like to solicit help from your readers in strengthening the morale and providing relaxation for the servicemen in Vietnam. “Tapes for Troops” is a program whereby people in the U.S.A. donate tape recordings for the listening pleasure of American servicemen. The tapes are shipped to 1st Logistical Command and are distributed to each Corps Area where they are further disseminated to units and clubs that have tape equipment.

The types of tapes we receive cover many musical areas—classical, jazz, pop, country & western, religious, etc. They can be in stereo or monaural; 3¾ or 7½ ips; and 3-, 5-, or 7-inch reels. The object of this program is troop entertainment not necessarily the production of a quality product. Because this is not a funded program of the Department of the Army, the cost of mailing the tapes must be borne by the sender. Once the tapes are received by the servicemen, they become the property of the recipient and will not be returned to the sender.

The enthusiastic reception of this program by the troops in the field has led us to attempt to contact more tape collectors who would be interested in making donations.

If your readers wish to contribute tapes, the address is: “Tapes for Troops,” Hq 1st Logistical Command, att: Special Services, APO San Francisco, Calif. 96384.

Ben Krytik
LTC. AGC
San Francisco, Calif.

The Old Man

I could not help but be shocked and annoyed after reading Alfred Frankenstein’s November “In Brief” review of Maksim Shostakovich conducting two of his father’s compositions: shocked to read that the only fitting description Mr. Frankenstein had for the great Russian composer was “the old man,” and annoyed that you permitted this to pass through your fingers unnoticed.

That description was completely uncalled for and demonstrates the writer’s complete disrespect for Dmitri Shostakovich. I have been reading your magazine for the past seven years, but until now I have never encountered such a gross display of ignorance on the part of a reviewer. If Shostakovich is just an “old man” to Mr. Frankenstein, I suggest he give up the idea of reviewing his works. Since he has already expressed his opinion of the composer, what more can he say about his works.

Daniel Lewicki
Bronx, N. Y.

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of Truth"
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Fairfax speaker systems are available in five models, from shelf to studio-type floor sizes, all natural walnut finishes and in two, three, and four way systems. Depending upon model, frequency response ranges from 25-20,000Hz; power handling capacity from 25–60 watts maximum; 8 ohms impedance; prices from $49.95 to $129.50 list.

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Fairfax speaker systems are available in five models, from shelf to studio-type floor sizes, all natural walnut finishes and in two, three, and four way systems. Depending upon model, frequency response ranges from 25-20,000Hz; power handling capacity from 25–60 watts maximum; 8 ohms impedance; prices from $49.95 to $129.50 list.

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The new Ampex Tape Selector simplifies your life. We've taken all the kinds of tape we make at our manufacturing facility—one of the most modern in the world, by the way—and put them together with our twenty-five years of innovation in recorders and frustration in tape shopping. The result: a compact and handy way to find the just-right tape. Fast. Easy. And note: For a limited time only people who shop at our Tape Selector Rack will get a Free Tape Calculator—an ingenious device that tells you what kind of tape to use for specific recording jobs. If there isn't an Ampex Selector Rack in your favorite store, fill out and mail this coupon and we'll see that you'll get a free instruction book on tape recording by return mail.

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Kit Stereo Components And Color TV's

HEATHKIT AR-15 Deluxe Stereo Receiver

The World's Finest Stereo Receiver... the Heathkit AR-15 has received high praise from every leading audio & electronics magazine and every major consumer testing organization. Here are some of the many reasons why. The AR-15 delivers 150 watts music power from its 69 transistor, 43 diode, 2 IC's circuit -- 75 watts per channel. Harmonic and FM distortion are both less than 0.5% at full output for clean, natural sound throughout the entire audio range at any listening level. The FM tuner has a cascade 2-stage FET RF amplifier and an FET mixer to provide high overload capability, excellent cross modulation and image rejection. The use of crystal filters in the IF section is a Heath first in the industry and provides an ideally shaped bandgap and adjacent channel selectivity impossible with conventional methods. Two Integrated Circuits in the IF amplifier provide hard limiting, excellent temperature stability and increased reliability. Each IC is no larger than a tiny transistor, yet each contains 28 actual parts. The FM tuner boasts sensitivity of 1.8 uV, selectivity of 70 dB and harmonic & IM distortion both less than 0.5%....you'll hear stations you didn't even know existed, and the elaborate noise-operated squelch, adjustable phase control, stereo threshold control and FM stereo noise filter will let you hear them in the clearest, most natural way possible. Other features include two front panel stereo headphone jacks, positive circuit protection, transformerless outputs, loudness switch, stereo only switch, front panel input level controls, recessed outputs, two external FM antenna connectors and one for AM, Tone Control, a massive electronically filtered power supply and "Black Magic" panel lighting. Seven circuit boards & three wiring harness make assembly easier and you can mount your completed AR-15 in a wall, your own custom cabinet or the rich walnut Heath cabinet. For the finest stereo receiver anywhere, order your AR-15 now. 34 lbs. *Optional walnut cabinet AE-16, $24.95.

HEATHKIT AJ-15 Deluxe Stereo Tuner

For the man who already owns a fine stereo amplifier, Heath now offers the superb FM stereo tuner section of the AR-15 receiver as a separate unit. The new AJ-15 FM Stereo Tuner has the exclusive FET FM tuner for remarkable sensitivity, exclusive Crystal Filters in the IF strip for perfect response curve and no alignment; Integrated Circuits in the IF for high gain, best limiting; Noise-Operated Squelch; Stereo-Threshold Switch; Stereo-Only Switch; Adjustable Multiplex Phase; two Tuning Meters; two Stereo Phone jacks; "Black Magic" panel lighting. 18 lbs. *Walnut cabinet AE-18, $19.95.

HEATHKIT AA-15 Deluxe Stereo Amplifier

For the man who already owns a fine stereo tuner, Heath now offers the famous amplifier section of the AR-15 receiver separately. The new AA-15 Stereo Amplifier has the same superb features: 150 watts Music Power; Ultra-Low Harmonic & IM Distortion (less than 0.5% at full output); Ultra-Wide Frequency Response (± 1 dB, 8 to 40,000 Hz at 1 watt); Front Panel Input Level Controls; Transformerless Amplifier; Capacitor Coupled Outputs; All-Silicon Transistor Circuit; Positive Circuit Protection. 26 lbs. *Walnut cabinet AE-18, $19.95.

HEATHKIT AS-48 High Efficiency System

Our finest Heathkit System... the new AS-48 uses famous JBL® speakers custom-designed for Heath. The specially constructed 14" woofer employs a 4" voice coil, a massive 1½ pound magnet assembly and an inert, self-damping material to suspend the cone to deliver clear, full bodied bass down to 40 Hz. Crisp, open highs, up to 20 kHz come from the 2¼" direct radiator. A three position high frequency control conveniently mounted on the rear panel lets you adjust the balance to your taste. Easy, one-evening assembly. Just wire the high frequency control, and the 2500 Hz LC-type crossover, then install the speakers. All components mount from the front of the one-piece cabinet for easier assembly and a more solid sound. And the beautiful pecan finish will blend graciously with any decor. For very high performance stereo, order two of these remarkable bookshelf systems today. 43 lbs.

HEATHKIT AS-38 Bookshelf System

The new Heathkit AS-38 is a medium priced system that's small enough to be used in apartments, yet delivers sound that readily qualifies it for use with the very best of components. The 12" woofer and 2½" tweeter, custom-designed for Heath by JBL® produce clean, lifelike response from 45 Hz to 20 kHz and the variable high frequency level control lets you adjust the sound to your liking. For easier assembly and more realistic reproduction, all components mount from the front of the one-piece walnut cabinet. Build the new AS-38 in an evening, enjoy rich, complete sound for years. Order two for stereo. 38 lbs.
Now There are 4 Heathkit Color TV’s...
All With 2-Year Picture Tube Warranty

NEW Deluxe “681” Color TV With Automatic Fine Tuning

The new Heathkit GR-681 is the most advanced color TV on the market. A strong claim, but easy to prove. Compare the “681” against every other TV — there isn’t a color picture at any price that has all these features. Automatic Fine Tuning on all 83 channels … just push a button and the factory assembled solid-state circuit takes over to automatically tune the best color picture in the industry. Push another front-panel button and the VHF channel selector rotates until you reach the desired station, automatically. Built-in cable-type remote control that allows you to turn the “681” on and off and change VHF channels without moving from your chair. Or add the optional GRA-681-6 Wireless Remote Control described below. A bridge-type low voltage power supply for superior regulation; high & low AC taps are provided to insure that the picture transmitted exactly fits the “681” screen. Automatic degaussing. 2-speed transistor UHF tuner, hi-fi sound output, two VHF antenna inputs … plus the built-in self-servicing aids that are standard on all Heathkit color TVs but can’t be bought on any other set for any price … plus all the features of the famous “295” below. Compare the “681” against the others … and be convinced.

GRA-295-4, Mediterranean cabinet shown $119.50
Other cabinets from $62.95

Deluxe “295” Color TV … Model GR-295

Big, Bold, Beautiful … and packed with features. Top quality American brand color tube with 295 sq. in. viewing area, new improved phosphors and low voltage supply with boosted B + for brighter, livelier color … automatic degaussing … exclusive Heath Magna-Shield … Automatic Color Control & Automatic Gain Control for color purity, and flutter-free pictures under all conditions … pre-assembled IF strip with 3 stages instead of the usual two … deluxe VHF tuner with “memories” fine tuning … three-way installation — wall, custom or any of the beautiful Heath factory assembled cabinets. Add to that the unique Heathkit self-servicing features like the built-in dot generator and full 2-year warranty, plus the comprehensive manual that lets you set-up, converge and maintain the best color picture at all times, and can save you up to $200 over the life of your set in service calls. For the best color picture around, order your “295” now.

GRA-295-1, Walnut cabinet shown $62.95
Other cabinets from $99.95

Deluxe “227” Color TV … Model GR-227

Has same high performance features and built-in servicing facilities as the GR-295, except for 227 sq. inch viewing area. The vertical swing-out chassis makes for fast, easy servicing and installation. The dynamic convergence control board can be placed so that it is easily accessible anytime you wish to “touch-up” the picture.

GRA-227-1, Walnut cabinet shown $59.95
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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
“But Julius, I’ve Always Sung This Way”

A look at the “new” Beverly Sills

BEVERLY SILLS, the amazing Brooklyn-born coloratura soprano whose first solo recording is reviewed elsewhere in this issue (page 76), frankly admits to being a late bloomer. “Everything takes me much longer than it takes anybody else,” she says, “but when it finally happens I’m usually more ready for it than I would have been when I thought it should have happened.” Most coloraturas historically hit their stride long before reaching their late thirties. Miss Sills has been breaking all the rules. At thirty-nine, she is a flawlessly brilliant artist whose “new” career can be said to have only just begun.

Actually, Beverly Sills has had a variety of careers, stretching back to the pulpy days of radio in the early 1930s. She was singing and tap dancing at the age of three on a Saturday morning children’s program called Uncle Bob’s Rainbow House. A few years later she became a regular on Major Bowes’ Capital Family Hour, following in the footsteps of another young star whom she subsequently came to idolize: Maria Callas. Then she traveled on to the Cresta Blanca Carnival, Our Gal Sunday, and commercials for Rinso.

By the time she got out of high school in 1945, aged sixteen, Beverly was already a seasoned pro. During her teens and early twenties she toured the length and breadth of America, first in Gilbert and Sullivan and Viennese operetta, later as a member of the Charles Wagner Opera—an itinerant company for which she performed Violetta fifty-four times and Micaela sixty-three. She began besieging the New York City Opera in 1951 and after eight effortful auditions and three years of patient solicitation finally got them to sign her on. But Miss Sills, as advertised, did not immediately burst into full bloom. Though she sang many leading roles with the still struggling opera company and made something of a stir as the steadfast heroine of Douglas Moore’s Ballad of Baby Doe, there were no delirious successes. Her image was not that of an exciting star but rather that of a good trouper—charming in looks, agreeable in voice, musical, flexible, dependable.

“I guess the trouble was repertoire,” she says, musings contentedly on the past with the air of someone nursing no regrets whatsoever. “I knew right along I was a coloratura. I had studied this stuff since I was a little girl. Why, trills have been second nature to me since the age of ten. And I studied all the important scores—Lucia, Sonnambula, Puritani—knew them all by heart. But I never got a chance to sing these operas. The New York City Opera just didn’t do coloratura repertoire. So I sang what they offered me, and was glad for the experience.”

Two years ago, after the company had moved into its elegant new Lincoln Center home, Beverly Sills finally got a chance to show off her coloratura stuff. As Cleopatra in Handel’s Julius Caesar she astonished everybody with the faultless precision and joyous sparkle of her bravura singing. She even astonished Julius Rudel, the company’s artistic director, who had expected a high level of accomplishment from Miss Sills but was totally unprepared for the speed, dexterity, and sheer virtuosic luster with which she negotiated Handel’s fiendishly difficult arias. He said as much after the first star-opening rehearsal. “But Julius,” the singer replied, “I’ve always sung this way. It’s just that nobody has ever heard me.”

True to form, Beverly Sills took awhile in getting onto records. She does, of course, figure in the “original cast” albums of Baby Doe (M-G-M) and Julius Caesar (RCA), but unfortunately neither does her proper justice. Now at last she is safely under contract as an important solo artist in her own right. The Westminster collection of Bellini and Donizetti scenes just released constitutes the first in a long series of contemplated recordings. Coming up next is a complete Lucia di Lammermoor, to be recorded in Europe this spring and released in the fall to coincide with the

Continued on page 27

CIRCLE 62 ON READER-SERVICE CARD —>
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The Stanton does.
MUSIC MAKERS
Continued from page 24

City Opera's new production of the work. (Now that the company has discovered a coloratura star in its midst, it is belatedly turning to the coloratura repertoire.) More operas and recitals for Westminster are also being discussed. Manon? Cog d'or? Roberto Devereux?

"I'd rather not get into specifics now," Miss Sills hedged. "It's all so tentative. But I very definitely want to record as much as I can during the next few years, while I'm still at the top of my form."

Her indecision is complicated by one particularly vexing circumstance. "My voice," she explains, "is a coloratura, but my soul is that of a dramatic soprano. Even after Julius Caesar, when the City Opera decided to put on a new production just for me, what did I choose? Manon! I want to create a character. Just to sing a lot of high notes is boring for me. Right now, I'm preparing the part of Zerbinetta for a concert performance of Ariadne with Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony, but I don't think I'd ever want to play this silly lady on stage. She's too much like whipped cream. Now, the role of Queen Elizabeth in Roberto Devereux—that's something else again. I'd love to get my teeth into that part."

Impresarios, please take notice.

Although the City Opera is certainly New York's most adventurous and artistically stimulating opera company, the accolade of the venerable Metropolitan is still not to be taken lightly. Would Miss Sills ever be singing on the Met's big stage? "Perhaps," she says. "One never knows. There have already been offers, but only for repertoire that was of no interest to me. And why should I cross Lincoln Center Plaza for that?"

If she and the Metropolitan do ever agree on repertoire, she would consent to sing there only as a guest artist on loan from the City Opera. Her engagements elsewhere are restricted solely to those occasions when "the City Opera can spare her. It is the same with records. Her first loyalty now is to Westminster, but she has the option of working for other labels in any repertoire that Westminster wants to pass by. This spring, for example, she has been tapped by RCA for a recording of Mendelssohn's Elijah with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy, and there is also talk of her doing an opera for Decca/London.

By the age of seven, Beverly Sills had memorized all the well-known Italian coloratura arias from her mother's collection of Galli-Curci records. Later on, she studied for many years with Estelle Liebling, who was Galli-Curci's coach. My ears detected many Galli-Curci moments in Miss Sills's new recital record—particularly the liquid trills and the rapid, delicate staccatos—and I passed on this opinion to the lady in question. "Do you really think so?" she purred.

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CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
LONDON

EMI's Month: From Haydn to Walton With Stops In Between

The Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank has had its first recording session. This modest-sized hall seating 1,100 has provided a bone of contention ever since it was opened by the Queen in March 1967. Its concrete-slabbled sides represent to many eyes the architecture of brutality, and many music lovers felt the same way when they heard the harsh resonances that emanated from the concrete box of the stage area at the early performances. Nowadays a curtain is literally drawn over the stage and things are much improved, but for its recording sessions—Handel Organ Concertos with soloist Simon Preston, Yehudi Menuhin and the Menuhin (formerly Bath Festival) Orchestra—EMI did exactly the reverse. The engineers excluded the hall acoustic as far as possible by concentrating their microphones within the box of the stage.

Even if the Queen Elizabeth Hall is unlikely to become a regular recording site, the EMI people seemed pleased with the results they were getting, and especially with the sound of the Flentrop chamber organ, an instrument designed in collaboration with Ralph Downes. Like almost everything else in the hall, the organ has been a subject of dispute, but only because of its position. It rises up from beneath the stage, but then effectively slices any choir present into two separate sections. For the Handel Organ Concertos, of course, the problem did not arise.

The sessions I attended were the second of a planned series of four covering all the concertos and representing a variety of baroque organs. (The first were done on the reconstructed eighteenth-century organ by Renatus Harris in the Merchant Taylors Hall in the City of London.) As I walked in, Menuhin (eye-catching in a bright crimson shirt) had just come to a halt in conducting the charming B flat Concerto, Op. 4, No. 6. "I'm not yet convinced," he was saying quizzically, "about the alternation of violins and flutes." Preston persuaded him that the reading was completely authentic, and they went on to discuss the exact details of double-dots and ornaments, particularly in the elaborated repeats of different sections. "That may be too frivolous," said Menuhin almost apologetically in suggesting an extra trill, but everyone readily agreed. London taste at the moment is for more ornamentation rather than less, perhaps as a reaction against the bald manners of earlier years. In the work at hand echo effects too were regarded as important, and Preston's registration emphasized the lightness of line stops and the like, with the accompanying strings muted for the whole of the first two movements.

Menuhin with Viola. Only a few days later, Menuhin was in EMI's No. 1 Studio, not with the baton this time but in a rare role for him, playing the viola. It was through the persuasion of recording manager Ronald Kinloch Anderson that Menuhin first started playing the viola seriously. Anderson suggested to him that he ought to take the lead in the Bath Festival recording of the Sixth Brandenburg. Finally Menuhin agreed, and since then he has periodically recorded full-scale viola concertos—notably Berlioz' Harlaw in Italy with Colin Davis and Bartok's Viola Concerto with Antal Dorati.

This time it was Sir William Walton's Viola Concerto, and the composer himself was on hand to conduct the New Philharmonia Orchestra. Following a strict rule he has set himself, Menuhin agrees to act as violist only after he has had a spell of holiday from conducting. This time he had been "relaxing" for three weeks, practicing the viola—not an instrument of his own but a Bergonzi lent to him by Peter Schidlof of the Amadeus Quartet. "Peter has now graduated to a Strad," Menuhin said, but he added how much he himself loves the "fat tone" of this Bergonzi instrument. Oistrakh, he recalled, sometimes played on a very beautiful Guarneri viola, but "I prefer this."

Sir William Walton fusses less about a recording he's conducting than any other composer I can think of, yet the results as a rule are astonishingly vital. Within seconds of the first movement's completion, ten minutes before the scheduled end of the session, Walton took up the baton for the scherzo (having checked with Menuhin on exactly how fast he would like it). Straightaway, without a word, he whisked soloist and orchestra through a very tricky movement. No re-

Continued on page 34
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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 30

hearsal whatever. The result was not perfect, but much better than many a first take I have heard. The Verdi Concerto will be coupled with Walton's Violin Concerto, to be recorded at a later date.

Klemperer, and Others. EVII, as it happens, has lately been boosking up recording sessions almost as if they were squash courts. With Klemperer it has been recording Mahler’s Seventh and re-recording the same conductor's Beethoven Seventh as well as Schumann Second and Genoese Overture, all of them with the New Philharmonia Orchestra. During the Genoese sessions producer Suki Raj Grubb casually asked the octogenarian maestro whether he was familiar with the opera for which the overture was written. "There is one good duet in it," the old maestro answered promptly and at once proceeded to sing it in his croaking voice. Not much wrong with the Klemperer musical memory.

Otto Klemperer: at eighty-four, just on the draw with an answer.

Grubb found that during a single week he presided over no fewer than nine separate sessions, including not only work with Klemperer but with Daniel Barenboim, whose Beethoven sonata recordings are proceeding apace: Op. 2, No. 3, Op. 28, the Pastoral; Op. 110 are the latest. Barenboim has also conducted for his wife, Jacqueline du Pré, in the Schumann and Saint-Saëns Cello Concertos; and with Sir John Barbirolli, Du Pré has recorded the Cello Concerto of Georg Mounn. The last-named will be coupled with the Haydn E major Concerto, already in the vaults.

Barbirolli had earlier completed the main bulk of the sessions for Verdi's Otello, which produced a characteristic Barbirolli story. He kept trying to get the chorus to look at him instead of burying their heads in the music. Finally, in exasperation, Barbirolli lay down full length practically at their feet, and challenged them: "Perhaps you'll look at me now!" No more trouble over missed cues.

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The Fisher 160-T

* U.S. Patent Number 3290443

CIRCLED ON READER-SERVICE CARD
WILL ELECTRONIC VIDEO SUBVERT VIDEO TAPE?

Sometime during 1969, many insiders feel, there will begin a battle whose outcome may well determine whether the home video system of the future will be a playback-only system (EVR) or one that permits the user to make his own recordings (VTR). Ostensibly, the struggle will appear to be between two systems for reproducing pictures on the home television screen. On one side will be companies like Ampex, Minnesota Mining, Sony, Matsushita (Panasonic), Philips (Noreco), Bell & Howell, and a number of other companies that are already involved with magnetic tape recording in general and with videotape recording in particular. In the opposing corner will be the television networks, program producers, and what is euphemistically called “talent”—all backing a system called electronic video recording.

Both systems will be trying to establish themselves as the medium for picture reproduction in the home. EVR uses motion picture film. Although it started over a year ago as monochrome (see this column, November 1967), EVR recently has shown itself capable of also making color pictures — and at costs lower than either color film or video tape. However, you can't record on EVR film; you must buy programs already recorded, as you now buy a phonograph record.

EVR was developed by CBS Laboratories, in conjunction with the Ciba Pharmaceutical Co. of Switzerland and ICI, an industrial group in England. The developers last December licensed Motorola to produce the device; other licensees are anticipated, while CBS Labs' parent group, the Columbia Broadcasting System, is looking on with interest. The TV networks have long been nervous about the home video recorder. As one network executive put it when the home VTR first appeared, "If somebody is watching a recording of Birth of a Nation he videotaped from some educational channel, he isn't watching whatever's on our network. As we lose viewers, we'll have to adjust rates to advertisers. If we lose enough, we'll have to cut our rates. And that will mean less money for new productions. The first ones to go will be the most expensive—news and public affairs, and cultural specials."

Just as the record companies look with some fear at tape cartridge units that can record as well as play back, so the owners of video programs are shy of the VTR. "After all," asks one movie executive, "why should anybody buy a videotape of one of our features if he can tape a copy for a fraction of the price the next time it plays on television?" Film producers would naturally prefer a playback-only system, in which you'd have to buy your copy of Cleopatra prerecorded and packaged, or do without. Understandable as these fears are, however, it may be that they are essentially unrealistic. Videotaping Julia Child on $30-worth of tape to play back in your kitchen doesn't make sense when her book, containing the equivalent of dozens of programs, costs only about $5.00 and fits on a few inches of counter space. And re-recording, the only factor that presently makes economic sense of the home VTR, draws the user right back to the output of his local stations.

EVR, like videotape, hopes to establish a beachhead in the schools, where playback units can be supplied at a fraction the cost of VTRs. If EVR's present price and quality advantages can knock VTR out of the schools—even for a year or two—the home picture system your children use may well be limited to pictures on a reel of film.
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Once you're there look for one of the Audiotape displays on the left. You can't miss it. It will be wearing a sign, "Audiotape Recording Center" and will be stacked with Audiopaks and Audiotape. We call our cartridges Audiopak cartridges and our cassettes Audiopak cassettes. We're the only cartridge and cassette maker who uses Audiotape. That's pretty important. A cartridge or cassette tape should be specially formulated because it goes back and forth, again and again, around guides and rollers and hubs. Ours is. Most tape makers start with the same raw materials: plastic base, iron oxides and so on. It's a lot like cooking or baking. Start with the same ingredients but what a difference a great chef makes in the finished product.

Our difference? We're tape specialists. We make tape only. Sound tape, lubricated tape, computer tape, videotape. You know yourself what happens when you put all your efforts into one thing. You get to know more about it—become a perfectionist. Does it make a difference in the way we sound? The major studios and radio stations think so. Good enough for you? Good.

Meet you at an Audiotape Recording Center. If you don't find a distributor listed near you, drop us a line at Audio Devices, Inc., Dept. HF-2, 235 East 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017

Audio Devices, Inc.
A subsidiary of Capitol Industries, Inc.
I'm considering purchase of the AR-5 speaker system, which is offered in walnut, birch, pine, and mahogany. I have asked audio salesmen whether the different types of wood affect the sound. The salesmen are vague in their replies, apparently trying to plug the more expensive finishes. Or are they right?—J. A. Aguero, Passaic, N. J. They are wrong. Either seven-core plywood or flake-core plywood (both of which have the same acoustical properties) is used for all AR's enclosures. The finish is only a thin veneer bonded to the outer surface, and it has no effect on performance. Incidentally, veneered plywood is almost universally used for cabinetry and furniture, in and out of the high fidelity industry.

I would like to know what you consider the best 4-track stereo recorder for $225 or less.—Arnie Bell, Playa Del Rey, Calif.

Of the low-priced machines we have tested in the past three years, the one we liked best was the Allied TD-1030, costing $129.95. (See report in HF, February 1968.)

Would you rate the AR amplifier ($225) and the Heathkit AJ-15 tuner kit ($190) as a better combination than the Heathkit AR-15 stereo receiver kit ($340)? The guarantee is much better on the AR amp; and if the combination is about the same qualitatively, it would be worth the extra $75 to me.—David Rawding, Lynn, Mass.

From a performance standpoint, our published test results show that the combination in fact comes out a little ahead—mainly because of the AR amplifier's somewhat higher power and somewhat lower distortion than the amplifier section of the Heath receiver. On the other hand, the Heath receiver offers controls and features that the Heath/AR combination lacks: a headphone jack for more than just FM listening, speaker-system selecting facilities, a four-position program selector, a loudness contour switch, and an AM band. If the attractive warranty of the AR amplifier and the slightly better performance of the combination outweigh for you their extra cost and fewer features, we'd say yes.

It is impossible for me to hear the following speakers together for personal evaluation. Separately, they all sound as though they would provide lasting pleasure. They are the KLH 17, Harman-Kardon 40, AR2X, AR2a. With the 2a in unfinished cabinet they are all in the $60 to $100 price class. By your knowledge and test reports on low distortion, bass full or hole in middle, clean highs, and over-all transience plus quality parts—how do they compare and rank, if driven by a 60-watt receiver of 18 watts RMS?—B. Brown, Louisville, Ky.

The AR2a is no longer listed as available, and we never tested the AR2X. Of the AR2 series, we have tested the AR2aX; our opinion is that it's the best in the group in which you seem interested. It's also the most expensive ($109 to $128 depending on cabinet). The lowest-priced speaker in the group is the KLH-17 at $69.95. Its response is fairly similar to that of the AR2aX except that it doesn't reach as far down into the deep bass. The AR makes it down to below 40 Hz; the KLH is a little shy at about 45 Hz. The HK-40, at $100, is fairly similar to the AR2aX in that its bass gets down to below 40 Hz; the top end rolls off a bit sooner at 13 kHz than either the AR or the KLH at 14 kHz. Your 18 watts RMS power per channel should suffice for any of these speakers.

I plan to return to my native country, Turkey, where the electrical standards are 220 volts AC at 50 Hz, rather than the American 115 volts AC at 60 Hz. Would the difference in Hz cause any harm to my stereo system?—Sccil Tun-calg, Champaign, Ill.

For your turntable and tape recorder you should obtain from your manufacturers any required adapter parts (pulley, motor shaft, or capstan) that permit them to operate correctly and safely on 50 Hz power. This line frequency doesn't matter for electronic units such as tuners, amplifiers, or receivers, but the line voltage (115-120 vs. 220-230) does matter for tape recorders and turntables. You will need a step-down transformer that changes the higher voltage abroad to the lower voltage required by U.S. products, unless your equipment has such provisions built in. We recommend a separate transformer to handle the electronics (tuner and amplifier, or receiver) and additional separate transformers for turntable and tape recorder. You will probably need about 250 watts from the transformer handling your electronics, and 100 watts each from the transformer handling your piano and tape recorder. Typical transformers would be the Stancor P-6385 (250 watts, $25), and the Stancor P-6383 (100 watts, about $15). For exact details, contact your local hi-fi dealer or radio parts supply store.

I am located in a valley, where distant FM reception is so poor that most people can receive only two stations twenty to thirty miles away. (We get one TV by cable, but it's not equipped for FM reception.) I'm lucky in that with my Scott 388 receiver, stacked pair of Fisco FJ-3 antennas, JFD-FT-1 amplifier, and eighty feet of Beiden 8290 shielded twin-lead, I can receive enjoyable sound from at least ten other FM stations. None of these, however, has signals strong enough for stereo reception. Would coaxial cable give better signal than twin-lead?—Claude Cook, Mullens, W. Va.

It's well worth trying, in our view. Foamed-coil coaxial cable is not only just about as rugged and certainly as noise-free as shielded twin-lead but it also has less signal loss. For your eighty-foot stretch, the cost would be only about $4.00 more than twin-lead.

Is a free-standing room divider strong enough to keep a turntable with very light tracking cartridge steady while controls are being adjusted on a tape deck, tuner, or preamplifier?—Malcolm R. Kimball, Tahalasssee, Fla.

If it's strong enough to support the turntable's weight, and is firmly anchored in place, such a structure will do the job. In shopping for a room divider, pay attention to the manner in which its uprights are fastened to floor and ceiling. Pressure-type fastenings, or bolts by bolted brackets, will suffice. If the thing still wobbles, brace it from the rear with a 1- by 4-inch board, itself bracketed to the floor at one end and bolted to the rear of a shelf or cabinet at the other end. We've installed this multi-span system this way and it works fine.

I have seen the Maximus 2 speaker system advertised for $110 a pair. They are small, but I'd like them for a starter system, to be replaced later by larger speakers. I plan to drive them with either a Dynaco Stereo 120 or an AR amplifier. What do you think?—David Y. Holcomb, Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

You may have a problem driving the Maximus 2 speakers from either of your powerhouse amplifiers. Each speaker is rated for power-handling ability of 30 watts; each of your proposed amplifiers can easily supply double that amount per channel. So, if you want to avoid distortion or even possible damage to the speakers, remember not to turn the volume control up to full. Rather than that, you have a good buy here—half the price the system sold for when it was introduced in this country about four years ago.
Why do we make it so easy to live without an expensive Fisher speaker system?

We could probably get a lot more people to spend $200 or so for a pair of Fisher speaker systems if we didn't make the low-cost speakers you see here.

These systems sell for as little as $89 a matched pair. The sound of each is unmistakably full and natural. Unmistakably Fisher.

And there are three easy-to-live-with low-cost Fisher speaker systems, so you don't even have to give up the luxury of a choice.

The Fisher XP-44 ($44.50 each) we call our Little Giant®. It's a two-way system that manages a frequency response of 39 to 19,000 Hz in just 8¼" x 15¼" x 6½" of space!

The Fisher XP-55B ($49.95 each) is the most popular speaker we make. It's the one that makes our $450 compact sound so good. The XP-55B uses a massive 8-inch woofer that extends its low-end frequency response down to 37 Hz, and a low-mass treble speaker with peak-free response to 20,000 Hz. It's also quite small: 10" x 20" x 7½" deep.

Our best two-way speaker system is the XP-60 ($79.95 each). It offers extremely clean sound from 35 Hz to beyond audibility. The treble speaker in the XP-60 has a unique shape that makes possible the speaker's extremely wide dispersion characteristics. The system is small enough to fit on any bookshelf: 13" x 23" x 10½" deep.

Sure, we'd like everyone to buy our expensive speaker systems. So why, you might ask, do we make such good low-cost speaker systems? Because we can.

(For more information, plus a free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1969 edition, an authoritative 72-page reference guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on magazine's front cover flap.)
STEREO SHOWS—A TALE OF THREE CITIES

With three major shows taking place in as many weeks, high fidelity may well be developing into America's newest spectator sport. Certainly, the events last November in San Francisco, Toronto, and—of all places—Paramus, New Jersey strongly indicate that people are eager to come out and see the latest in high quality stereo gear. In fact, the Paramus show boasted some 28,000 visitors according to official count—a figure which, to our knowledge, sets a new attendance record for audio shows.

The San Francisco show, held at that city's Civic Auditorium October 30 to November 3, under the sponsorship of the Institute of High Fidelity—offered West Coast stereo enthusiasts a chance to audition most of the offerings introduced by the industry a month earlier at the New York show. In addition, the SF show boasted a few products not seen at previous shows, including a new tape deck from Teac, two Sansui stereo receivers, and a budget tuner, amplifier, two receivers, and stereo compact from Nikko of Japan. While the Nikko line isn't, strictly speaking, unfamiliar to Southern Californians, it will be new to stereophiles in other parts of the country when it begins to appear on dealer shelves.

The Civic Auditorium, with its king-size rooms and spacious halls, proved to be one of the best auditoriums we've seen from the standpoint of permitting equipment to be properly displayed and large numbers of visitors to move about freely. Because the spaces are so large, people don't have the claustrophobic feeling they get in corridors and rooms at the New York show (and, incidentally, which we experienced in the minirooms of Toronto's Lord Simcoe Hotel). For the same reason, the Tijuana Brass doesn't leak from one exhibit to the next. However, the very size of many rooms, combined with their "hard" acoustics, caused problems of excessive reverberation for several exhibitors, who had to resort to carpets and drapes to improve the sound dispersion characteristics. Be that as it may, the Civic Auditorium's vastness made a crowd which almost doubled Toronto's estimated 7,000 seem small, while the Toronto show had seemed to be playing to capacity.

Visitors to Paramus' audio extravaganza—sponsored by Sam Goody, Inc. at Garden State Plaza, November 14 to 16—didn't have much new to look at. Goody made up for it by offering the first 10,000 visitors a free booklet on installations and by handing out, every hour on the hour, door prizes such as transistor radios, stereo receivers, tape decks, and stereo compact discs. The Goody show differed from the others in several important respects: it was dealer-sponsored, which meant you could place orders right at the show; it provided plenty of free parking in a suburban shopping mall; and there was no admission fee. Held in an auditorium, the show permitted some thirty manufacturers to set up exhibits remarkably similar to those from the New York High Fidelity Music Show and manned by company personnel. Factory experts were on hand to answer specific questions about equipment, while Goody salesmen were available to anyone who wanted to buy something.

Torontoians at a show sponsored jointly by Electron magazine and the Dominion High Fidelity Association (November 20 to 23), also got their first look not only at Canadian-made components by Hallmark, Studiotone, H. H. Scott, and Martel, but a new receiver from Japan (AGS) a new tape desk from England (Ferrograph), and other stereo products. Canadians now can choose from brands familiar to U.S. buyers, plus many not yet sold in the states, such as AGS, Studiotone, Hallmark, RSC, Arena, and others. One interesting component exhibited was AGS' TK170 stereo receiver. It claims 170 watts of music power, stereo FM and AM, flywheel tuning, sliding volume control, push-button operation of other controls, and a flip-down drawer containing less frequently used controls. Price is $599.95, and the set is available, so far, only in Canada.

Here is a rundown of some of the new products introduced in either Toronto or San Francisco: The Teac A-7030 tape deck, at $749.50, holds reels up to 10½ inches, it records half-track, and it plays either quarter-track or half-track tapes. The unit is intended for semi-professional use. Ferrograph's Series 7 deck, introduced in Canada and expected south of the border later this year, is a three-speed, three-motor transport available in mono or stereo. It can also be had with a wood case and built-in loudspeakers. It holds reels up to 8¼ inches and weighs 49½ pounds.

Sansui's Model 350 is a 46-watt stereo receiver retailing for $200, while the $260 Model 800 claims 70 watts. Both offer stereo FM and AM, and feature meter tuning, stereo indicator, earphone jack on the front panel, and blackout dial. The Nikko equipment includes the Model TRM-40 amplifier at $99.95, which offers 44 watts of music power and features separate bass and treble controls as well as all the standard inputs and outputs. The companion tuner, FAM-12, sells for $109.95 and claims a sensitivity of 1.8 μV IHF. The two receivers, Models STA-501 and STA-701B, are stereo FM/AM units. The former is rated at 50 watts output 1HF and lists for $189.95; the latter, at $239.95, has a 70-watt amplifier. Model STA-301 is a compact system, including a 30-watt receiver and two SS-83A minibookshelf speaker systems for $199.95.

Continued on page 44
What can we say after we've said "It's the Greatest"?

JULIAN HIRSCH, in STEREO REVIEW, said:

"If anyone doubts that moderately priced integrated stereo receivers are capable of really top-quality performance, let him examine, as we have, the specifications — and the actual performance — of the Pioneer SX-1500T. This import outperforms, both in its audio and FM aspects, most of the components we have tested in recent years. Die-hard advocates of vacuum-tube design should ponder the fact that no FM tuner of pre-solid-state days matched the overall performance of the SX-1500T, and only the costliest vacuum-tube amplifiers approached its high power output with such low audio distortion."

This is what AUDIO MAGAZINE had to say:

"The engineers at Pioneer must belong to the 'wide-band' response school for, although we suspected that the Pioneer Bandwidth published specification might be a misprint, it actually does extend from 17 Hz (they claim only 20 Hz) to 70 KHz! You'll never lack for 'highs' with this one!

If you crave lots of power and don't want to get involved with separate pre-amps and tuners, the Pioneer SX-1500T AF/FM stereo receiver certainly has enough power and enough true component features to make it very worthy of consideration at its remarkably low price of $360.00."

After you've heard it, we're reasonably sure what you're going to say.

Because you want a better receiver, don't be misled—pick the one with the optimum features at an honest price. You owe it to yourself to evaluate the SX-1500T against any other receiver on the market, regardless of price. What more can we say?

Write Pioneer for reprints of the entire reviews from Stereo Review and Audio Magazine and the name of your nearest franchised Pioneer dealer. PIONEER ELECTRONICS U.S.A. CORP., 140 Smith Street, Farmingdale, L.I., New York 11735 • (516) 694-7720

CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
CANADIANS GETTING MORE STEREO
—AND THE U.S. MAY GET SOME OF IT TOO

Speaking of Canada, for many years it took more than dedication for a Dominion resident to be an audiophile—it took money, and lots of it. A receiver that sold in the United States for $500 might cost Canadians as much as $750—including all the import duties and luxury taxes. Although Canada has one-tenth the population of the United States, it consumes only eight per cent as much high fidelity equipment—or it did until recently.

Because such a small market wasn't worth the attention of a domestic manufacturer, Canadians had to make do with imports—Fisher, Scott, and Harman-Kardon tuners and amplifiers from the United States; Wharfedale speakers and Garrard changers from Britain; Philips tape recorders and components from Holland; Dual and Miracord changers from Germany; and Pioneer loudspeakers. Sony tape recorders, and other products from Japan. "In fact," one Toronto audiophile lamented recently, "we had a wider choice of products than even U.S. buyers did—but nobody could afford them."

Well, prosperity has come to Canada, and with it a determination on the part of Canadians to acquire high fidelity components. Today, Canadians can choose from not one but two domestic brands of electronics with a third made-in-Canada product carrying an American name. There are Canadian-made loudspeakers and loudspeaker systems. The Canadian market has become so important to H. H. Scott that it is licensing a Canadian manufacturer to produce Scott components in Toronto, while Ampex is making prerecorded cassettes there. Finally—can you believe it—Canada is exporting components to the United States.

The first export is Martel Electronics' Model 40W 40-watt AM/FM stereo receiver, which sells in Toronto for $180. Until recently, Martel's electronics all were manufactured under contract in Japan, but recently Martel switched to Canada. At the same time, the company licensed Wide World of Electronics, a Canadian marketing firm, to use the Martel name on its products in Canada. Wide World markets not only the 40W but two higher priced receivers, the 100-watt T14MC at $300 and the T12MC—an 80-watt selling for $240.

At the same time, Automatic Coil Manufacturing Co. in North Toronto is making three stereo receivers, two stereo compacts, and three loudspeaker systems under license from H. H. Scott. The receivers are the 341, 344C, and 384; there are two Scottie compacts (2550W and 2550T) and the S-10, S-14, and S-15 loudspeaker systems. Joe Bass, Automatic Coil's general manager, points out that the first thing Canadian audiophiles will notice about these models is the lower price. The 344C, for example, used to sell for $677.95 imported. Today it sells for $500.

Another manufacturer hoping to invade the American market during 1969 is RSC Audio Sales Ltd., whose loudspeaker systems include two bookshelf models and three minispeakers.

Two other firms—Hallmark Sound of Canada and Studiotone Ltd.—are offering made-in-Canada stereo receivers. Hallmark's receivers are the 36-watt CW-90 ($400) and the 80-watt CW-120 ($550). Both include FM stereo and AM, stereo indicator beacon, earphone jack on the front panel, and other features. Studiotone's 200R is rated at 25 watts, while the 300R claims 50 watts. Controls and features are similar to Hallmark's. The firm also markets a stereo compact, the 300RC music center; and two minibookshelf loudspeaker systems.

What all this means to the Canadian audiophile is lower prices. It also seems safe to predict that products in Canada will get better and prices will get lower in the months ahead.

SONY OFFERS NEW DECK

From Sony/Superscope comes the Model 355 three-speed (1¼, 3½, 7½ ips), three-head (erase, record, playback) stereo tape deck. Priced at "less than $229.50," the 355 includes built-in switching for sound-on-sound and for echo effects during recording. Additional features include source and monitor switches, four-digit tape counter, automatic tape lifter, twin VU meters, and more.

ORGAN FOR THE SOLDERING-IRON SET

If you're a kit builder looking for greater worlds to conquer, you may want to consider Allied Radio's new Knight-Kit electronic spinet organ. The instrument is a 2-manual, 14-voice design from Schober. Pedals cover the range down to three octaves below middle C (32.7 Hz). Swell shoe, continuously variable vibrato, and spring-type reverb are among the instrument's other features. Output, rated at 25 watts (rms), feeds a 12-inch bass speaker and a 6- by 9-inch treble unit (with crossover network). The walnut-veneer console is included in the kit, with the glue and screws needed for assembly; it is sanded but must be finished by the builder. Price is $599.50.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

Continued on page 46
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uniCLUB has all the labels. All of them. No exceptions. Choose any LP or tape on over 350 different labels. Capitol • Colombia • RCA • Angel • DGG • Folkways • Mercury • London—to name just a few. Your selection is absolutely unlimited. Every LP and tape available in the U.S.A.

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You receive only factory-sealed brand new albums, tapes and books. You are guaranteed satisfaction with the quality of all purchases. A defective album or tape is always returnable at Club expense. Books are first quality original publishers' editions only.

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A FREE Schwann catalog is sent upon joining. It lists over 30,000 LP's—every LP available on every label. No guesswork here either. The records you want you'll find under "Classical," "Popular," "Opera," "Folk," "Jazz," "Original Cast Shows," "Drama and Comedy," etc. The Harrison catalog, sent FREE upon joining if you request, does the same job for tapes and auto cartridges. uniGUIDE, the Club magazine, keeps you posted on releases of your favorite artists, supplements the Schwann and Harrison catalogs and lists extra-discount club specials.

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SPECIALS are a regular feature of uniCLUB. You save extra dollars—often on a single item—40-60%. Specials appear in the uniGUIDE. See examples of the uniCLUB specials right here. You could save the price of your membership on 2 or 3 of these specials alone. You may order any or all of these 50% off items when you join—if you wish.

HERE ARE THREE FEATURES THAT ONLY UNICLUB HAS:

FACT 8 —STEREO GEAR COSTS UP TO 50% LESS
• Acoustic Research • Ampex • Dynaco • Electro Voice • Empire • Kenwood • Tandberg • Garrard • Fisher • Sony. These are just a few of the manufacturers whose equipment you may buy at large discounts through uniCLUB. Both uniCLUB and full manufacturers' guarantees apply. Factory-sealed units are shipped promptly, always insured. Get a low uniCLUB quote on your needs and expand your system today!

FACT 9 —BOOK DIVISION SAVES YOU 25%—ALL PUBLISHERS
Random House • Doubleday • Little, Brown • McGraw-Hill • Simon & Schuster • MacMillan—to name just a few, uniCLUB furnishes every book except *texts* and *technical books* at 25% discount. And, you get only original publishers' editions—not book-club editions. All paperbacks are available too at the same 25% discount. *Texts and technical books—10% off.*

FACT 10 —YOUR ORDER IS SHIPPED THE DAY UNICLUB GETS IT
Instead of just same-day processing—uniCLUB boasts same-day shipment of your LP and tape orders. Only uniCLUB can do it—500,000 LP's, tapes and cartridges in stock make it possible. (Books take slightly longer to reach you.)

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YOU CAN SAVE ON RIGHT NOW!
Every MGM popular, jazz or classical LP:
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PACE SETTERS FOR TEAC

Teac, now selling to the U.S. market under its own name through Teac Corp. of America, has expanded its production facilities in Japan and revamped its line to give broad coverage to the consumer tape recorder field—as witness the two models illustrated here. One is the A-7030 tape deck, capable of 15- and 7½-ips operation; it takes NAB (10⅞-inch) reels and offers other professional features; price is $749.50. At the other end of the line is the A-20 cassette deck, selling for $139.50.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

RECEIVER PLUS TAPE CARTRIDGE

Automatic Radio has announced its Model HMX-4000, an AM/stereo FM receiver combined with a built-in 8-track and 4-track cartridge tape player, with which Automatic Radio’s Gidget device may be used. Rated output is 20 watts (music power). Terminals at the rear permit connecting external program sources, speakers, and antenna. A front-panel headphone jack is provided. Price was not known at press time.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SHURE MAKES IT EASIER

“Trackability.” Shure’s watchword for its cartridge line these past couple of years, has been joined by a new one: “Easy-Mount.” The term refers to a mounting clip, held in place in the tone arm shell by the usual mounting screws. The cartridge, after its leads are connected, slips into the clip. Top of the line is the M91E ($49.95), designed to track at ¾ to 1½ grams in high-quality arms. Its stylus tip is a 0.2- by 0.7-mil biradial diamond, as is that in the M92E ($44.95), designed for similar use but with arms whose specs aren’t so exacting. The third model in the new line is the M93E ($39.95), equipped with a 0.4- by 0.7-mil biradial diamond and recommended for use in automatic turntables that require 1½ to 3 grams tracking force.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

PRETUNING WITH FISHER

The Fisher 250-T stereo FM/AM receiver, rated at 50 watts music power per channel, features pretuned push-buttons for the FM band. Each can be turned to tune, like the full-scale FM dial, across its own miniature dial and then pressed to the channel selected. Positions on the master selector switch allow for FM, local FM, AM, phono, and aux. In addition there’s a tape monitor switch. Main and remote speaker systems are individually switchable; both can be turned off when you’re using the 250-T’s headphone jack. Price is $299.95.

Incidentally, the automatic turntable used in the Fisher 127 stereo compact is a BSR and not a Garrard as stated last month.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SYLVANIA ADDS ANTENNA LINE

A line of fifteen antennas ranging in price from $11.95 to $74.95 has been announced by Sylvania Electric Products. The top-of-the-line Model 32UV-SG, which is suggested for fringe-area FM and VHF-UHF TV reception, is constructed of what Sylvania calls gold-alo-dized, structural-grade seamless aluminum tubing a half-inch in diameter. Although Sylvania has been active in supplying antennas for space, military, and communications purposes, these are its first for the home entertainment market.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
AR-3a speaker systems were designed for home music reproduction. Nonesuch Records uses them as monitors at recording sessions.

Nonesuch Records recently recorded several volumes of organ music played by Richard Elsasser at the historic Hammond Museum near Gloucester, Massachusetts. To make the recording, Marc Aubort of Elite Recordings, engineering and musical supervisor, used Schoeps microphones, and Ampex 351 recorder, Dolby A301 Audio Noise Reduction apparatus, and several pieces of equipment which were custom made. To monitor the input signal and to play back the master tape, Aubort used an AR amplifier and 2 AR-3a speaker systems.
In listening to the room-filling sound of a modern stereo system, you might be oblivious to the fact that all those thrilling highs, middles, and lows you hear have their beginning—as far as your playback system is concerned—at an impossibly tiny juncture between a microscopically sized stylus tip and a set of invisible (to the naked eye) wiggles along the walls of a vinyl groove. Moreover, the conjoining here is no placid, or even orderly, affair; rather it is a turbulence of forces which, despite their small dimensions, kick up a veritable storm in physical terms. When playing a normal record, for instance, the stylus must accelerate to several hundred times the force of gravity merely to reproduce middles and highs (a 20,000-Hz tone requires acceleration of 1,000 G!). Just to reproduce an “easy” tone—say 5,000 Hz—the stylus must move twice that number of times per second, and not in a manner that would be “easiest” in relation to its own inertia and mass but rather in conformity to the unique, and constantly changing, shape of the groove wall.

Not only does the success of stereo playback depend to a large extent on the pickup’s ability, but that ability probably is qualified more strictly by a set of difficult physical laws than is the functioning of any other single element in the playback chain, with the possible exception of loudspeakers.

Gauging a pickup’s ability to perform is no cut-and-dried matter. To begin with, we are dealing not with something that can be stopped and leisurely analyzed but with a state of flux. Then too, there are no industry-wide standards for pickup measurements. Even when engineers agree on method and on the relative importance of different performance criteria, they are apt to disagree on test materials (such as the records used), on the instrumentation for reading the results, and on the interpretation of the results.

This is not to suggest that objective pickup measurements are impossible; quite the contrary—at CBS Laboratories we certainly make precise measurements and documentation of pickup performance. There are bound to be differences, however, both between specifications and test results for a given cartridge and among test results derived by different means. All this only emphasizes the need, in evaluating a cartridge, to supplement the reading of test reports with actual listening to the musical end-product.

If we are unable to see what goes on between stylus and record groove, we can at least study the effects of this action. At our lab, we test for eight specific criteria: frequency response, channel separation, sensitivity, distortion, stylus compliance, tracking ability, stylus tip geometry, and vertical tracking angle.

The cartridge must transform the groove modulation into an electric signal accurately. Its frequency response thus must cover the audio range in a linear or “flat” manner. Resonant peaks and sharp roll-offs within the range from 20 Hz to 20 kHz will color or distort the sound.

Frequency Response Most pickups have two inherent resonances, one at low frequencies and the other at high frequencies. The low-frequency resonance is determined by the effective mass of the tone arm and the stylus compliance. The peak occurring at high frequencies results from the interaction of the effective mass of the stylus tip with the resilience of the vinyl record groove. These resonances may be “designed out” of the audible response—that is, below and beyond 20 Hz and 20 kHz respectively. Alternatively, the peaks can be damped so that, although they fall within the audible band, they will remain largely inaudible.

As is true of any audio device, the flattest response describes the best response. Incidentally, pronounced and undamped resonances, even when occurring outside the normal audio band, are undesirable since they can overload the amplifier and speakers, or cause objectionable noises, or both.

For measuring a pickup’s frequency response, we at CBS Labs use a fresh copy of a highly accurate test record especially prepared by us and played on a turntable fitted with a vacuum platter which firmly holds the disc and prevents mistracking due to any slight warpage. Unless the cartridge manufacturer has specified a particular arm the cartridge itself is installed in the SME arm, using appropriate anti-skating compensation force. The response of the pickup is automatically traced on a graphic recording device; other equipment permits us to monitor and observe the effects of pickup motion and of pickup response in each channel.

The performance criteria and test methods described here are those used by the author and his associates at CBS Laboratories in preparing data for HIGH FIDELITY’s equipment reports.
Channel separation is a measure of how well the cartridge keeps left- and right-channel signals on the record from interfering with each other in the output stereo signal. Separation—essential to stereo—is measured with the help of our special test record, which itself has a channel separation of better than 30 dB. The signals, like those used for frequency response, are long tonal sweeps from one end of the audible band to the other. The left-channel separation sweep is obtained by measuring the output from the left channel of the cartridge when playing the right channel on the record. This sweep is then compared with the actual left play, left measure curve to give the separation directly in dB. Right-channel separation is similarly obtained.

Generally, separation figures of about 25 dB are considered excellent for today's stereo cartridges. The wider the frequency span covered by the separation curves, the better, although we feel that for satisfactory stereo a good separation characteristic, from at least 200 Hz to 10 kHz, is required. Note too that small peaks in a separation curve do not appreciably change the audible stereo quality; such peaks can be ignored when assessing a pickup.

A pickup's sensitivity figure denotes its output voltage when the cartridge is tracking a standard test signal on a record. The output voltage figures for most of today's magnetic cartridges are not a matter of great concern, being always only a few millivolts, an amount of signal easily accommodated by all modern high fidelity amplifiers (and receivers) via their "magnetic phono" inputs. Of course, extreme cases of mismatch should be avoided if you want to enjoy the best sound from the pickup and the most favorable signal-to-noise ratio from the amplifier. For instance, it wouldn't be desirable to connect a pickup whose output voltage was only 2 millivolts into an input whose own sensitivity required 6 millivolts. As for the other way around, you might overload the preamp circuits. A "mismatch" within 2 or 3 millivolts, either way, is generally of no consequence—except of course to the audio perfectionist.

In measuring sensitivity, the most widely used signal is a 1-kHz tone, recorded at a velocity of 3.54 centimeters per second RMS, although some firms choose to rate their models by other standards. We play back left and right signals from CBS Laboratories Test Record STR-100, and measure the cartridge's output voltage on each channel.

The signal values thus obtained actually do more than indicate the cartridge's sensitivity; they also show how similar the two channels are. A cartridge in which left and right sensitivities are quite different will of course throw the channels off balance through the playback system. You can correct this by adjusting the amplifier balance control or the individual channel gain controls, but an ill-balanced pickup often signifies that its design is in general faulty.

Distortion in phono cartridges is caused by many factors, such as an oversized or irregular stylus tip, vertical and lateral angle errors, nonlinear mechanical properties, and others. The two distortion measurements we make—intermodulation (IM) and total harmonic distortion (THD)—describe the over-all nonlinearity of the cartridge for all the factors over most of the frequency range. Inasmuch as they are, essentially, two different ways of gauging the same total effect, you might expect that high IM and high THD always go together in a pickup. This is generally, but not always, the case.

IM measurements reveal mainly the low-frequency linearity of the pickup. Consequently, they do not tell us much about distortion at middle and high frequencies. THD measurements, however, are made at various frequencies, and therefore these figures do relate directly to the frequency response.

To illustrate: a pickup with high IM distortion might show little harmonic distortion at 10 kHz. Examination of its frequency response would probably show that it was rolling off beyond 10 kHz—that is, the pickup would be acting as a filter, actually removing the harmonics (20 kHz, 30 kHz, etc.) caused by its distortion. This explains why cartridges with poor high-frequency response appear to have low harmonic distortion at high frequencies.

The IM distortion measurement is obtained by playing CBS Laboratories
Test Record STR-111, which provides IM test bands for both lateral and vertical response. Lateral IM is caused mainly by mechanical nonlinearities in the cartridge; vertical IM is, additionally, a function of tracking angle errors and effective tip size.

Harmonic distortion is measured at individual frequencies between 1 kHz and 10 kHz. The spot frequencies on STR-100, left and right channels, are used. The playback system is set for RIAA equalization, so that the actual harmonic content relates to what would appear on home playback systems.

Compliance in general is a measure of the distance an object moves when a known force is applied to it. For a pickup cartridge, it defines the force required to properly track (comply with) a signal of known amplitude. Once the cartridge compliance is known, an engineer can calculate the maximum amplitude signal before mistracking for a given vertical tracking force. In other words, compliance determines the tracking force to be used with a given cartridge. As a rule, the higher the compliance, the lower the tracking force required. Compliance is measured at a low frequency, and is expressed as the number of millionths (10⁻⁶) of a centimeter the stylus will deflect when a force of 1 dyne is applied—e.g., 20 x 10⁶ cm/dyne. To get a feel for these numbers: in order to play records with 1 gram vertical force, a cartridge should have a compliance of at least 10 x 10⁶ cm/dyne. For twice this compliance (20), the vertical force could be reduced to ½ gram before groove jumping occurs.

The tracking ability of a cartridge takes into account not only compliance but other factors such as tip mass and dynamic friction. It is determined by measuring the minimum vertical tracking force needed to play, without groove jumping or distortion, the high-level bands on both the CBS Laboratories STR-100 and the STR-120 test record. The values reported in HF's equipment reports are the lowest recommended tracking forces for use with refined tone arms—either separate models or those found on top-quality record players.

The distortion produced by the stylus tip as it engages the wiggles (modulation) along the walls of a record groove is called tracing distortion. It is most prevalent when the modulation is at a high amplitude level, a high frequency, and towards the inner bands of the disc. If, for instance, bells, cymbal crashes, or tambourines sound unrealistic at the inside diameters, the reason usually is tracing distortion.

Tracing distortion is caused by the relatively large playback stylus radius (see Fig. 1). The problem arises in the first place because the master disc is cut with a sharp stylus, whereas the records produced from it are played with a rounded stylus. Figure 1 shows a signal wave on a record which is being played with a smooth stylus tip. Because of its size, the tip cannot follow the modulation; the output is distorted. Logically, we should reduce the tip radius so that this wave can be played without distortion. But then the stylus would gouge out the vinyl grooves, making the disc unplayable. Consequently, a "happy medium" must be devised.

Unfortunately, a "happy medium" stylus is in danger of riding on the bottom of the groove—and a stylus must be supported so that it rides, or traces, both groove walls. One solution has been the elliptical, or biradial, tip, which has a very small effective curvature in contact with the groove walls and thus is able to trace the modulation and still remain out of contact with the groove bottom (see Fig. 2).

There are three tip sizes popularly in use: the 0.7-mil spherical, the 0.5-mil spherical, and the elliptical, most often specified as a nominal 0.2 x 0.7 mil—although these last dimensions may vary with individual designs. The ellipse, to be sure, is the most effective in reducing tracing distortion. However, great care should be taken when using it. The tone arm and turntable should be suited for low tracking forces, the cartridge should be very compliant, and the vertical tracking force should not be more than 2 grams. If turntable/tone arm properties do not permit tracking at or below 2 grams, then a spherical tip should be used. The so-called conical tip, by the way, is really a spherical tip terminating a cone.

We measure stylus tip radius under a special microscope which shows the
Fig. 1 An extreme case of tracing distortion. The record modulation is a pure wave, but since the tip is round it cannot follow this wave. Instead, it follows the path described by the dotted line, and produces a distorted output.

Fig. 2 Close-up of an elliptical tip, showing points of contact with groove walls.

Fig. 3 Simplified diagram of distortion caused by vertical angle error.
outline of light reflected from the stylus surface at 45 degrees. This method can be used for spherical and for elliptical tips.

Another source of distortion in pickups are errors in tracking angle. These occur whenever the plane of motion of the playback stylus does not match that of the cutting stylus. To see how this distortion occurs, consider the typical pivoted type stylus shank as shown in Fig.

**Tracking Angle Errors**

3. Note the path of tip motion, due to the vertical angle. The close-up view shows the tip tracking a high-level vertical signal. For small excursions, as on a record, the path of tip motion is almost a straight line tilted an amount equal to the vertical angle. However, an instant later, as the stylus moves upward to the top of the wave, it also moves forward, because of that vertical angle. Because it takes a longer time to move upwards than downwards, it distorts the wave as shown.

The standard tracking angles are zero degrees laterally and 15 degrees vertically. Strictly speaking, the only way to get zero lateral tracking is to use a straight-line or radial arm. However, if a pickup is correctly installed in any good arm of recent design, the lateral angle will vary by less than 1.5 degrees over an entire record, and the distortion produced will be almost negligible. On the other hand, vertical tracking angles—which depend on the cartridge design rather than on the tone arm—may vary considerably from the standard of 15 degrees, and thus introduce distortion into the system.

The distortion caused by vertical angle error also rises rapidly as the velocity of the recorded signal increases. For instance, a “raspy” sound on a cymbal crash at middle or inside diameters of a record is often due to vertical angle error. Vertical angle errors of 2 to 3 degrees are quite innocuous, but errors of 10 degrees or more can produce audible distortion on stereo.

We measure vertical tracking angle by using CBS Laboratories Test Record STR-160. This disc contains 15 bands of 400-Hz tone recorded at an effective vertical angle graduated from -6 degrees to +43 degrees. Since minimum distortion will occur when the recorded vertical angle equals the pickup's vertical angle, we look for just that during the test. By means of a filter and distortion-measuring instruments, we can determine just when the record's vertical angle matches that of the playback stylus. We then note the band on the record, and report its indicated angle as that of the pickup. This method for measuring vertical angle involves the stylus in actual operating conditions and in our judgment yields the most meaningful information.

If you ask a record collector for his most important requirement of a cartridge, the answer inevitably will be: “It must sound good.” How then, does this “specification” relate to the objective data we supply in the test reports?

No single performance characteristic in itself supplies the answer. Rather the total effect of all the reported data should be considered. Low distortion, obviously, is paramount in choosing a cartridge. To the extent that such factors as vertical angle and the size and regularity of the stylus tip influence distortion, one should look for the smallest tip consistent with the vertical tracking force to be used, and for a vertical angle close to 15 degrees.

Equally important to pickup performance is the bandwidth and response. Certainly, being able to cover the audio band from 30 Hz to 15 kHz, at least, is a prime requirement. Cartridges with peaks below 10 kHz tend to color the music and should be avoided. Slight tilting in response curves can always be compensated for with tone controls and is in itself of no great importance.

Electrically, the output voltage of the pickup should relate to the input sensitivity of the amplifier, as described earlier. But a cartridge also should match its record player in a mechanical sense. One cannot expect to use with much success a highly compliant cartridge in a poor changer, or indeed, in any tone arm that lacks the refinements of balance, anti-skating, low mass, and minimum pivot friction. Conversely, a modern, high-quality arm almost demands a superior cartridge.

Finally, before actually choosing a cartridge, the best test—as with any hi-fi component—is a listening test. I'd advise using the published equipment reports to narrow one's choice to a few models. Then, zero in on the model by comparative listening tests at a reputable audio dealer's.

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How Important?

As shown in the drawing, the vertical tracking angle is defined as the angle formed between the record surface and an imaginary line drawn from the stylus tip to the cantilever pivot within the cartridge. Note that as a consequence of the slanted stylus shaft and the manner in which the stylus is typically fastened to the end of that shaft, the stylus itself invariably extends forward in a slight angle to a vertical from the record surface. This particular angle is the "rake angle"—a term that has been confused with vertical angle. The two are not necessarily equal and are not the same thing. The angle that matters is the vertical angle as we have defined it, since that angle directly influences the manner in which the elements inside the cartridge translate mechanical vibrations into electrical signals.

The actual angle employed doesn't matter; what does count is the agreement between cutter and playback heads. The value of 15 degrees was chosen by the recording industry as a convenient angle to work with.

In assessing the vertical angle figures given in test reports, bear in mind that the method we use to measure vertical angle is not necessarily that used by all cartridge manufacturers. And, of course, variations in the test procedure (for instance, whether the cartridge is merely resting on the record lightly, or actually tracing it at normal working pressure while the disc is spinning), not to mention the test record used, will influence the outcome.

Consider too that the tracking force (or stylus pressure) used in making HF's measurements never exceeds 2 grams. With a tracking force of 3 grams or more, which might be required on some equipment, the vertical angle resulting would be about 2 degrees less for any pickup.

Yet another point: standard laboratory procedure employs a manual turntable and a high-quality arm installed parallel to the table. However, many or most cartridges are used in record changers. This is the reason, it has been suggested, that cartridge manufacturers sometimes deliberately offer a vertical angle greater than 15 degrees—to compensate for the decrease in angle that occurs as the arm of a changer rises to play at an increasing height. The difference in angle resulting between one record and a pile of eight is 6 degrees.

Of course, on many changers the arm slants downward for the first disc—and so the best the arm can then do is to reach horizontal somewhere along the pile, perhaps not until the top of the pile, where of course the vertical angle remains whatever it was in the cartridge. On the other hand, as indicated above, vertical angle does lessen as tracking force is increased; this force, as a rule, is greater for changers, and it increases as the arm plays at a greater height. It thus is conceivable that a cartridge with a vertical angle of, say, 24 degrees when measured in a parallel arm tracking at 2 grams will exhibit an angle of perhaps 19 degrees when used in a changer (subtract 2 degrees for the added stylus force and another 3 degrees for the pile of records). So, what started out as a seemingly high error may turn out in a given installation to be insignificant.

N.E.
If the past few years have been a time of innovation and experimentation in cartridge design, 1969 appears to be a year for consolidation and refinement. Such developments as reduction in the size and mass of pickups and the introduction of elliptical styli are by now familiar stories. The current news is the availability of a variety of better-engineered cartridges incorporating these changes, and often selling at lower prices than earlier models. In fact, in the thirteen months since HIGH FIDELITY last surveyed the cartridge scene some eight suppliers have introduced about two dozen new pickups (for details, see the chart accompanying this article).

In any event, it's clear that the stereo pickup has acquired a new sort of importance among audio components. In the early mono era, the average audiophile was generally satisfied with one pickup. Today he may very well own several, and probably has at least two—for playing different records, or for making comparisons, or for demonstrating his own interest in perfectionism. And many stereo owners on a budget have discovered that the cheapest way to upgrade a playback system is to install a new cartridge; they know that at the very least the new cartridge—correctly installed in an arm that permits it to track at its recommended stylus pressure—will be kinder to their records.

In surveying the latest crop of cartridges, several areas of development merit consideration: stylus shape, stylus compliance, cartridge tracking force, cartridge mass, vertical tracking angle, ease of installation, transducing element, and cartridge specialization—to name the major ones.

**Stylus Shape and Angle**

For years, the playback stylus had (or was supposed to have) a conical ball-shaped tip. Actually, records were—and are—cut by a chisel-shaped stylus, but it quickly became obvious to early record makers that if you used one chisel to trace the groove that another chisel had cut, it would gouge out at least as much sound as it reproduced. So for generations the tip remained conical (or spherical). With the advent of the long-playing microgroove disc, the diameter of the stylus tip shrank from .003 inch (3 mils) to .001 (1 mil). When the first stereo records appeared, the tip diameter shrank again—to .0007 inch (.7 mil) for a stylus designed to play both mono and stereo discs. Soon after, the .0005 inch (.5 mil) stylus was offered as a perfectionist's stereo-only reproducer, the tacit understanding being that mono discs would be played with a 1-mil stylus.
Even the half-mil stylus, however, had trouble tracing every curve and dip in a record groove that had been cut by a chisel operating in three planes at the same time. The stereo record groove not only widens and narrows as it goes along, but rises and falls as well. At times these excursions were so complex and narrow that the ball-shaped stylus simply popped out of the groove. Again, the ball sometimes took a short cut, failing to reproduce some bit of stereo information or producing distortion instead of clear sound. So, about three years ago, manufacturers began experimenting with elliptical stylus—diamond tips which were neither spherical nor chisel-shaped but essentially ovals. The elliptical stylus more nearly approximates the cutting chisel, yet its rounded edges do not gouge out the groove even while contacting both of its walls.

Introduction of the elliptical stylus hasn't completely solved the stylus problem. For one thing, elliptical diamonds must be precision-cut, a fact which makes these stylis more expensive to produce than the sphericals. Because the dimensions are small to begin with and because tolerances are so critical, the reject rate for elliptical styli is very high. Moreover, the experts haven’t agreed on the proper dimensions for the ideal stylus: although the most widely listed size is 0.2 x 0.7 mil, some ellipses are specified as 0.2 x 0.9 mil, 0.4 x 0.9 mil, 0.3 x 0.8 mil, and 0.4 x 0.7 mil. The reasons for the variations have to do with individual solutions to the complex of problems in designing a cartridge, as well as with the realistic tolerances that prevail at such minuscule dimensions. Finally, some engineers argue that the elliptical stylus, in any event, results in greater record wear because of the higher pressure it exerts on the record surface. Pending some additional research, this controversy is likely to continue, with each type of stylus having its own partisans.

A related characteristic is the pickup's vertical tracking angle. Because the vertical angle of a cutting stylus has been standardized at 15 degrees, more and more cartridges are approximating this angle, although we have yet to find one that actually meets it.

Stylus Compliance

The more accurately a stylus traces the record groove, the better the reproduced sound and the less likelihood of damage to records. Accordingly, manufacturers try to make their pickups as compliant as possible, so that the stylus is free to move horizontally and vertically as well as in an infinite number of attitudes between. During the mid-1960s, manufacturers and audiophiles placed such emphasis on compliance that they occasionally lost sight of other properties important to good cartridge design. A few cartridges, in fact, were so compliant that they proved structurally weak after several playings. Since there are many methods for calculating compliance and since each manufacturer wanted to show his product in the best possible light, consumers began to be bombarded with astronomical compliance specifications. Eventually, the word got around that compliance is only one factor in the playback complex. Other characteristics—such as low tip mass, elimination of resonances, linear response—began to be emphasized in discussions of pickup performance. Some firms have flatly refused to publish any compliance figures. For these reasons, we have omitted manufacturers' compliance specifications in our informational chart.

Cartridge Mass

Anybody comparing the new cartridges with those popular only five years ago will note immediately that today's models are about half the size and weight of their predecessors—and with good reason. The lower mass and weight enhances a cartridge's ability to trace a record groove while simultaneously reducing groove wear.

Tracking Force

One of the goals of most cartridge engineers is a tracking force near zero—which would mean records would be completely immune to wear caused by action of the stylus. In recent years, engineers have come within one-half gram of that goal, thanks not only to higher compliance, lower mass, and better cartridge design but also to the development of low-mass arms which track at such low weights.

Because, strictly speaking, a very low tracking force implies a high compliance, some audiophiles have used manufacturers' compliance figures to set their tone arms for unrealistically low tracking forces. The results have been disappointment and frustration, as evidenced by complaints of mistracking and distortion.

The important thing to remember about tracking force is that you'll get no benefit from installing a cartridge whose recommended tracking force is 3/4 grams in an arm that cannot track well at that force. Check the specifications for your tone arm or automatic turntable before you buy a new cartridge to upgrade your system.

Cartridge Specialization

The increase in the number of models now offered by an individual company (often several versions of the same basic model) has led many firms to advise prospective purchasers which models are intended for use in older or inexpensive record changers, which in better automatic turntables, and which in perfectionist separate tone arms. A few manufacturers recommend that for best results specific arms be used with specific cartridges. Some manufacturers even provide a detailed guide showing which of their cartridges perform best with specific models of automatic turntables. Because the same cartridge design can come in configurations suitable in one
version for a highly professional tone arm and in another version for an inexpensive record changer, it's more important than ever to be sure you've got exactly the right model for your arm.

Ease of Installation

It has been estimated that two million "hi-fi type" cartridges (that is, excluding those offered as replacements or supplied anonymously for use in package sets) are manufactured annually in the U.S. The cumulative effect of this proliferation cannot be gauged, but obviously there are many times two million pickups in use today—by stereo listeners who own more than one pickup and by others who have purchased their very first stereo pickup.

To make things easier for this expanding market, a few cartridge manufacturers (and for their part, most manufacturers of separate arms and of turntable/arm combinations) have begun to simplify cartridge installation by introducing clip-on mounts or slide-in platforms. Much remains to be done in this area, however: for one thing, the color-coding of the four leads in the tone arm head or shell has not yet been universally standardized; for another, the metal sleeves at the ends of those leads remain fairly fragile and pesky to work with.

Transducing Element

Basically, there are three methods to convert mechanical energy from the record groove into electrical energy. Theoretically, each has built-in advantages and disadvantages; and on balance, all would appear to be about equally satisfactory. The method most widely used in high fidelity design involves some form of magnetic interaction between tiny iron members and tiny coils. The signal voltage produced is very low—on the order of a few millivolts—and requires preamplification. Its frequency characteristic also varies in a way that the recorded signal does not—and so the signal must be equalized in addition to being boosted.

Less expensive to manufacture, smaller in size, and lower in weight are ceramic cartridges, sometimes promoted with the magic phrase "solid state." In these types, the stress of ceramic elements generates a voltage—usually much larger than that possible with a magnetic. Here too the frequency characteristic varies, but differently from a magnetic. So, while a ceramic does not as a rule need preamplification, some types do require unique forms of equalization. Theoretically, ceramics can be designed to offer, vis-à-vis magnetics, less (or no) hum pickup, just as high compliance, and lower mass. For the most part, however, the ceramic idea has been applied to low-cost pickups—the kind typically supplied with cheap package sets. A few of the manufacturers who were experimenting with new ceramic models a year ago have given up because of lack of consumer interest. Actually, the ceramics still being offered for serious hi-fi use have abdicated one of their class's inherent advantages over magnetics—that is, their high signal output. Nowadays, virtually all preamplifiers, integrated amplifiers, and receivers have inputs only for low-output magnetic pickups. Hence, ceramic manufacturers invariably supply their models with some form of adapter which tailors the signal from the ceramic to resemble that of a magnetite.

A third class of pickup, the photoelectric, offers perhaps the greatest promise of reaching that goal of near-zero grams tracking. First introduced more than twenty years ago, this idea has never attained any real product popularity, nor has it quite died. In its original form, it used a beam of light to track the groove, instead of a conventional stylus. The one model now available—A. Bernard Smith's Luminsonic—uses a conventional needle linked to a photoelectric cell. In sum, the photoelectric cartridge, while an intriguing idea, has not yet demonstrated to my knowledge any superiority over the more conventional (and less expensive) magnetics.

Cartridge Prices

Most of this year's new models fill gaps in manufacturers' lines. Thus, the design improvements introduced in higher-priced cartridges are being incorporated in more moderately priced models. Many of these are being offered for use in older record changers or other less critical applications.

A glance at the chart on the opposite page shows that you can pay anything in a wide spread of prices for an acceptable cartridge.

If you live in a big city and have shopped around, you'll have discovered that some of last year's models can be had for a fraction of their list price. In fact, some models—introduced even earlier and possibly no longer listed by their manufacturers as available—may be found at some dealers for $10 or less.

Certainly, any high fidelity pickup in normal working condition made since, say, 1964 will sound satisfactory even by today's standards. If, however, you want the ultimate in sound combined with maximum protection for your records, you must look to today's generation of cartridges, which, roughly speaking, can be described as those having first appeared since 1967.

In any event, it would be wise to check the test reports on any bargain cartridge you're considering. They'll tell you how old it is (generally, the more recent models are the more desirable), tip you off to possible problems like too much compliance, and tell you the good things about it. If your dealer doesn't have reprints and you don't save back copies of High Fidelity, try your public library. An index of all test reports published during the previous twelve months appears in the June and December issues.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>STYLUS (mils)</th>
<th>MFRS. RATED OUTPUT (mV)</th>
<th>WEIGHT (grams)</th>
<th>TRACKING FORCE (grams)</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Dynamics 550E</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>.3 x .7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>¾ – 2½</td>
<td>For use in “any kind of equipment.”</td>
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<td>Benjamin Elac STS-244-17</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7¾</td>
<td>1½ – 3</td>
<td>For older record changers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>STS-344-17</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7¾</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>Use in better changers.</td>
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<td>STS-344-E</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>.2 x .9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7¾</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>Use in separate arms or best automatics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS-444-12</td>
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<td>.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7¾</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
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<td>$70</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
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<td>$30</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>Use in any good arm. Removable mounting wedge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empire 888</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>¾ – 5</td>
<td>Use in record changer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>888E</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>.4 x .9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>¾ – 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>888TE</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>½ – 3</td>
<td>Use in separate arms or best automatics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>888VE</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>½ – 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF-Goldring 800/E</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>.3 x .8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
<td>Use in any good automatic turntable or arm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super 800/E</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>.3 x .8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>½ – 1¼</td>
<td>Use in best automatic turntables or tone arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF-Goldring 800/E</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Integrated arm/cartridge combination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Capacitance</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickering XV-15/750E</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>.2 x .9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>½ – 1</td>
<td>Use in any arm that tracks at this weight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shure V-15 II-7</td>
<td>$62</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
<td>Use in best automatics or manual arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M91E</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M92E</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>.2 x .7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M92G</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>¾ – 1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M93E</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>.4 x .7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1½ – 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanton 500A</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td>For broadcast turntables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500AA</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>¾ – 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500E</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>.4 x .9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 – 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table does not list all the available cartridges, but rather those of recent vintage (released since our last survey, January 1968) and of interest to the serious stereo listener. Thus, in addition to the models mentioned here, others also are available from the companies named, and still others are offered by companies not tabulated, such as Euphonics, Grado, Ortofon, A. Bernard Smith, and Sonotone.

Note that stylus size given in one dimension indicates a conical stylus; two dimensions indicate an elliptical tip. Prices are rounded off to the next highest dollar.
BY LEO HABER

The Perils of Record Collecting

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
It's important to begin by emphasizing what we classical LP collectors are not. First of all, we are not sound buffs: we do not listen to squeals and whistles that only a dog can hear (unless they're part of a John Cage electronic score), and we never lower ourselves before guests by turning our modest living room into Grand Central Station with trains chugging in opposite directions at once. Secondly, we are not 78-rpm connoisseurs: we do not spend our time in musty rear cubbyholes of record shops looking for a 78 that hardly anyone else wants and that will undoubtedly cost us a small fortune; and when some fabled old recording has been remastered on LP, we enjoy it without succumbing to paroxysms of Weltenschmerz ("Where are the snows of yesterday?") and guilt. Thirdly, we are not professional critics or professional musicians. Fourthly, we are not women—in my experience women don't like to listen to music, although they seem to enjoy being in the presence of music. And finally, we are not specialists: we collect everything by everybody.

How did we arrive at this state of grace? What a strange divine mystery! I'm almost willing to wager that most of us began in the conventional way. There was an apartment to furnish and a shelf or two to fill, and along with the set of Shakespeare and the Columbia Encyclopaedia we bought a Beethoven Fifth, an African figure, the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 played by Cliburn, an imitation vase from the diggings at Troy, and the original cast albums of Oklahoma and South Pacific and My Fair Lady. That was that, so we thought. Of such modest beginnings are empires built. (If somebody had told us then that one day our shelves would sag under the weight of sixty-seven of Haydn's 104 symphonies, we would have laughed in derision.)

Who knows how it happened? Perhaps an idiot relative presented one of us with the Toscanini set of the Beethoven Nine upon the birth of our eldest son and thereby unleashed the consuming passion. Perhaps our wives were foolish enough to get us the Horowitz recording of the Tchaikovsky concerto as an anniversary gift, innocent of the fact that our Cliburn disc was of the same music. This has happened. And sometimes it has led us to think of getting the same Tchaikovsky concerto done by Rubinstein, Gilels, Janis, Istomin, Ashkenazy, Richter, Richter with Mravinsky, Richter with Ančerl, and indubitably Richter with Von Karajan!

I know of one fellow who wandered into a second-hand record shop during his lunch hour and picked up a battered copy of Scheherazade, the sixth record of his collection. When he got home, he found that the sultry Arabian princess had vanished and that the jacket contained Book 1 (1 to 8) of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier done by Wanda Landowska. Since he could never face up to a shopkeeper with a defective article, he kept his purchase. He now owns two piano recordings of the complete two Books, one complete harpsichord recording, and also Book 1 on the clavichord—a total of eighteen discs of the WTC.

He's presently working on Bach's harpsichord concertos. If he ever finds out about the 212 cantatas, his wife will divorce him.

Enough of preliminary speculation. What are the problems and pleasures that a devoted classical record collector encounters in assembling a representative collection? They are almost delightfully innumerable, but let me try to list some of them that might be overlooked by the unwary beginner.

1. The bugaboo of the basic record library: It doesn't take long for our votary to find out that there is no such thing. What is basic to editor A is not basic to editor B. A little listening proves to our man that neither editor can satisfy him forever. One fellow lists Beethoven's Emperor Concerto No. 5, for Piano and Orchestra, the other lists No. 4. A third editor insists on Nos. 3, 4, and 5. But our novice collector happened to hear on the radio the First Beethoven Piano Concerto, and a myriad of musicologists claiming the work isn't vintage Beethoven could not keep him from acquiring it. My very own wife paid no heed to my awesome collection of Mozart until I had come up with the Twenty-fifth Symphony, the little G minor. She now tolerates every Köchel listing I take home, from 1 to 626. (Not all women, incidentally, are permanent nonlisteners. The trick is to woo them during the courting period with strong stuff—play the Rite of Spring at the opportune moment. The collector who opts for Frank Sinatra or Glièrè Pari-
sienne is in trouble for the rest of his life.)

2. The compulsion of completeness: Sooner or later, all serious collectors get to the point where they want to own a recording of every work written by the great composers. This isn't easy. Somebody seems to be coming up with a newly discovered Vivaldi concerto every other month. No sooner does our man put together all six Tchaikovsky symphonies than Ormandy belts out a hybrid Seventh. Our fellow thought he had all the Mahler symphonies, and along came Ormandy again (and Deryck Cooke) to finish the Tenth. Denis Vaughan did the same for Schubert's Unfinished, and a certain Dr. Durr began and finished Bach's Saint Mark Passion! Eventually our collector will pride himself on owning the unusual—Beethoven's Violin Concerto transcribed for piano and orchestra by Beethoven himself, his Fifth Symphony arranged for solo piano by Liszt, Bach's Musical Offering done in nine different instrumentations, Bruckner's symphonies in every extant edition, Haydn according to H. C. Robbins Landon and Haydn according to everyone else.

My friend mentioned above—the one who bought Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 before he got the Emperor—has become a veritable zealot about cadenzas. How many recordings of that perky concerto does he now own? Let me count the cadenzas. Beethoven himself wrote three for the first move-

An instructor in English at CCNY and head of the department of foreign languages at a Long Island high school, Mr. Haber is also a practicing poet and short-story writer: obviously, he's an inveterate record collector too.
ment. Our crony acquired the set by Arrau, who plays the first cadenza; by Brendel, who gives us the first and parts of the third; by Solomon, who plays the second; by Kempf, his own cadenza based on the second; by Fleisher, the third; by Richter, the third with cuts at the end; and by Rubinstein, the third with alterations. He then added the versions by Glenn Gould and Robert Casadesus, who wrote their own cadenzas; by Serkin, who precedes the third-movement cadenza with a cadenza of his own; by Eschenbach, who puts in a cadenza of his own in another place in the third movement; and finally by Gieseking. This last was purchased not for the cadenzas but for the presence of the Philharmonia Orchestra, here conducted by a Mr. Anonymous (and sounding it).

Is the instrumentation slightly different from the usual in Colin Davis' version of Berlioz' Symphonie fantastique? Reason enough to acquire the record. Does Beecham add trumpets and cymbals to his Messiah? Has Bernstein restored Schumann's original orchestrations in the symphonies? Has Stokowski orchestrated Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition? (My friend naturally owns the Ravel version of the Pictures and the original piano version, but he also has hidden in a wayward closet a jazz version by Ralph Burns—his sole jazz recording of any kind. I haven't the heart to tell him about Duke Ellington's versions of Peer Gynt and the Nutcracker Suite.)

The "compleat collector" knows no limits. He seeks out a recording of Chopin's 24 Preludes by one Sergio Fiorentino because it contains 26 Preludes. He glows over Novacek's rendition of Chopin's 14 Waltzes because she also plays number 15, and then grabs Vásáry's because he adds 16 and 17. He refuses to part with a Denis Matthews recording of Mozart's D minor Piano Concerto (No. 20) because Matthew's improvises on the melodic line of the slow movement.

Oh what delicious perplexities completeness betrays! Should one look for Bach's violin concertos in the original, or in harpsichord transcriptions by Bach, or in modern piano versions, or in all three? Bach by Segovia, or Bach by Stokowski, or Bach by Ormandy (and Elgar and William Smith and Respighi and the Swingle Singers and Walter Carlos' synthesizer)? Vivaldi by Vivaldi on the violin or Vivaldi by Bach on the organ? One must not conclude that only ancient baroque masters provide such sweet problems. Shall it be Stravinsky's Firebird complete or Suite—1911 of the latter, or 1919, or 1945? Shall it be one of Stokowski's retouched jobs, or Leinsdorf's unduplicated mix, or all six?

I can't count the number of collectors who have been overwhelmed with delight in discovering that almost every work seems to exist in duo-piano form, from Brahms's Variations on a Theme of Haydn to Ravel's Bolero. Some are yet to be recorded. Stravinsky's Rite of Spring is a case in point. And one of these days an enterprising team of duo-pianists will tape Beethoven's own duo-piano version of the Grosse Fuge, with its own opus number 134, and collectors everywhere will murmur hosannas.

The opera collector brooks no opposition, entertains no doubts. He wants complete operas, no single aria excised, no spoken dialogue (The Magic Flute) omitted. But along with every complete set he manages to acquire a highlights album featuring other artists—presumably for the less tenacious members of his family, not for himself. This isn't always very easy to accomplish. The DGG Ballo in maschera highlights and the London highlights of the same, each almost one hour in duration, contain a half hour of music respectively that is not on the other record! Our man settles the issue by keeping both (to go along with his complete Angel Callas set). He always adjudicates in favor of holdings on a record—never against. This is a sacred principle.

3. The drug of duplication: Every neophyte collector originally vowed to keep only one recording of each major work. Blame the recording companies for sabotaging his sworn resolution. Before long he owns delightful recordings by Cantelli of Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony, by Karajan of Beethoven Overtures, by Ludwig of Mozart's Fortieth, by Maazel of Schubert's Fourth, by Munchinger of Schubert's Second, by Steinberg of Schubert's Third, by Szell of Haydn's Ninety-second, by Toscanini of Schubert's Fifth, by Walter of Beethoven's Fifth. He refuses to give up even one of these nine discs. All nine of them contain Schubert's Unfinished Symphony on the other side!

Once he is stuck with duplications, he becomes drugged with them. He seeks out alternate performances with a passion. I'm willing to swear that half of our collectors began their careers with the pious assertion that they could not distinguish one conductor from another and that their interest was solely in the piece of music. What a change! What a development! Now they are aficionados of tempo and dynamics and inner voices and instrumental timbres, and each aspect calls for, nay demands, another recording. Beethoven's Eroica will satisfy in the Scherchen fast version only if one owns the Kempener slow version (two for Angel, one slow, one slower). Schubert's Ninth means Toscanini and Furtwängler for fast and slow. All violin concertos require Heifetz for top speed and others for medium to schmaltz. The solo literature, particularly for piano, can never be adequately duplicated. Another friend of mine owns nine recordings of the Beethoven...
Appassionata Sonata, from deliberate Kempff to whirlwind Serkin, from evenly paced Rubinstein to stop-and-start Richter. He has timed every one of the performances and claims that not one resembles the other even remotely.

His family, by the way, is reconciled to the fact that Sunday is comparison day. Give him his easy chair, his turntable, his earphones when the others are looking at television in the same room, plus his stopwatch, and his day is made.

An addendum: Opera lovers become addicted to duplicating much earlier than orchestral fans do. The human voice is more easily differentiated, and it doesn't take long to pant for ten recordings of the very same Verdi aria. In fact, an LP was once issued of "Di quella pira" from Il Traviata done by forty tenors in succession hitting more than eighty high Cs! What might drive others close to the abyss is paradise to our opera buff.

4. The sacrilege of stereo replacement: Should the collector replace all his mono recordings with stereo? He never does. He supplements—in keeping with the sacred principle enunciated above. How can anyone be gross enough to insist that he discard Toscanini for Solti in stereo! Sacrilegious, to say the least. But there is no harm in supplementing the maestro with a version in modern sonics. Some of my pals own several pressings of the same Toscanini performance—one with the highs in, another with the lows out, and the third with or without added reverberation, to say nothing of electronically reprocessed stereo.

5. The curse of the critics: Our collector has gone far beyond the basic record library, he is on his way to a complete repertore, he duplicates performances, and he supplements with modern sound and stereo. Only one thought deters him from becoming a master collector living a bittersweet, hazardous life among mountains of records. He's afraid of the critics. Actually critics affect him both ways. They compel him to add and to discard, to accept and to reject. Our man becomes a voracious reader of High Fidelity and the British Gramophone. He keeps files of back copies and checks ancient reviews before and after purchasing a record. If Harris Goldsmith once insisted that Richter's Columbia recording of Mussorgsky's Pictures is a once-in-a-lifetime feat, he must hold on to his copy even though it sounds as if recorded in a Swiss sanatorium for compulsive coughers rather than in a Bulgarian concert hall. (He won't be rid of a tamer Richter performance on Artia because it includes a Prokofiev sonata on the reverse side.) If Conrad L. Osborne prefers Fricay's version of Mozart's Abduction to the one by Beecham that the collector heedlessly bought before studying the critics, he must hunt about for the Fricay performance. Luckily, he retains the Beecham for the sake of comparison and finds that the spoken recitatives differ in the two versions! What is more, Beecham transplants "Martern aller Arten" from Act II to Act III. O happy day. These are reasons enough for keeping both albums.

Gradually, our collector becomes partly inde-pendent of the critics. Never completely. He still relies on them to tell him what to get. But he begins to disregard their strictures on what not to get. He suddenly prides himself on owning a performance that the critical fraternity overlooked or disparaged. My friend of the nine Appassionatas loves to impress (or oppress) an evening visitor with such delicacies. The other night I listened to Sylvia Marlowe in the Goldberg Variations ("Better than Landowska in the 25th variation"), to Hans Henekmans in the Debussy Etudes ("Who is he?... Lord, the poor man's Gieseking!"), and to a record of Figaro highlights wherein my pal played arias done by Jurinac and Kuzin while adjuring me to forget about the renowned performances led by Kleiber and others. I am now planning to invite my friend to my home some evening to hear Barbara Hesse-Bukowska play the Chopin Waltzes so that he can feel unfulfilled with Lipatti, Novaces, and Rubinstein.

I could go on for reams of pages writing about the tribulations (and joys) of a classical LP/ST collector. When one's wife is won over (nice shelves in a hidden part of the basement or in someone else's house will also do the trick), there are often neighbors to contend with. They just don't fancy hearing a comparison of seven versions of Rite of Spring in succession of a Sunday afternoon though one's wife melts with emotion upon hearing her song. (Vide courting advice above.) But I won't go into this.

I'd rather end with some hidden advantages of classical record collecting. You are not always an outcast, a pariah, by dint of your passion. Your collector friend's wife, for instance, becomes quite dependent on you: whenever she desires to present her husband with a gift of records, she comes to you for advice because you're the only one who knows what he has; this leads to fine relationships. Your colleagues at work and your relatives also make you the perennial adviser (and purchaser) of record gifts for others. You are needed—a state of affairs not to be disparaged.

Your children who have lived in your household for ages without actually hearing a single note of the classical music swirling all about them are suddenly dependent on you to pass a silly high school course in music appreciation. Your wife begins to feel that the massive expense is finally paying dividends when you take her more frequently to live concerts (where she does listen). ("Oh, that Sibelius Second is luscious. Did I ever hear it before?" "Only sixty-two times at home this year done by Ansermet, Collins, Stokowski. Von Karajan, Monteux, Ormandy, Paray, Sargent, Schippers, Szell..." "Oh, shut up!")

Need one say more? There are worse compulsions in this driven world of ours than that which exposes our man (and woman) to so much of the divine in classical music. Consider the hapless fellows who collect jazz, folk, original-cast albums, and/or spoken word recordings from Beowulf to Rod McKuen. Do such exist? Good Lord, to contemplate their problems...
“THIS IS GALACTIC AIRLINES, Miss Jones speaking. May I help you?”

“Yes. I want to fly to Los Angeles on the 23rd. What’s playing?”

“On the screen, you can see the film The Young Americans in full color. We also have nine channels of stereo sound. On the classical music channel, for example, you can hear the Debussy and Ravel quartets played by the Budapest.”

“Don’t you have anything a little more rousing?”

“Well, if you want to wait until after the first of the month, there’ll be Leonard Bernstein conducting the New York Philharmonic in Mahler’s titanic Symphony of a Thousand.”

“Have you the Verdi Requiem scheduled on any flight soon?”

“I’m sorry, we don’t play things like that. Now what time of day do you plan to travel?”

While the airlines’ battle for passengers hasn’t quite come to this yet, reservation clerks now joke about travelers who may be shopping around for flights which not only take them where and when they want to go, with pretty stewardesses and delicious meals (free aperitif, of course), but which also offer the right movie and stereo sound.

On Air France, for example, you can see a color film with either English or French sound track, plus stereo classics or jazz on certain transatlantic flights and long hauls. On long flights via American Airlines, you have a choice of a color movie, stereo classics, or stereo pops. Continental Airlines has no movie, but offers three stereo channels (classics, pops, and contemporary—i.e., rock) and two mono channels (comedy and miscellaneous adult entertainment). Trans World Airlines has no less than nine channels (counting the movie sound track), two of them in stereo: besides standard classics and pops you might hear jazz in mono, mono background music, hard rock announced by a disc jockey, a “Memory Lane” program by Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, and Fred Astaire, a mono program of folk and international music, or a language course for European travelers. Only slightly less ambitious is United Air Lines, which also offers classics and pops in stereo; in a recent month you could also choose among the following mono programs: Hawaiian music, comedy and show tunes, marches and patriotic airs, and lull instrumental and choral arrangements plus the movie. Pan American provides movies (in black and white only, on TV screens) plus pops, classics, and a mono language course.

JUST WHAT’S INVOLVED in the typical sound system aboard an airliner? First, there are the earphones—plastic tubes shaped like a stethoscope with rubber-tipped earpieces. On domestic flights the stewardess dispenses them free in a sealed plastic bag; if you’re flying on Olympic, Pan Am, Pakistan International Airlines, or TWA’s international flights, you have to pay $2.50 for the privilege. After each flight the stewardess collects all the headsets and turns them in for sterilization and repackaging. Actually “all the headsets” may be too inclusive a reference: according to one airline, millions of these plastic tubes—which cost the companies about twenty-five cents apiece—are pilfered each year. “I really don’t know why they do it,” one airline executive wondered.
In the Lockheed L1011 trijet of the 1970s (facing page), upwards of 345 passengers will be able to hear stereophonic music emanating from JBL loudspeaker systems installed (as indicated here by the dotted rectangles) on opposite sides of the huge cabin. In 1933 (above) a radio for the entertainment of passengers was a novelty, while today a young traveler (at right) takes stereo via headphones in his stride; stewardesses have altered their uniforms—but not their smiles.

"Those headsets aren’t good for anything—unless you’re planning to fly the Atlantic and want to save $2.50."

The possibility of pilferage and the need for sterilization are two reasons given by the airlines for not adopting the direct-coupled dynamic headset. Many airline executives—often audiophiles in their own right—privately admit the low fidelity output of today’s acoustic headsets compared to the dynamic versions. "But we couldn’t stand the cost of replacing large numbers of them if they were stolen," one explained. "We can’t sterilize them cheaply, they’re bulky, and we can’t store a large number of them conveniently aboard an airliner, as we can with the acoustic type. Finally, women passengers object to having a headband which interferes with their hairdos." Most acoustic types join in a yoke under the chin.

A few airline spokesmen feel that the acoustic headset doesn’t have to be as low-fi, uncomfortable, and noisy as are most of today’s. Bell & Howell recently produced one for American that features an earpiece of floppy rubber. Like the direct-coupled headset, the rubber shuts out extraneous noise while shutting stereo sound in. It also feels more comfortable than do most acoustic phones. A problem with conventional airline earphones is that a kink in the tube or a twist at the yoke can shut off or reduce sound in either earpiece. American’s new headsets have reduced that possibility.

The earphone plugs into a transducer built into the back or armrest of your seat. Besides two tiny dynamic speakers, this soundbox contains a program-selector switch. There’s a volume control (in the case of audio-oriented American, separate volume controls for each ear) as well. The range of the transducers is similarly limited—relatively flat from about 100 Hz to 1,500 Hz, falling off sharply at either extreme. While the airlines admit that better transducers are available (American hopes to use one with its new earphones to produce sound fairly flat to about 6,000 Hz), they feel that the extra cost of really quality equipment would still only provide sound better than the earphones could accommodate.

On today’s airliners, a pair of wires connects each position on the selector switch to an amplifier. That could mean over 2,000 extra wires running through a 120-seat plane, a fair amount of excess weight. Besides, with the present-day setup, if a large number of people are tuned to one channel and you’re the farthest one from the amplifier trying to listen to it, you may get a pretty weak signal.

To overcome the problem in the jumbo jets of the 1970s, manufacturers like Douglas, Lockheed, and Boeing are experimenting with multiplex via wire. "A single wire will carry all of the signals to each seat," an engineer at Bendix Aviation told me. "At the amplifier, there’s a miniature transmitter which adds all of the signals together, and at the seat, the control which selects the program actually decodes the multiplex signal to re-create the original program."

Most of the amplifiers in use on airlines today are capable of wider range reproduction that the earphones can handle, and they do produce reasonably flat frequency response. "The trouble is that noise in the cabin presents entirely different problems from living-room listening," says a Bell & Howell
project engineer working on the American system. "The roar you hear, which may reach as high as 94 dB, about twice as loud as a Times Square traffic jam, masks low tones, so you have to do something about them. At the same time, higher tones need a boost to make them intelligible through the playback system. Actually, the ideal airline frequency response curve would look something like the letter U."

**The source for all in-flight sound, with the exception of movie sound tracks, is a compact transistorized tape deck. Two types are commonly used: the Gables, an automatic-reversing deck which provides up to three hours’ worth of stereo sound; and the Ampex AR-104, a machine which rewinds automatically at the end of the reel. Both tape decks operate at a speed of 3 3/4 ips, using standard quarter-inch tape.**

The Gables records two ninety-minute programs (one in each direction) on a reel. The recorder begins before the plane leaves the ground, at whatever point in the tape it stopped after the last flight. It continues until it comes to the end of the first track, reverses automatically and plays the second track, reverses again and again until the plane lands and the system is shut off. The Ampex also plays continuously, but it features two stereo or four mono programs recorded in the same direction on the tape. A program may last up to ninety minutes. At the end, the tape rewinds automatically and the recorder plays the tape again and again until the end of the flight. American uses two Gables recorders (one for classics and one for pops), while TWA, United, and some others use two or more AR-104s (one with classical and popular stereo, another with mono programs teaching a language, telling children’s stories, playing mood music or teen favorites, and so on).

At their best, both types of recorder are capable of first-class 3 3/4-ips sound. But airline machines operate up to twenty hours a day for twenty days a month without service—no head demagnetizing, no tape cleaning or machine lubrication. Once a month they get checked, and loaded with that month’s program; the servicemen don’t see them again until the next program is ready. In the meantime, the recorders aren’t readily accessible to the crew—and in any case stewardesses are not trained in changing tapes or cleaning a recorder. So, if something goes wrong, the offending machine simply gets turned off until the next time a serviceman can look at it. The result is that the passenger at the beginning of a month is likely to hear better sound on more channels than the man who occupied his seat a week earlier. Recorder heads do clog up, and one or more channels can develop noise.

"It’s not as bad as it sounds," says Bill Johnson of Ampex Stereo Tapes, one of the leading suppliers of in-flight tapes. "Remember that the same tape is passing back and forth over the heads, and it gets polished. It’s not the same thing as playing a series of different tapes on your recorder at home, where each contributes some oxide and some dirt every time it passes through the recorder. After the tenth continuous pass, there’s very little to get knocked off on subsequent passes."

A problem faced by all carriers is interference in the audio system caused by all of the other complex electronic gear on board. Generators, radar equipment, navigational gear, and the engines themselves conspire to produce a 400-Hz noise. It can be reduced, with luck, by careful wiring of the sound system—and American makes it a point to check theirs regularly. During several recent flights, I encountered it only once—and then only intermittently on a United flight to California.

Finally, there are the tapes themselves. Purchasers of prerecorded tapes are aware that they can buy copies of tapes heard aloft, and some titles have become best-sellers. "Originally, people bought them because you got an awful lot of music for $24.95," says Johnson. "More and more people are now buying them as souvenirs of their flight, or because of the really creative programming some of them offer." But the tapes are still most commonly bought, Johnson believes, by people who want long programs of background music without commercials.

The man behind much of American’s program-
If you've traveled on a recent flight with stereo, you may well have been disappointed. The airlines readily admit that the headsets are uncomfortable, and that the sound isn't all that good. All of the equipment currently in use, they point out, was designed for use somewhere other than the cabin of an airliner. And there are more things to go wrong than you can shake a plastic tube at.

Interestingly enough, although stereo and movies do attract customers to specific airlines and flights, once on board, many customers choose not to take advantage of the service. A survey by American some months ago showed that sometime during the flight some seventy-eight per cent of passengers used the plastic headsets provided by the stewardess to listen to something. On my last few continental flights, I noticed passengers listening to stereo for a maximum of twenty to twenty-five minutes at a time; and at any given time, only about one-fourth of the passengers seemed to have their headphones on.

But the first of a fleet of planes with better-quality sound equipment should be in the sky shortly: the sound systems to be used in Boeing's 747, Lockheed's 1011, and the Douglas DC-10 will be designed specifically for planes. The decisions about what passengers in the 1970s will hear and what it will sound like are being made by these three companies today. "We can choose from among the 747, the 1011, and the DC-10. Within each of those, there are a lot of optional items, like JBL speakers in the Lockheed. But if you don't want JBLs and you like the rest of the 1011, you do without speakers of any kind," says an executive of one airline. The result is that differences in services and sound among American, United, TWA, and the others will depend more upon the supplier of the planes than on the preferences of the airlines.

In the meantime, here's a tip for the sound-conscious traveler: the quietest seat on the plane is an aisle seat farthest from the engines (usually in the front row). It's about 10 dB quieter than a window seat near or next to the engine.
You can't get a better buy for your new hi-fi system than a Shure cartridge, whether it's the renowned "Super Track" V-15 Type II at $6.50 or the new M91E Easy-Mount "Hi-Track" at $49.95, made in the tradition of all fine Shure cartridges. If you're new to hi-fi, benefit from the published opinions of experts the world over: the Shure V-15 Type II Super Track makes a decidedly hearable difference. If you want to spend less, the M91E is right for you. You can always "trade-up" to a V-15 Type II at a later date. Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204.
EQUIPMENT REPORTS
THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO NEW AND IMPORTANT HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT


COMMENT: Another very good buy in stereo receivers has entered the lists; the new Allied 395 offers features and performance that are distinctly better than average for a combination chassis in its price class. As for those performance characteristics not above average, the worst you could say about them is that they seem to be as good as average for this price class.

The tuner section, to begin with, is a real winner. Stations seem to pop in all up and down the dial, thanks to a happy combination of extremely high sensitivity, low distortion, astonishing capture ratio, and very good signal-to-noise ratio. Audio response on mono FM is good; it actually improves on stereo FM (see accompanying CBS Labs graphs) where many tuners show a characteristic slight high-end roll-off. Channel separation is excellent. In our cable-FM test, the 395 logged a very high total of 49 stations of which 28 were judged suitable for long-term critical listening and off-the-air taping. And for those interested, the AM section of this set is distinctly better than the AM section found on many other stereo receivers. In fact, the entire tuner portion of this receiver has a performance level which suggests much costlier equipment.

The amplifier section shapes up as a good medium-high-powered unit. Output power for rated distortion (of 1 per cent) holds up to beyond 75,000 Hz which, for a set in this price class, is prodigious. Even at a lower amount of distortion, which would be a more rigorous test, the set's power bandwidth would easily span the audio range. At normal power output demands, the amplifier's harmonic and IM distortion both remain very low across the better part of the audio band. The only real evidence of design compromise from ultimate perfection (inevitable in some form in a low-priced combination set) would seem to be in the roll-off in the amplifier's frequency response below 40 Hz, which is reflected in the equalization curves and in the low-frequency square-wave response. Above this frequency, though, response is exemplary—with a very linear characteristic to beyond audibility and excellent transient response. Input sensitivities are at comfortable levels for today's program sources, and corresponding signal-to-noise ratios are very good. The S/N figures on magnetic phono and tape playback inputs, in particular, are excellent.

Styling and control features have not been skimped

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NEW RECEIVER PERFORMS LIKE COSTLIER MODEL

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REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Laboratories, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Laboratories assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.

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Allied 395 Stereo Receiver

Lab Test Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance characteristic</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuner Section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHF sensitivity</td>
<td>1.6 µV at 98 MHz, at 90 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency response, mono</td>
<td>+0.8 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THD, mono</td>
<td>0.04% at 400 Hz, 0.43% at 40 Hz, 0.56% at 1 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM distortion</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture ratio</td>
<td>0.75 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/N ratio</td>
<td>65 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stereo, 1 ch</td>
<td>+0.8 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r ch</td>
<td>+0.5 dB at clipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THD, stereo, 1 ch</td>
<td>0.5% at 400 Hz, 0.44% at 40 Hz, 0.48% at 1 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel separation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>either channel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-kHz pilot suppression</td>
<td>50 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-kHz subcarrier suppression</td>
<td>42 dB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Amplifier Section           |             |
| Power output (at 1 kHz)     |             |
| into 8-ohm load             |             |
| 1 ch at clipping            | 38.3 watts at 0.15% THD |
| r ch at clipping            | 39.6 watts at 0.09% THD |
| 8-ohm load                  | 37.7 watts at 0.23% THD |
| THD, mono                   | 0.06% at 400 Hz, 0.1% at 40 Hz, 0.52% at 1 kHz |
| Channel separation          |             |
| either channel              |             |
| 19-kHz pilot suppression    | 50 dB        |
| 38-kHz subcarrier suppression| 42 dB        |

on in this set. The upper portion of the front panel has a generous-sized dial that lights up when the set is turned on. Between the FM and AM station numerals is a logging scale; at the upper left there's a stereo indicator, while a tuning meter is at the right. The two large knobs further to the right are for tuning and for signal selecting respectively. The selector has positions for AM, mono FM, FM automatic, phono, 7½ tape head, 3¾ tape head, and auxiliary. The stereo indicator will come on whenever a stereo FM station is tuned in, regardless of whether the knob is on mono FM or FM auto although the latter position is required for hearing FM in stereo. The lower half of the panel contains a speaker selector; a stereo headphone jack; bass and treble...
tone controls; channel balance control; volume control; six toggle switches for loudness contour, low and high filters, interstation muting, automatic frequency control, and phono 1 or 2; and a mode/monitor knob. The muting action is especially good; in cutting out most of the rushing noise between stations, it eliminates only the poorest of incoming signals which you wouldn’t care to listen to anyway. The AFC action is quite effective in holding onto a station to which you may have slightly mistuned the set. The phono 1 or 2 switch lets you choose between two record players that you may opt to connect to the set. The speaker selector permits choosing either, both, or neither of two sets of stereo speakers; the headphone jack is live in any position of this switch. Bass and treble controls are friction-clutched dual-concentric types that let you adjust either channel separately or simultaneously, as you choose. The mode/tape monitor knob has positions for right and left mono and stereo.

At the rear are the inputs corresponding to the front panel selector and the speaker outputs. The latter are polarized plug-in connectors fitted with protective rubber covers. The rear also has one switched and one unswitched AC convenience outlet for powering other equipment. The set has a built-in AM loopstick antenna which is adequate for local reception; there’s also a screw terminal for a long-wire AM antenna. FM antenna terminals are for twin-lead. A power line fuse, grounding post, multiplexer separation adjustment, and the line cord complete the rear complement. The model 395 comes in a metal case fitted with four small feet; it may be tabled or shelved “as is,” or fitted into a custom cut-out, or dressed up in an optional walnut cabinet. A supply of terminal connectors and installation screws is packed with it, and the owner’s instruction manual is clearly written and well illustrated.


COMMENT: The MD 421/N is one of a series of mikes from Sennheiser that are aimed at the professional user and the advanced amateur recordist. Its low impedance (200 ohms) means it can be jacked into the mike inputs typically found on today’s recorders, and also that several hundred feet of cable may be used without degrading the signal. The mike has a built-in compensation coil which protects the sound pickup against the effects of random magnetic fields. It also has a two-position (M and S) switch near the bottom of the body that adjusts the response for music and speech respectively—the M position permits flat response into the bass region; the S position rolls off the bass to avoid “heaviness” in the sound that could occur when a performer gets too close to the mike.

The sound pickup pattern of the Sennheiser is cardioid—that is, unidirectional: sounds are picked up predominantly from the front of the mike, slightly less from the sides, and very little from the rear. This general configuration—low-impedance, dynamic, cardioid—has been for years the favorite of many recordists and broadcasters. It furnishes an ample and clean signal, it is fairly rugged, it is easy to use, and it can be positioned—after some experimentation—for a satisfying mix of direct and reflected sound.

As tested at CBS Laboratories, the MD 421/N had an excellent frequency response. By way of explanation, the legend on the response graph of “1 mW/10 µBar/1 kHz” refers to the sound pressure level fed into the mike to get the output response shown. This 10 µBar is an arbitrary average level that is fairly standard in professional use; it corresponds approximately to a sound somewhat above normal conversational level at a distance of three feet from the mike. For judging frequency response, the -55 dB line on the graph can be regarded as a 0 dB line. The useful out-

UNUSUALLY SMOOTH RESPONSE FROM NEW DYNAMIC MIKE

put signal level of this mike, feeding into the input of a typical recorder would be about 1 millivolt, which is of course quite ample.

At this level, and with the M/S switch in M position (no bass roll-off), response was clocked within

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Re the Lafayette LR-1500T receiver report, October 1968: due to a typographical error, the distortion percentage figures listed on the left-hand side of the IM chart all were one number too high. The bottom line, shown as 1 per cent, should be zero per cent; all subsequent horizontal lines should be reduced by 1 accordingly.

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plus or minus 7.5 dB from 40 Hz to beyond 15 kHz. The greater portion of this response was very smooth and linear; the two peaks at the high end are actually less prominent than found on many good microphones. With the switch moved to S position, response—as intended—rolled off gradually and linearly to minus 10 dB at Hz, continuing down to minus 13 dB at 60 Hz. The middles and highs are not affected by this contour. The polar response plot shows the cardioid pattern at two test frequencies of 500 Hz (the solid line) and 5 kHz (the dotted line), incidentally, the more unidirectional pattern at the lower of the two frequencies is normal for this type of mike. The Sennheiser MD 421/N—packaged in a plush-lined, leather, zippered case—comes with a standard attachment for mike stands and a 15-foot cable fitted at one end with a mike connector. The other end terminates in pigtails for hook-up as required. A dual-impedance version, model 421/HL, fitted with a 6-foot cable, also is available at $139. In addition, the firm offers many accessories such as wind-screens, table stands, flexible shafts, and so on.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

MINISPEAKER SOUNDS

MADE FOR NORMAL-SIZE ROOM

THE EQUIPMENT: Bogen LS-10, a full-range compact speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 15 by 8 by 7 inches. Price: $49.95. Manufacturer: Bogen Communications Division, Lear Siegler, Inc., P. O. Box 500, Paramus, New Jersey 07652.

COMMENT: The LS-10 is a new minispeaker with more than minisound. Barely a half-cubic foot in interior volume, it provides—for its size and cost—very creditable performance. The system is completely sealed inside an attractive walnut enclosure trimmed with brushed aluminum. A 6½-inch woofer, which functions as a miniature air-suspension type, crosses over at 1,100 Hz to a 3-inch cone tweeter. Impedance is 8 ohms. Connections are made at the rear to screw terminals marked for polarity. No level adjustments are provided. The LS-10 is recommended for use with any amplifier rated for 10 watts or more (per channel), although with amplifiers capable of supplying more than 30 watts per channel, the manufacturer advises not turning up the volume control to full (to avoid overloading the speaker). The LS-10 may be positioned horizontally or vertically. It is sold with a seven-year guarantee.

The low end response of the LS-10 was surprisingly full, holding up very nicely to just below 40 Hz. Very slight distortion is evident downward from about 100 Hz, but it does not increase as much as we have observed on other minispeakers when raising the input signal level in this response region. It takes an awful lot of amplifier drive to get the LS-10 to double severely down to its design limit. Response continues below 38 Hz but it is mostly doubling. Upward from the bass, the response has some minor peaks and dips within a generally strong output from about 1,000 Hz to 9,000 Hz. Dispersion is very good, and directional effects increase only gradually as you go up the scale. A 10,000-Hz tone is audible at more than 90 degrees off axis, and fairly strong on axis. This effect continues up to about 14,000 Hz which is thinly audible mostly on axis and from which frequency the response slopes towards inaudibility. As seems to be true of most petite speaker systems, white noise response is a little on the bright side with a trace of hardness when listening on axis; it sounds much smoother off axis.

The over-all tonal quality of the LS-10, reproducing normal program material, is surprisingly wide range albeit with a slight upper midrange emphasis. A pair, playing either mono or stereo, provides a pleasant, fairly open sound with a very good transient response. In a larger than average room, they sound—compared to larger and costlier speakers—clear enough but somewhat distant when handling heavy orchestral material. They make a better acoustical showing in smaller rooms, where they don't have to work as hard in projecting heavier musical textures and can be driven by relatively less power from an amplifier. Indeed, in such use, the LS-10s are very easy to listen to for long periods of time.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Crown 300 Amplifier
Sony TA-2000 Preamplifier

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

www.americanradiohistory.com
IMPROVED PICKUP

RATES HIGH IN TESTS


COMMENT: Some segments of the audio world move faster than others, it seems. We had barely finished tests of the first pickup in the new Goldring series (December 1968) than we received word, and samples, of a Mark II version. The new model looks like the other but some canny design refinements have given it a generally smoother response. The high end, in particular, shows a more extended and stronger output signal while simultaneously measuring lower distortion—which, as stereo cartridge design goes, is a neat trick indeed. So, kudos to Goldring!

As tested at CBS Labs, the Mark II needed only 0.6 gram to track bands 6 and 7 of test record STR-120, and the glide tones on STR-100. For subsequent tests, and for normal listening to commercial discs, a tracking force of 1 gram was used. The pickup furnished a signal output of 3.5 and 3.3 millivolts on left and right channels respectively—values that indicate close balance between channels and which are well suited for the magnetic phono inputs on today’s stereo equipment. Harmonic distortion measured, for a pickup in this price class, lower than average—particularly in the midrange and treble regions. IM distortion, laterally and vertically, was average. The pickup’s vertical angle was found to be 19 degrees which is 2 degrees closer to the 15-degree standard than in the former version. Compliance was the same as in the other model, 18 (x 10⁶ cm/dyne) in both lateral and vertical planes. The stylus was found to have a geometrically good elliptical tip. Frequency response, on either channel, remained very linear across the audio band. The left channel ran within plus or minus 2 dB from 20 Hz to 12 kHz, with a slope that reached minus 7 dB at 20 kHz. The right channel showed plus 1 dB, minus 3 dB from 20 Hz to 12 kHz, with a similar slope. Channel separation averaged 25 dB and better than 30 dB to right and left channels respectively over much of the response range, and remained unusually good (20 dB or more) to beyond 20 kHz, where most cartridges show very little separation.

After listening to the new Goldring, tracking at 1 gram, playing several recent stereo discs, we would rate it as one of the best-sounding cartridges yet auditioned, with a sound that seemed natural, full, and well balanced from top to bottom. It is an excellent groove tracker. One new release in particular that we feel will give a pickup a good work-out is Von Karajan’s reading of the Bruckner Ninth (DGG 139011). This is an unusually clean, wide-range recording of a complex work that has many passages to challenge one’s playback equipment: the polyphonic dissonances of the nervous scherzo; the broad, rich-hued textures of the adagio. We don’t doubt that recording this work this well was a chore of major proportions; the Goldring took it in stride with ease and authority.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

TEST REPORT GLOSSARY

Capture ratio: a tuner’s ability, expressed in dB, to select the stronger of two conflicting signals. The lower the number, the better.

Clipping: the power level at which an amplifier’s output distorts.

dB: decibel; measure of the ratio between electrical quantities; generally the smallest difference in sound intensity that can be heard.

Doubling: a speaker’s tendency to distort by producing harmonics of bass tones.

Harmonic distortion: spurious overtones introduced by equipment on a pure tone.

Hz: hertz; new term for “cycles per second.”

IM (intermodulation) distortion: spurious sum- and-difference tones caused by the beating of two tones.

k: kilo; 1,000.

m: milli; 1/1,000.

M: mega; 1,000,000.

μ (mu); micro; 1/1,000,000,000.

Power bandwidth: range of frequencies over which an amplifier can supply its rated power without exceeding its rated distortion (defined by the half-power, or ~3 dB, points at the low and high frequencies).

Ringing: a tendency for a component to continue responding to a no-longer-present signal.

RMS: root mean square; the effective value of a signal that has been expressed graphically by a sine wave.

Sensitivity: a tuner’s ability to receive weak signals. Our reports use the Institute of High Fidelity (IHF) standard. The lower the figure the better.

Sine wave: in effect, a pure tone of a single frequency, used in testing.

S/N ratio: signal-to-noise ratio.

Square wave: in effect, a complex tone, rich in harmonics, covering a wide band of frequencies, used in testing.

THD: total harmonic distortion, including hum.

Transient response: ability to respond to percussive signals cleanly and instantly.
DGG collectors are plugged in.

To the sounds of now. To the experiences of new music. To the excitement of owning never-before-recorded performances by international composers in our century’s anything-can-happen revolution.

Deutsche Grammophon is kicking off its fascinating Avant Garde series with some of the choicest chance music around. We offer a spectacular performance of Ligeti’s Lux Aeterna, one of the unforgettable background pieces in Stanley Kubrick’s “ultimate trip”, 2001: A Space Odyssey. Our collection of premieres begins on this LP with two love poems by the award-winning protest poet, Kenneth Patchen, set to music by an Englishman, David Bedford; a choral work, Matka, by the 38-year-old Czech composer, Kopeleń; and another choral piece which “transcends the frontiers of extra-musical sounds”, Súcšim, by a 35-year-old Swedish musician, Mellnäs.

If you’re plugged in at all you’re plugged in to Stockhausen, a composer) “wanders from one orchestra to another” and Carré, a piece “that tells no story... every moment can exist for itself... and one must leave time if one wants to let this music enter.”

On to the string quartet, where two Polish members of the burgeoning Eastern Europe avant garde—Penderecki and Lutosławski—join with Mayuzumi, a Japanese composer from the “New York School,” in an album which will challenge even the most sophisticated listener.

These intriguing compositions, recorded here for the first time by Deutsche Grammophon, are certain to expand your mind... and your horizons.

For collectors who like being taken off garde, we urge you to make note of these additional new releases:

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8
Fidelio, Coriolan and Leonore III Overtures. Berlin Philharmonic, Karajan, cond. 139 015


Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 28 and 29. Berlin Philharmonic, Böhm, cond. 139 406

Schubert: Wanderer Fantasie/ Moments Musicaux. Wilhelm Kempff, piano. 139 372

New from Archive:

Biber: 15 Sonatas on the Mysteries of the Rosary/Passacaglia in G Minor for Solo Violin. 198 422/23

Palestrina: Seven Madrigals/ Five Ricercari. Regensburg Cathedral Chorus, Schrems, cond: Ensemble Musica Antiqua. 198 434

Vivaldi: Four Concerti Grossi from L’estro armonico. Lucerne Festival Strings, Baumgartner, cond. 198 449

DGG and Archive Records are distributed by MGM Records, a division of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc.

High Fidelity Magazine
PRIZE WINNERS ALL: CLIBURN’S CHOPIN—HIS FINEST RECORDING; OGDON’S RESCUE OF RACHMANINOFF; SOKOLOV’S IMPETUOUS SCHUMANN

by Harris Goldsmith

The first concerts and records to come from prize winners are invariably less interesting than their sequels. A contestant will frequently enter a competition or give a debut recital with a program that has been drilled into the marrow of his fingers since childhood. The second, third, and fourth concerts, on the other hand, will expose an artist’s range, temperament, and capacity for growth. This point I think can be demonstrated by the albums at hand, which offer sequel recordings from three of the four first-prize winners in the Soviet Union’s Tchaikovsky Competition—an American, a Briton, and a Russian. Van Cliburn, as everyone knows, came out on top in 1958; John Ogdon tied for first prize with Vladimir Ashkenazy in the deadlocked 1962 affair; and Grigory Sokolov—aged sixteen at the time—took the 1966 medal over our own Misha Dichter. The happy news is that they all can play other music even better than they do the (inevitable) first Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto.

Cliburn’s Chopin Sonatas are in many ways the most surprising and exciting of all these releases. A Mozart/Beethoven solo disc issued a few years ago led me to announce Cliburn’s musical coming of age, from which it might have been assumed that I was expecting a continued artistic growth on his part. Nevertheless, these present performances have struck me as nothing short of astounding in their personal conviction, temperamental resourcefulness, and sheer sophistication. From the outset of his career, Cliburn, with his huge twelfth-spanning hands and plushy romantic tone, gave promise of one day becoming a grandmanner interpreter in the Rubinstein tradition. To judge from the evidence at hand, that day has now arrived—certainly this is the Texan’s finest recorded performance to date. He tapers his melodic lines (“teases” them, if you don’t agree with his ideas), expands and contracts his rhythm with elaborate elasticity, and shows that he has acquired a heightened sensitivity both intellectually and emotionally. Moreover, he demonstrates here a sure instinct for cumulative, split-second timing, not one of his strong points in the past. He chooses to begin the Scherzo of the B-flat minor
Sonata hard on the heels of the stormy first movement, for example, and similarly lingers *attacca* into the Large of the B minor.

Actually, the performance of the B flat minor strikes me as a bit more stimulating than that of the B minor. Far one thing, Cliburn's license almost verges on fousiness in the latter work, and for another, the B flat minor—aside from being a shade "straighter" and more tightly knit—features some interesting details, including a repitition of the first movement exposition and a rhythmic variant in the *Meditation* (which the authoritative Paderewski Text attributes to the manuscript and the first German edition—the initial French text contains the version usually heard). I implied above that Cliburn's masterly playing might be termed "Rubinsteinian," but in fact it takes only a brief sampling of the Russian's own recording of these two compositions to show how utterly different and uniquely original the younger artist's accounts of them really are. Cliburn is more elaborate and leisurely, while the veteran chooses to play with an understated economy. Both approaches are completely valid.

From the beginning—even, in fact, in his debut recording of the Tchaikovsky—John Ogdon has displayed a single-mindedness rather unusual for prize contestans. The possesser of big, splashy equipment, this fine Petri-trained artist has preferred to display it in the more obscure citadels of virtuosity. These long languishing Rachmaninoff Sonatas, which could easily be unbearably cloying, profit especially from his unwillingness to add further interpretative syrup. Though not a colorist in the conventional sense of that word (Ogdon's playing has always tended to the sober-sided and the structural), he does manage some lovely pellicid soft playing here. He also keeps the sometimes sprawling architecture of these treatises under stringent discipline; and if he doesn't quite make us wonder why they are not in the mainstream of the repertory (the Sonata No. 2 is, let's not mince words, a pretty dreadful horse's head of musical romanticism and inspired pianistic effects), he at least convinces one that they are partially worth salvaging.

Of the two works, the Sonata No. 1—for all its greater length and, at times, greater crudity—seems to me considerably more direct and appealing than its predecessor. Rachmaninoff himself evidently regarded the Second as something of a problem child: his first edition, of 1913, was abandoned as "unplayable," and then was supplanted many years later by a second edition that carried the simplification process too far. Ogdon apparently is giving us the revised text, but it should be mentioned that perhaps the ideal solution is the one that Vladimir Horowitz hit upon. With the composer's sanction, Horowitz worked out a composite. If and when a Horowitz recording appears, it will prove instructive to compare the textual divergences (at a Carnegie Hall performance Horowitz seemed to add all sorts of interlocking octaves and the like), but I am quite certain that Ogdon's record will remain a strong competitor. Indeed, this coupling will be as welcome to collectors of out-of-the-way keyboard literature as were Ogdon's recent recording of the Busoni Concerto and Nielsen piano works.

Grigory Sokolov's account of the Tchaikovsky Concerto tended to be on the sprawling, unsuitable side. While the appealing songfulness and red-blooded romantic temperament he also showed in that performance are no less apparent in the Schumann Carnaval and Saint-Saëns G minor Concerto, the young man (he is now only nineteen) has made great strides. This has instinct towards meaningful music making.

The *Carnaval* performance, for all its delectable details, moves in a steady line from the opening *Préambule* to the closing *Marchebabel*, *Gigue*, and the like. Though very different in actual detail, you can see that Sokolov obviously is planning his conception along the same lines as Rachmaninoff did. In other words, he favors a thrusting, angular kind of brin, and a fiercely impetuously extroverted sonority. Like Rachmaninoff and Cortot, Sokolov even plays the *Spinthiores*—those cryptic note sequences which provide the riddle around which all of *Carnaval* is based. Clara Schumann's straitly withstanding, I like the *misterioso* touch of melodrama the spinthes provide, for the ensuing *Papillon* then emerges in a new burst of B flat major: sunshine that would otherwise be dissipated. Apropos the *Sphynx* question, I might point out too that Sokolov's account in straight, unadorned octaves is quite awe-inspiring (if less blood-curdling) as Rachmaninoff's treatment in spooky tremolos. It should also be noted that though Sokolov generally favors brick—not to say downright impossible—tempo (listen to his fantastic repeated wrist action in the famous *Reconnaissance* episode), he does find the time to let the music breathe. I am particularly grateful for his much slower than usual treatment for the central section of

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**HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE**

**Sokolov, winner, at age sixteen, in the 1966 Tchaikovsky Competition.**

**Papillon et Colombine. At this speed, the downward chains of double sixths are truly legato as marked. Another interesting device in the performance is the forging-ahead *attacca* from Chopin right into the *Estrella.* Although this *Carnaval* is up against some severe competition, it proves to my ears one of the most enjoyable of modern recorded versions.**

**Sokolov is every bit as impressive in the Saint-Saëns Concerto. His first movement does not behave the pseudo-Bach Chorale elements, but instead savor to the fullest the potentialities for electrifying octave bravura. The second movement—inspired by a phrase lifted right out of Chopin's E major Scherzo—rolls with a great elasticity, this with his instincts towards meaningful music making.**

**The Sokolov recording on Melodiya—Angel, as heard in the review acetates, is brightly reverberant yet admirably detailed. The fine recorded sound of the two RCA discs is marred by abnormally noisy surfaces throughout.**

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Van Cliburn, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3053, $5.79.

**RACHMANINOFF: Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in D minor, Op. 36; No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 36**

John Ogdon, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3024, $5.79.

**SCHUMANN: Carnaval, Op. 9**

*Saint-Saëns: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 22**


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**Ogden: cowinner (with Ashkenazy) in the 1962 Tchaikovsky Competition.**
Between 1921 and 1928 Paul Hindemith composed seven works to which he gave the title Kammermusik. Now we can hear them in a recorded performance by a most remarkable organization known as Concerto Amsterdam. On the cover of the box, the seven Kammermusiken are identified as the so-called Brandenburgs. We are not told who called the pieces so, but the designation is very apt, for many reasons.

The Hindemith of the 1920s resembled Johann Sebastian Bach in a good many ways, "Er komponiert nicht, er musiziert," said Paul Bekker in a great untranslatable phrase. What it means is that Hindemith was not a specialist in any one branch of music but a general practitioner, in the baroque tradition. Six of the seven Kammermusiken are solo concertos—for violin, viola, viola d’amore, cello, piano, and organ—and Hindemith was capable of giving public performances of the solo parts in all of them. For him, there was no break between writing and playing: they were all part of the same intense, vivid, vitally absorbing musical activity. As the new set of records amply proves.

The first of the series, Op. 24, No. 1, is the only one without a solo part, and that may explain why it is the best known. It is for twelve instruments, starts the series in an atmosphere of irresistibly excited, trumpeting joy, goes on to a breathtakingly slow movement for three woodwinds and a single, mysterious, quietly insistent bell, and ends with a jazzy finale entitled “1921.” This is one of the earliest examples in music of our century’s self-conscious delight in its busyness and its mechanized dynamics, and it is to this day one of the best.

No. 2 is the Piano Concerto, with heavy emphasis on a toccatalike, Bach-like handling of the solo part, which runs on for pages in two contrapuntal lines and parallels the “motoric” treatment of the piano by Bartók and other major composers of the period. In No. 3, the Cello Concerto, the style begins to take on larger outlines, to compromise with the romantic expression which Hindemith always professed to disdain. (What he really disdained was the academic officedom which rested its case on the music of the nineteenth century; drive him into a corner and you would discover that he admired Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms quite as much as anybody else who had any sense.) The Cello Concerto is a big work, with a fine, flourishing solo part. People who musizieren have no truck with the nonsense about subduing the solo role in the concerto; Hindemith knew better than anybody that the root of the word is concertare, which means to compete, and his soloists really do.

No. 4, the Violin Concerto, is the most romantic Kammermusik of them all. The orchestra is the largest of the series, the solo part the most strenuous, brilliant, and, in the slow movement, the most tenderly expressive. But the romantic delights of No. 4 are nearly matched by those of No. 5, the Viola Concerto, which Hindemith himself often presented in his later years, when he specialized in the viola on the concert stage.

The concertos for piano, violin, cello, and viola form a single opus, 36. The last two Kammermusiken make up Op. 46, and for me they are somewhat less interesting than the earlier set. Op. 46, No. 1, is a Concerto for Viola d’Amore and Orchestra. The soft tone of this old instrument is completely submerged more often than not here—this is the one recording of the seven that one may question. Op. 46, No. 2, is a Concerto for Organ and Orchestra that foreshadows Hindemith the academician, proud of his heritage, who during his middle years turned out more than his share of exercises in contrapuntal technique. The performances—all, apparently, done without a conductor since none is named—are beautifully balanced, transparent but rich in texture, perfectly in tune, and superlatively colorful. The recordings, with the single exception noted above, are in keeping. Three of the soloists—Schröder, Vermeulen, and Bylsma—are members of Concerto Amsterdam, while Van Blerck and De Clerck are other well-known Amsterdam musicians; viola soloist Doktor is of course well known everywhere.

The accompanying pamphlet contains far too many pictures of Hindemith and the performers and far too little about the music.

BY ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

HINDEMITH'S SO-CALLED BRANDBERGUNS:
SEVEN PIECES FROM THE TWENTIES

THE COMPOSER WAS ALSO A TALENTED PERFORMER ON A VARIETY OF STRING AND KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS.

February 1969
IT IS A PLEASURE to see Westminster making a bit of a project of American singers who are not at the Metropolitan or who for some reason have not cracked the international recording scene. We have had a disc from Norman Treigle (this second is now ready for release), and a recital by the tenor Barry Morell has just been issued (see review elsewhere in these pages). And here we have the first solo aria disc by Beverly Sills, though her extraordinary talents have already been made known to record listeners through her brilliant contributions to the RCA Giulio Cesare and—let it not be forgotten—the excellent performance of The Ballad of Baby Doe, taped nearly a decade ago by M-G-M and currently available on Heliodor.

Comparisons are odious, but irresistible too. And when a singer tilts in the international arena with the repertoire recently made almost familiar by the likes of Callas, Sutherland, and Caballé, she invites judgment by big-tournament rules. In this case, such judgment is implicit in the quality of the singing as well; Miss Sills is not in need of handicapping.

It is fascinating to observe the career patterns of our prime donne. They seem to fall into two patterns, and longevity really does seem to depend on a great deal not only on a secure technique but on finding out before it is too late just which kinds of music are healthy for the voice in question. We have had Callas and Tebaldi, both of whom started early, reached stardom while quite young, and ran into difficulty while still relatively young. Each had certain technical flaws, Callas' quite obvious. Tebaldi's less so. Each sang certain roles she might better have left alone, with the difference that Callas attempted several different sorts, which pulled her voice in several directions at once, whereas Tebaldi tended to stay within the approximate limits of her voice and technique, simply inclining increasingly to the overdone side of her voice. Tebaldi's troubles have been correspondingly less severe, her career correspondingly more active.

Sutherland, Caballé, and Sills have all been late bloomers. Each sang all sorts of music for a number of years without lighting on a particular specialty. Each had a perfectly solid, respectable career of ten to fifteen years behind her before anyone began to notice that she might be a great singer. Sills was perhaps a bit more protected during this time than the other two, for the voice is so obviously a light one that there was little chance of her being asked to sing some of the roles essayed at one time or another by Sutherland and Caballé.

In each of these cases, things suddenly coalesced in the course of a single evening. The elements which had been lying about for anyone to view came together, under the spotlight. For Sutherland, it was of course Lucia that did it, in the context of the new production mounted in 1959 by Covent Garden, where the piece had not been done for many years.

For Caballé, it was the 1965 concert performance of Lucrezia Borgia at Carnegie Hall, before one of those hyper-throid audiences attracted by such events. And for Miss Sills, it was the premiere of the Giulio Cesare in the fall of 1966—a fussy production in a still new house, and the first Handel opera actually staged by a major company in New York within memory.

Now, Miss Sutherland was not a better singer the day after the Lucia premiere than she had been the day before it, and in fact she had already sung in London in roles that come quite close to her greatest strengths—as Gilda, for example, and in several Handel pieces. As for Miss Sills, I can recall seeing her Phileas as long ago as 1956, and feeling that one would not be likely to hear it sung any better. For that matter, Baby Doe is a real challenge to voice and technique—it's just that no one thinks of it that way. But on those evenings, the signs were right, and everyone present woke up with a start. I do not mean to put these ladies in the same vocal bag, though they share a good deal of repertoire. Miss Sills is closer than either Sutherland or Caballé to our traditional concept of "coloratura soprano." Hers is a full-bodied high soprano, with considerable warmth and roundness and a reasonably good bottom octave—by no means the slim, very high Galli-Curci/Pons type. But there is little of the dramatic about it; Sutherland remains unique for the size and fullness.

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of her sound and for her ability to carry truly big tone into the area above the top C.
Sills's sound has a singular freshness and freedom about it. The qualities we
rather inaptly call "spin" and "flick,"
which give the impression of tone coming
forth with no impediment, no "hold-
ning" or "setting" of any sort, are amply
evident in her singing. Her trill rivals
Sutherland's as the most beautiful that
can be heard today, and her ability to
carry it in flight over most of her range
is something I have otherwise experienced
only in the voices of pre-electric
vintage. She has no superiors in the
execution of runs and divisions of various
sorts; Sutherland and Berganza are her
only equals whom I know of. Her skill
in the several means of executing the
messa di voce is also of the highest
order, as is her capacity for sustaining
and shading very long, controlled legato
phrases. The clarity of her vowels is
unusual for a soprano, and in conse-
quence the words are accorded much
more meaning than is normal.
As to limitations, there are a couple.
One is in the sheer size and bite of the
voice—there's not a great deal of either.
Actually, the volume is ample for most
of the music she is ever likely to sing,
but she sometimes seems to "nurse" the
voice, using her lovely floated mezzo-
nurioso as a basic singing level and letting
it out only occasionally. Carried to an
extreme, this can rapidly become cloying
and fatiguing; one wants the sound to
be there. The other limitation is at the
very top end of the voice. The D and
E flat are there, and they are usually
attractive. But they are not really ex-
citing, and one does not have the feeling
that she could carry on up from there.
Not the least, this is an occasionally
a drawback in practice.
Such a voice is marvelously suited to
Linda and Amina, only a little less to
Lucia. It is also beautifully adapted to
the French repertory, of which she is
also a mistress from the stylistic and
linguistic standpoint. Her Manon is ex-
tremely good, and one can imagine her
reviving a piece like the Dinnah
"Shadow Song" or the Mad Scene from
Hamlet to great effect. Fortunately, she
has a remarkable stylistic adaptability;
she is able to feel many sorts of
music from the inside out.
The thing that is quite special about
her, I think, is a particularly communi-
cative temperament. She is absolutely
direct and honest with what she does on
the stage, and her presence has a femi-
nine and unadulterated unusualness.
This is most easily experienced in the theater,
of course, but it comes over on the
record too, in her handling of recitative
(always urgent and personal) and in
the joy with which she sills into passage-
ways. She is always in love with the
music and with the sensations of singing,
and this is what makes her, for me, per-
haps the finest of these performers (cer-
tainly the most endearing). I do not say
that Sutherland does not sing as well as
Sills, or even better in certain respects
(if worse in others). But I do say that
she does not begin to move me or ex-
hilarate me in a way that Sills does in
one of her better roles. Which is, as
they say, the name of the game.
I have almost no caviats about this
record, which presents each of these
scenes in its complete form (e.g., the
recitative of Manon's "Crolla gato"
before "Oh! quanto volette;"
the caletabeta to "Come per me sereno;" etc.),
so far as actual performance is con-
cerned. But I do think Miss Sills must
learn to say "no" to Raoul Gelson.
Mr. Gagnon, a member of the New
York City Opera's musical staff, is the
gentleman responsible for the embellish-
ments and cadenzas which turn up about
twice per groove. He is no doubt an ex-
cellent musician, and he clearly knows
what to show off in this artist's voice.
But he needs an editor. Some sort of
flight, turn, or other ornamental inven-
tion manifests itself at every conceivable
point, and at some inconceivable ones.
Sometimes they are written right into the but-
on, and sometimes not (certainly they
become harmonically outlandish at a few
points). The point is that no selectivity
has been exercised; the music has been
simply drowned in the stuff. It is not
necessary for Miss Sills, or any singer,
to show her entire arsenal in the course
of each little recitative, and I am afraid
that we soon get the feeling that much
of the display is being undertaken for its
own sake, despite the singer's earnest
efforts to imbue it with musical tone or
dramatic meaning. There is nothing
more predictable than this sort of tired
inventiveness—it becomes a case of plus
ga change, plus c'est la même chose.
Such music may occasionally be held up
for ornamental commentary to tremen-
dous effect, but when it is constantly
dealt out, we grow impatient. Basic tempos
must not be allowed to disappear, espe-
cially when the singer's proclivity is in
any case towards quite moderate ones.
The engineering is good, if not spec-
tacular; the surfaces of my copy were
less than immaculate. Jals's accompani-
ments are well above average for the
brief periods of time when he is allowed
to keep the music on a rhythmic path,
and the choral work is competent. Now
that the mandatory display record is out
of the way, perhaps we may have some
Handel, Haydn, and Mozart, and some
of the French repertory. (Hint: A complete
Manon in stereo is badly needed.)

BEVERLY SILLS: "Bellini and Donizetti Heroines"

Donizetti: Laura di Suonamox: O luce di quest'atima; Lucia di Lammermoor: Regina tu di noi; Vincenzo Devergundo: Vivi; ingnato: Rovanda d'Inghilterra; Perché non ha del veneto. Bellini: I Capu-
etti ed i Montecchi: Oh! quante volte: La
Sonnambula: Come per me sereno.

Beverly Sills, soprano; Sonia Drakeles,
contralto (in Lucia): Vienna Academy
Chorus; Vienna Volksore Orchestra,
Jussi Jalas, cond. WESTMINSTER WST
17143, $4.79.

CLASSICAL

BACH: Cantata No. 198 ("Trauer-
ode")
Rohtraud Hansmann, soprano; Helen
Watts, contralto; Kurt Equiluz, tenor;
Max van Egmond, bass; Monteverdi
Choir of Hamburg; Concerto Amster-
dam, Jaap Schroeder, cond. TELEFUNKEN
SAWT 9496, $5.95.

BACH: Cantatas: No. 51, Jauchzet
Gott in allen Landen; No. 202,
Weibet nur, betrübte Schatten
("Wedding Cantata")
Agnes Giebel, soprano; Maurice André,
trumpet; Concerto Amsterdam, Jaap
Schroeder, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT
9513, $5.95.

BACH: Cantata No. 215, Preise dein
Glücke, gesegnetes Sachsen
Erna Spoorenberg, soprano; Werner
Kreujn, tenor; Erich Wenk, bass; Giech-
ger Kantorei, Chorus of the Gedachti-
niskirche, Bach-Collegium, Stuttgart,
Heimull Rilling, cond. Nonesuch
71206, $2.50.

The Trauerode was written in 1727
for the funeral of the Electress of Saxony.
Christiane Eherhardtine. About four years
later Bach probably incorporated most of
the music from this strictly "occasional"
composition into his setting of the St.
Mark Passion, though all of the Passion
music has been lost and only the text
remains. A few years ago Wolfgang Gön-
enwein recorded twelve numbers, taken
from various sources, that fit a portion
of the text of the St. Mark Passion, in-
cluding the two great choruses and three
arias from the Trauerode. That Epic
recording (reviewed in these pages in De-
cember 1963) remained in the catalogues
only a short time, however, and is prob-
ably no longer available. The only other
existing recording of the Trauer-
ode is Scherchen's on Westminster, a
performance which epitomizes for me
the very worst possible interpretation of a
Bach cantata—huge chorus, slow and
ponderous tempos, and the whole dri-
ping with a stifling Reverence and Awe.

This new Telefunken release presents
an entirely different approach. The re-
cent tremendous surge of interest in au-
the authentic readings has produced several
ensembles who specialize in performing
baroque music in as stylistically accurate
a manner as possible. The Concerto Am-
sterdam, heard on this record and in the
two solo cantatas, is one of the best of
these groups. Its playing is light, clean,
and confident, and often tremendously
expressive. The rich orchestration—which
includes pairs of flutes, oboes d'amore,
flutes, and gambas—produces in the great
opening chorus a sumptuous yet subdued
sound that is unique among all the can-
tatas I know. Outstanding in this work
full of outstanding music is a tender and
meltingly beautiful alto aria accompanied by two gambas and a continuo consisting of the two lutes and cello; Miss Watts realizes its expressive potential completely. Rohtraud Hansmann and Kurt Equiluz turn in first-rate performances, vocally and musically, of their single arias, and though Max van Egmond has only one recitative/arioso to contribute, he manages to fill it with a memorable warmth and sensitivity. The thirty-two-voice Monteverdi Choir is a solidly featured and thoroughly professional-sounding ensemble, and their balance with the orchestra is near ideal. The spacious church acoustic contributes greatly to the serious and spiritual atmosphere of the work without any loss of clarity or articulation. In the two soprano solo cantatas the playing of the Concerto Amsterdam is again a model of stylistic accuracy; special mention must be made here, however, of the fascinating and imaginative continuo realizations by harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt, particularly in the C major aria in Weich et nur. With each of Agnes Giebel's recorded performances, I have become more and more impressed by the shining and pure quality of her voice and by her really superior musicianship. This record may represent her best work so far. The tortuous coloratura of Jauchofer Goci that classical soprano tour de force seems to present no technical difficulties whatsoever; Miss Giebel sails effortlessly up to each of the high Cs and navigates the tricky course through the opening aria and final allegro with aplomb, in spite of the brisk tempos. Though she just misses making the spectacular impact that Maria Stader does on an Archive recording with Richter, Giebel's voice is certainly better suited to the work. In the more lyrical Weich et nur, she is able to project her best qualities even more effectively. This delicate and lovely performance is one of the best on record.

The festive cantata Preise dein Glücke is a work of more uneven quality than the gems discussed above. A drama per musica, it was put together in about three days and was performed outdoors for the visiting Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, August III. The giant opening eight-part double chorus accompanied by flutes, oboes, trumpets, kettle-drums, strings, and continuo was borrowed from an earlier secular cantata, Es lebe der König, BWV Anh. 11. This same work appeared some years later in a much shortened form as the “Domine” in the B minor Mass. The soprano aria later found its way into the fifth part of the Christmas Oratorio as a bass aria. Rilling manages to inject considerable life and forward motion into the work, but he seems slightly hampered by a somewhat overlarge and sluggish chorus. A distant and too diffuse recording acoustic probably is partly to blame. One recitative and aria each for soprano, tenor, and bass are all admirably presented, though the dry “sallutions” of the text don't offer much opportunity for expressivity. The bass recitative, the only one accompanied by continuo alone, provides harpsichordist Martin Gallling with a text that invites very meaningful musical illustrations; the instrument here expresses the meaning almost better than the words. The jacket notes for the Nonesuch disc consist of an interesting and informative essay by Alfred Durr, plus complete text and translation. The person responsible for preparing the jackets for the two TELEfunken cantatas, particularly their Trauerode, should receive some sort of award for thoroughness: the cantatas are discussed in detail, and very specific information is provided on the performing forces involved in the recording. C.F.G.

BACH: Organ Works

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; Prelude and Fugue in C, S. 547; Fantasia and Fugues: in G minor, S. 542; in A minor, S. 904.

Wilhelm Krumbach, organ. TELEfunken SAWT 9503, $5.95.

Thanks to the ever broadening range of material being recorded and marketed throughout the world, American listeners are now able to hear increasing numbers of Europe's truly historic organs. This record brings to my attention for the first time an instrument built in 1732 in the tiny village of Lahm in southern Germany, near Bayreuth. The organist of the Schlosskirche at the time was Johann Lorenz Bach (a second cousin of Johann Sebastian) and he very likely had a hand in the design of the instrument. The builder, Heinrich Gottlieb Herbst, representative of the strong central German tradition, produced a two-manual twenty-nine stop organ tonally closer to the instruments of his famous south German contemporary Gottfried Silbermann than to those of the brighter, more sparkling north German builders such as Arp Schnitger. Exceptionally broad scaling, which seems thickest in the tenor octave, and a generous supply of large-scale quints (a 3\textsuperscript{3}/4 Quinta as well as a 2\textsuperscript{3}/2 "Nassat on the Great and a 10/8 "Gross Quint on the pedal) combine to produce a tremendously thick yet rich sonority, though without the sweetness and warmth characteristic of Silbermann's best efforts. This kind of richness must be paid for, of course, with a certain loss of definition of individual voices, and the extreme length of the Bach organ church does little to help matters. Fortunately, sensible tempos and clearly articulated playing go far in making sense out of the dense part-writing in these works.

Krumbach does his best playing in the warhorse D minor Toccata and Fugue. The Toccata is played with tremendous drive and powerful intensity, with sonorities piling up on one another to a really exciting climax. The Fugue is much smoother but no less exciting. The same kind of violent energy characterizes the G minor Fantasia, but its Fugue is marred by inconsistent, almost random, phrasing at each entrance of the subject or countersubject.

The A minor Fantasia and Fugue (S. 904) was written for harpsichord or organ, but is most often grouped in the former category; I know of no other recordings of the work played on an organ. Here Krumbach wisely adopts a calmer, more restrained approach for this mature and very serious work. After hearing it so sensitively performed, I feel that its broad grandeur is much better suited to the organ than to the harpsichord.

Though perhaps too much of the Schlosskirche's reverberation has been included, the recorded sound is nevertheless magnificently lifelike. The level is high, but I detected no signs of overload or distortion, and the surfaces are excellent. As usual, Telefunken has assembled impressively thorough and intelligent jacket notes, including an informative essay on the history of the instrument and a complete stop list. C.F.G.

BACH, CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL: Magnificat

Elly Ameling, soprano; Maureen Lehane, contralto; Theo Altmeyer, tenor; Roland Hermann, bass; Töpler Boychoir; Collegium Aureum, Kurt Thomas, cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1368, $2.50.

The joy and splendor of this work bring two questions immediately to mind. What prompted Bach to compose it in 1749, at a time when his professional pursuits were nothing if not worldly? (Frederick's court certainly displayed no pressing need for sacred music.) And, once having composed it, why did he do nothing so fine in this vein again, and how did his harpsichordist gain over musical direction of the churches of Hamburg and was turning out church music to meet a weekly deadline? The composer Zelter suggested that the Magnificat was an "audition piece," written when Bach hoped to obtain an appoint-
Hell no, Boulez won’t go traditional

Boulez is anti the music establishment. He's also a genius.

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OLIVIER MESSIAEN ET EXSPECTO RESURRECTIONEM MORTUORUM COULEURS DE LA CITE CELESTE CONDUCTED BY PIERRE BOULEZ

Pierre Boulez' genius is on CBS and Columbia Records

CIRCLE 19 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

February 1969
ment to the court of Frederick's sister, Princess Amalie. That may be the answer; perhaps too there is an element of showing the old man, for Carl Philipp made no bones of patterning the work on his father's Magnificat in matters of key and in straight borrowing of thematic material.

Much has been said about the work's looking both forward and back, with the old harpsichord being against the work in the middle-period creations 80 disciplined Americanization of EMI, Symphony, whichSomewhat overshadowed by man, cond. Bonaldo in its inclusion of voltage to lend that extra zing. crops up endlessly. suggests "Suscepit Dominum" than lamenting soprano aria don't for closing points to on his father's spirit. To choruses, and tendency towards motivic key and is on its side, Moralt. is rather than being shunted to too of work's Capcoments, is more preciosity. There are earlier, and, final fugue and the triumphant passages for clarino trumpet in preceding sections don't set you to reminiscing, nothing will. The new look is perhaps suggested in the lamenting soprano aria "Quia respexit," a bit more subjective than the customary church fare, and the fluid string subject in the contralto/tenor duet "Deposuit potentem" is rather more facile-sounding than anything J. S. Bach would have written; but the pacing gravity of the "Suscipit Israel" for contralto solo suggests nothing new, and doesn't need to. Whatever the Magnificat's historical component, I hope your curiosity is aroused; it is a lovely work. Problems of choice. The RCA version is as good as the older Archive disc when it comes to the choruses, and better when it comes to the soprano soloist—Elly Ameling is superb at this kind of thing. But the DGG male soloists have the edge over RCA's—bigger voices, more effortlessly produced, with more rhythmic thrust. The matter of rhythmic tension crops up as a basic matter here: the Collegium Aureum is certainly not slack, but the DGG forces add just enough voltage to lend that extra zing. Collegium Aureum has on its side, however, the inclusion of a boy choir, and that special quality of sound is worth having. S.F.

BEETHOVEN: Mass in C, Op. 86

Patricia Brooks, soprano; Lili Chookasian, contralto; George Shirley, tenor; Donaldo Giaiotti, bass; Musica Aeterna Chorus and Orchestra, Frederic Waldman, cond. Decca DL 79433, $5.79.

Somewhat overshadowed by its stupendous successor, the Missa Solemnis, the C major Mass is one of Beethoven's strong middle-period creations and deserves better than being shunted to the rear. Vox once offered a very fine early LP by Rudolf Moralt and the Vienna Symphony, which in spite of its antiquated sound I found easily superior to a later edition by Beecham for Capitol/EMI, which was a bit fussy in interpretation and disappointing in sound for its circa 1959 vintage. Another recorded version, on the Baroque label, I have never had an opportunity of hearing. Now we are given a sinewy, tautly disciplined American-style reading. If it lacks that last touch of reverent spirituality which graced the Moralt, it is also mercifully free of Beecham's preciousity.

BERLIOZ: Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

Orchestre de Paris, Charles Munch, cond. Angel S 36517, $5.79.

The Fantastique was something of an idle five throughout Charles Munch's long and distinguished career. The late conductor recorded the work four times (his first disc, done with the Orchestre National for French Columbia 78s, was never issued in the U. S.); it appeared on his initial concert with RCA Victor (his New York Philharmonic-Symphony, he programmed it innumerable times during his Boston tenure), and—only a few days prior to his death—he led the piece in New York with the new Orchestre de Paris. It would be a pleasure to be able to report that the recording now under review was the best of all the Munch performances I have heard, but I am afraid that such a report would be more sentimental than true. The Orchestre de Paris, despite its agreeable sound and immense potential, is not yet an ensemble of the highest caliber. On this very first recorded specimen of its work (it was taped in the spring of 1968), the ensemble is very scrappy and the rhythmic discipline loose-limbed indeed. The variations in "Un Bal" sound like thirty willful soloists; the brass are extremely nervous about their dotted rhythms in the "Marche au Supplice" and the resulting slapdash inaccuracy tends to transform that movement into a sinister-sounding variant of the Tristach-Trutsch Polka. The execution in the "Witches' Sabbath" has all the carelessness of the first Munch/Boston edition but little of that version's malevolent merriment. This particular failing, I suppose, can rightly be paid to the conductor: it is really shocking to discover how much bite Munch had lost by the time he led this session. Of course, there are details that have more creativeness and imagination than either Boston performance (e.g., the eerie col legno violins in the final movement), but, in the main, the tempos are weary alongside the second Munch/Boston recording (RCA Victor LM/LSO 2608) which remains a clear choice for anyone desiring this conductor's surrealistic, Dali-esque interpretation.

BERLIOZ: Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

Orchestre de Paris, Charles Munch, cond. Angel S 36517, $5.79.

The Fantastique was something of an idle five throughout Charles Munch's long and distinguished career. The late conductor recorded the work four times (his first disc, done with the Orchestre National for French Columbia 78s, was never issued in the U. S.); it appeared on his initial concert with RCA Victor (his New York Philharmonic-Symphony, he programmed it innumerable times during his Boston tenure), and—only a few days prior to his death—he led the piece in New York with the new Orchestre de Paris. It would be a pleasure to be able to report that the recording now under review was the best of all the Munch performances I have heard, but I am afraid that such a report would be more sentimental than true. The Orchestre de Paris, despite its agreeable sound and immense potential, is not yet an ensemble of the highest caliber. On this very first recorded specimen of its work (it was taped in the spring of 1968), the ensemble is very scrappy and the rhythmic discipline loose-limbed indeed. The variations in "Un Bal" sound like thirty willful soloists; the brass are extremely nervous about their dotted rhythms in the "Marche au Supplice" and the resulting slapdash inaccuracy tends to transform that movement into a sinister-sounding variant of the Tristach-Trutsch Polka. The execution in the "Witches' Sabbath" has all the carelessness of the first Munch/Boston edition but little of that version's malevolent merriment. This particular failing, I suppose, can rightly be paid to the conductor: it is really shocking to discover how much bite Munch had lost by the time he led this session. Of course, there are details that have more creativeness and imagination than either Boston performance (e.g., the eerie col legno violins in the final movement), but, in the main, the tempos are weary alongside the second Munch/Boston recording (RCA Victor LM/LSO 2608) which remains a clear choice for anyone desiring this conductor's surrealistic, Dali-esque interpretation.

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BERLIOZ: Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

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Among other recent Fantastiques of uncommon interest are the Ozawa/To-
ronto (CBS), Boulez/LSO (CBS), Anser-
met/Suisse Romande (London), and Davis/LSO (Philips). The last-named—an
extremely classical view of the music as o-
opposed to the usual programmatic one—is currently my own favorite. H.G.

BIBER: Sonatas of the Rosary (15);
Passacaglia for Solo Violin

Eduard Melkus, violin; Huquette Drey-
fus, harpsichord; Lionel Rogg, organ;
Karl Schen, lute; Gerald Sonneck, cello;
Alfred Planjuyvsk, double bass; Jans-
Jürg Lang, bassoon; Angelv 198422/ 23, $11.58 (two discs).

There is, as far as I know, nothing in the violin literature quite comparable to these incredibly imaginative, relentlessly intense pictorial essays by Heinrich Franz Biber (1666-1704), that still only half-known Salzburg Kapellmeister who plunged with an almost Joycean intellect into the task of delineating the Mysteries of the Rosary in musical outline. Yet to call these fif-
ten-piece (often referred to as three Mystery Sonatas) pictorial essays is to sell them short, and that is where the Joycean parallel comes to mind: these works can be approached on three levels at least, and possibly four, if one takes into account that even the choice of keys had religious significance in Biber's day.

More accessible to our ears are the facts that: 1) the composer drew upon standard forms—dance forms, passacaglias, chaconnes—and stretched them to unprecedented limits, conjuring a world of Blakean images and eccentric tonalities which defy any straightforward designation as "courante" or "aria"; 2) the violin itself seems also proroduced to unprecedented feats, tuned, in keeping with the practice of the time, in different manners for each sonata, rendering chordal effects not otherwise available, and sounding occasionally, indeed, like another instrument altogether, so strangely is its tone altered with certain tunings; and 3) the programmatic points in the music are at times literal and vivid—the leaden weight of the cross borne by Jesus, the hair-raising drive of the quaking earth and rending rocks—and at times more veiled (the accompanying notes account for more pictorial content than I, for one, can concede, but no matter). Any way you look at it, these sonatas are an experience, one is apt to forget, over a long period of time, just how remarkable—even exhausting—they are.

The first violinstist to bring the Rosary Sonatas to the attention of the American record buyer was Sonya Moneoff (Cam-
bridge), and that three-disc album re-
mains in very good standing. The Melkus performance, a bit more assertive and tending towards brisker tempos, also offers a strong temptation to the buyer. For the continuo part it employs the six instruments listed above. In varying combi-
inations (the Moneoff called on organ, harpsichord, viola da gamba, and bas-
soon), and in certain sonatas it seems to me that the handling of continuo is more}

successful—that is, more aggressively set forth—in the new set. Melkus is tremendous-
ly skilled and forthright, and his work is exciting. These qualities are evi-
tent too in his playing of the solo Pas-
acaglia, a relatively simple example of the form which nonetheless manages to hold you fast. Sound is superb—spacious and clean. S.F.

BONDON: Concerto for Guitar and
Orchestra ("Concerto de Mars")—
See Castelnuovo-Tedesco: Quintet
143.

BOULEZ: Structures for Two Pianos
—Books I and II

Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky, pianos.
MCE MXX 9043, $2.50.

Because of Boulez' practice of revising,
rewriting, and extending his works after
their initial public presentation, the chron-
ology of his music is more than a little complex. A case in point is the composi-
tion of the Structures: the first book was composed in 1951-52 (its three parts in
the order Ia, Ic, Ib), while the two sections of Book II followed in 1956 and 1960 respectively. Boulez re-
lates that in undertaking this work he
sought to purify his musical vocabulary of all previous influences and to develop
a musical language in which all aspects of a work would stem from the same principles. Contemporary with the first book is the composer's famous polemic Schennoberg Is Dead, in which he attacked the late Viennese master for retaining classical ideas of rhythm and form rather than carrying his serial idea into other dimensions of music than pitch; the first book of Structures is the musi-
cal counterpart of that polemic.

The theoretical issues need not concern us here; Boulez was not the first to apply a rigorous serial scheme to durations,
dynamics, and attacks, but to many younger Europeans Structures I became
kind of a classic example of such pro-
cedures. For the listener, the most ob-
vious effect of Boulez' specific procedures in this work is virtually to guarantee
that there will be no elements of con-
ventional repetition in the work—no se-
quence of pitches will be associated twice with the same durations, dynamics, or attacks, and thus an apparent randomness
suffuses the musical surface. Musical
and textual contrasts take place and articu-
late the sections, but the over-all im-
pression is that every single note remains an independent entity; this "pointillistic" texturing is the more pronounced the more the "shape" of a piano tone is so heavily weighted towards the initial attack rather than the sustained after-portion.

The second book incorporates elements of aleatory procedures in some passages, and is altogether a work of more profile and more obvious coherence (I can speak only of this particular performance, for a score of Book II is not at hand). The serial principle is here applied to harmonic elements, which might be some perceptible relation between sur-
face and structure. If Book I seems now mostly a historical monument to the mathematical stage of "total serialism," the more recent portions are a better argument for Boulez' position in the European avant-garde.

The Kontarsky brothers have recorded Book I once before, in the Véga series stemming from the Paris Domaine Musi-
cal concerts. The present stereo version, made in January this year, is a great im-
provement, for the playing is more se-
cure, and the stereo separation helpful (it could with benefit be still more pro-
nounced). The original German issue of this disc, on the adventurous Wergo label (WER 60011), was embellished with an essay by Boulez and an analytic study of Book II, including numerous music examples: those who read German might find this a worthwhile investment, for the Mace liner note offers little in the way of hard facts: some biographical information, vapidities about musical rev-
olution, and some trivial technical in-
formation—which applies, in any case, only to Book I (but how would the annotator know, for he thinks the whole work was written in 1955)). All this is set in nasty small type, surrounded by acres of white space.

The sound (described as—I'm not kidding—"Stereo-Monic") is quite a
reasonable facsimile of the original Wergo. The labels are curiously reticent about what is on which side; fortunately, it's really very simple—side A holds Book I, side B Book II.

D.H.

BUSONI: Six elegies
17aLobos: RudepeoÊma

David Bean, piano. RCA VICTROLA
VICS 1379, $2.50.

In comparing his own music with that of Debussy, Busoni once wrote: "Deb-
ussy's art implies a limitation which strikes many letters out of the alphabet.

The brothers Kontarsky collaborate on a new recording of Boulez' Structures.

High Fidelity Magazine
The first serious cassette tape deck.

Of all the cassette tape players and decks around, only a handful make a serious claim to high-fidelity sound reproduction. And the few that do claim they sound on a par with today's good stereo systems, are missing some extremely important features. Features included together for the first time in this Fisher stereo deck.

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(For more information, plus a free copy of the Fisher Handbook, 1969 edition, an authoritative 72-page reference guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on magazine's front cover flap.)

The Fisher RC-70
... I strive for the enrichment, the enlargement, and the expansion of all means and forms of expression." While Busoni doubtless intended in this statement to place his own art in a positive light, it seems to me that he actually touched here upon an essential problem in his compositional output. The fact is that the "all-inclusiveness" of this composer's approach indicates a muddled eclecticism which has highly dubious musical consequences. Whereas I am usually fascinated by Busoni from an intellectual point of view, aesthetically I am left uneasy. The *Six Elegies*, composed in 1907, illustrate this eclecticism clearly. They could well be described as six pieces in search of a composer—or perhaps more aptly, a compositional style. One feels that Busoni is continuously groping for the desired expressive effect and its proper musical embodiment, but the results, ranging in quality from the most naive diatonicism to a peculiarly mellow brand of chromaticism, do not add up to a convincing totality. One of the six—No. 4—is nothing more than a highly sophisticated arrangement of Greensleeves, thus compensating the effect of a musical potpourri. Still, there is certainly much that is of interest in the *Elegies*, and significantly, Busoni himself felt they were the first pieces in which he had put down his "entire musical vision." (They were composed, incidentally, after the recently recorded Piano Concerto.)

David Bean's performance is both musical and clear, but I would suggest that those primarily interested in the Busoni collection should try the version by Howard Steuermann on Contemporary. Bean studied with Steuermann at Juilliard and, as might be expected, their readings are not dissimilar; but Steuermann (who himself studied with Busoni) plays the pieces with considerably more rhythmic flexibility, and he also comes closer to capturing the "visionary" qualities implied in the phrase quoted above. The Steuermann record also has the advantage of containing Busoni's Toccata and the First and Sixth Sonatinas.

Villa Lobos' *Rudepoêma* (literally "rude poem"), which can be described as a twenty-minute orgy of pianistic pyrotechnics, is played by Bean for all it is worth. He has the drive, stamina, and sheer muscle power to bring it off, and I must confess that the results are not without a certain impressiveness. I do so reluctantly, however; *Rudepoêma* is obviously geared towards outward effect rather than any real musical continuity and development. It consists of a series of loosely connected sections, each one of which is itself highly fragmentary in structure, all spun together so as to evoke as much sound and fury from the instrument as possible. The style of this 1926 piece is often reminiscent of Stravinsky, but it is a Stravinsky who has lost all of his elegance. There are veritable cascades of notes (usually fortissimo), consisting for the most part of little more than cadenzalike passagework held together by occasional scraps of folkish melody. The whole process reaches its climax—or nadir—when the piece finally closes with the pianist banging away at the lower end of the keyboard with his fist—a fitting conclusion, all the same.

R.P.M.

**CAGE: Variations IV, Vol. 2**

*EVEREST 3230, $4.98.*

Variations IV, which runs six hours and is being released on records some forty-five minutes at a time, is an almost exact musical counterpart to the "combine paintings" which Cage's close friend, Robert Rauschenberg, was making about ten years ago. Rauschenberg threw together almost anything he could find—rags, stuffed birds, pillows, color plates of Goya and Rembrandt, old neckties, bits of discarded posters, and tin signs, slashed them all with thick, brilliant, vigorous paint, and produced some of the most sumptuous and eye-filling art of his time.

In this work, Cage (according to the unnamed gentleman with the slight Slavic accent who tells us all about it at the start of the record) began by recording the sounds of a gathering—presumably an opening party—at a Los Angeles art gallery; microphones were also placed in the street to add traffic sounds to the mix. But there is a great deal more to it than that. The second side opens with speech obviously taken from a recorded French lesson, and part of a talk on health follows shortly; what is most important, however, is that the score is full of snatches of familiar music—Chopin, Beethoven, Berlioz, Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Handel—collaged into the speech and wild, rumbling electronic distortions of both.

The whole thing is immensely sonorous and stimulating. It attains its sonorities precisely as Rauschenberg attains his coloristic resonances, but Cage's musical quotations have a much greater value as quotations than do Rauschenberg's color plates. One thing Cage may be pointing out here is the degree to which the celebrated music of the past has become part of the sonic garbage with which we are all surrounded today. If so, he likes the garbage; and he makes a fine case for it, in all its aspects, in this most remarkable work.

A.F.

**CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Quintet for Guitar and String Quartet, Op. 133**

†Bondon: *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* (*"Concerto de Mars")

Manuel Lopez Ramos, guitar; Parrenin Quartet (in the Quintet), Konrad Ragossnig, guitar; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Jacques Bondon, cond. (in the Concerto). RCA VICTROLA VICS 1367, $2.50.

The words that Castelnuovo-Teodosio's guitar quintet (1950) bring to mind are all of an academic cast—well crafted, carefully balanced, classically conceived, seriously intended. They can be reduced to a simple and deflating summary: the work, despite its careful virtues, strikes me as dry and, well, academic. Only the third movement, a kind of Mandarin cakewalk (if there isn't such a thing, there ought to be), gets off the beaten track and catches the ear, mainly because of its fancy sonorities. Ramos and the Parrenin Quartet are stodgy, which may be part of the trouble.

Jacques Bondon's *Concerto de Mars* (1966) is quite another matter. No classicism here, but an exotic, richly orchestrated, highly pictorial score which—so film-oriented are we—keeps conjuring vistas of frozen wastelands, interstellar space, and the like. If it's not Bonaparte retreating across Russia, it's another spaceship in search of Mars. All probably as unfair to the composer as it is unavoidable. (The title, incidentally, is ambiguous; "Mars" is French for March, the month in which the concerto was written, and of course

The unpredictable John Cage takes aim at an unsuspecting timpanist.
New Recordings of the Remarkable Feats of Elliott Carter

These two works occupy important places in Elliott Carter's output, and therefore in the music of the last fifteen years; it is good to have them available in these new and improved recordings. The 1955 Variations, a Louisville commission, have been available in the series devoted to those commissions, but this performance is decidedly superior, and the equally fine reading of the Double Concerto also outclasses the long deleted Epic version made immediately after the premiere in 1961. Except for the Second String Quartet, which falls immediately between the present two pieces, all of Carter's major compositions since 1948 are now available on discs (as have pointed out before, RCA could fill that one gap very quickly by reissuing the fine Juilliard recording).

One of the most striking aspects of Carter's music is the utter independence of every work, and for all that there are certain recurrent preoccupations that one comes to recognize as "typically Carterian," certain technical procedures that are characteristic (although never statically so, for this composer's musical language continues to expand in new directions with every work), each piece is conceived from the ground up as an all-embracing conception, in which thematic, harmonic, rhythmic, timbral, even spatial materials all form interrelated parts of the same logical and compelling progression.

In the Variations, changing degrees of character contrast form the main structural thread, and the relatively "normal" orchestral surface makes this an easily approachable piece at several levels. As I remarked last year in connection with Carter's Piano Concerto, much of this music, although forbidding on the printed page, sounds perfectly clear; our ears are much better equipped than our notation to handle the noncomprehensible rhythms and shifting tempos basic to the kinds of change and contrast that Carter sets up.

The same is equally true of the Double Concerto, although this is certainly a much more difficult and complex piece to unravel at first. With its contrasting solo instruments (each matched by its own ensemble), with its elaborate percussion parts, and with its infinitely higher degree of individualization of every part, the Concerto presents a novel and perhaps forbidding sound picture. But persistence is well repaid, for repetition brings clarity—and you may be sure that the tremendously active texture is not the result of random improvisation (as in many equally dense textures today) but of careful decisions; every note is there for a purpose.

As I have said, the performances are good, and that of the soloists in the Concerto is more than good, it is simply staggering; the difficult problem of balancing the two disparate keyboard instruments has been well handled, and the recording throughout is quite good. For anyone who wants to have his musical experience extended, and is willing to do some really active listening towards that end, this record is highly recommended.

David Hamilton

Carter: Variations for Orchestra; Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Piano with Two Chamber Orchestras

New Philharmonia Orchestra (in the Variations); Paul Jacobs, harpsichord, Charles Rosen, piano, English Chamber Orchestra (in the Concerto); Frederik Prausnitz, cond. Columbia MS 7191, $5.79.

it is also the name of the god of war; maybe planets have nothing to do with the matter.) Anyway, it is a pleasure to know that a single guitar can be so courageously juxtaposed against so formidable an orchestra and come through intact. Bondon, a pupil of Milhaud, is a master at scoring for percussion, in particular, and some very interesting instrumental relationships are developed. A fine performance by both the soloist and the composer-conducted orchestra. S.F.

Van Cliburn, piano.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

Dvořák: Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")
Smetana: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")
Juilliard String Quartet. Columbia MS 7144, $5.79.

The Juilliard plays both these familiar works with such a lively sense of style, conviction, and technical precision that the pieces seem absolutely rejuvenated, recapturing in this fresh light much of their lost (at least for me) charm. As one has come to expect from this quartet, the ensemble playing is remarkably good: the instrumental balance is beautifully controlled, and the resulting textual clarity brings out the best features of both pieces. The playing also shows a great deal of differentiation; the essential characteristics of the various sections are explored in such a way that one seems to be hearing something new all the time.

Another facet of these performances, and one perhaps less characteristic of some of the Juilliard's earlier playing, is the group's pronounced rhythmic flexibility. There is an almost constant give-and-take of tempo, entirely appropriate to these pieces; as a consequence they seem to breathe more easily than they often do. Only occasionally does this lead to questionable results: the first movement of the Dvořák suffers particularly from the much slower tempo accorded to the second subject, which thereby acquires a somewhat saccharine quality. This also has unfortunate repercussions on the rest of the movement, as the return to the original tempo during the development section seems both strained and awkward. But don't let this stop you. On the whole, the results are excellent; and if you like this music, I can't think of a better way of hearing it.

R.P.M.

Elgar: Orchestral Works


Pro Arte Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, George Weldon, cond. RCA Victor Vics 1377, $2.50.

This collection, recorded for the World Record Club, Ltd. in England, must date back at least five years inasmuch as Weldon, known chiefly as the City of Birmingham's Maestro, died in 1963. You would never guess that the sonatas are not the very latest—the sound is first-rate in its spaciousness, purity, and clarity.

February 1969
Weldon delivers first-class readings of the Overture, the String Serenade, and the two Chansons (originally written for violin and piano). In the Cockaigne, particularly, the large, complex scoring is copiously annotated with judicious poise. The string playing, more insinuating and pointed than lush, is never permitted to swamp the delicious soloing of the woodwinds, while the very civilized brass and percussion offer a crisp contrast. The organ point at the very end makes a splendid noise, which the recording captures without constraint or blur. (Speaking of organ points, incidentally, while it might as well be mentioned that the broad, bland melody of the Chanson de Nuit merely reiterates—less successfully—the second movement of Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony.) Some listeners might find the style of string cantabile in the Chanson de Nuit a bit archly inflected in the present performance, but I rather think it adds character to the writing. As for the two most popular Pomp and Circumstance Marches, they receive incisive, muscular statements, though the combination of brass and woodwinds and (one suspects) the scarcity of strings in the Pro Arte Orchestra tend to make the noisily intended middle sections seem a mite seedy. All other selections, it should be noted, involve the Royal Philharmonic.

On the whole, this is a very attractive disc at a bargain price.

H.G.

FIELD: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in A flat; Nocturnes: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in C minor; No. 3, in A flat; No. 4, in A; No. 7, in C; No. 10, in E minor; No. 11, in E flat

Rena Kyriakou, piano; Berlin Symphony Orchestra, C. A. Binte, cond. (in the Concerto). CANDIDE CE 31006, $3.50.

Another release in Vox's new middle-price Candide line, the present disc offers the rare opportunity to hear a piano concerto by John Field (1782-1837), the Irish-born protégé of Clementi. Though best known today as Chopin's precursor in the genre of Nocturne writing, Field wrote seven concertos. His Concerto No. 1 was recorded by Sandra Bianca for M-G-M some years ago. Now Rena Kyriakou gives us the Second Concerto—a teaser in every sense of that word.

For one thing, the work wanders like a vagabond between the polarities of classic decorum and romantic ardor. It begins with a long orchestral ritornello à la the classical masters. The first theme sounds like an attempt to quote the Austrian national anthem without using any of its melody outright, while the second subject, on the other hand, is a hodgepodge of Weber and early Rossini turns of phrase. Before passing on to the solo instrument, Field commits something of a gaffe by allowing the orchestra to restate the first theme in a form virtually unaltered from its initial statement. The key relationships also tend to be static. The solo writing pre-
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FEBRUARY 1969
sents us with the rhythmic ambiguities of a classically trained composer attempting to try his still wobbly wings of romanticism. The piano hobbles around with constricted fantasy, occasionally leaving the ground in little hops and leaps that make it hard to follow Schubert's Ecosiessons. Aside from this rhythmically choppy ornateness, the scales and chords hark more to Hummel or Weber than to Chopin. The knockon-duck-style rondo is the one that has the most infectious charm, although the bland nocturne's slow movement is not without grace. All told, the documentary value of the piece makes it a welcome addition to the record catalogue, particularly so in Kyriakou's expressive, nimble-fingered account. Her orchestra supports well, and the sound, aside from some stridency and hollow timpani thwacks, is most acceptable.

Aside from Nos. 1, 7, and 11, all the overide Nocturnes here were also contained in the more extensive Field collection played by Noël Lee. His faster tempo for No. 2 provided greater structural clarity than the present pianist's more amiable account. On the other hand, Noël Lee's account of Nos. 3 and 4, and to her loss, for she sounds square and metronomic where Lee sounded gently expressive. Kyriakou's account of No. 10, however, has an interpretative quality that deftly evokes the mood of some of Chopin's finest Nocturnes.

The solo piano sound tends to be a mile tubby and indelicate.

H.G.

HANDEL: Ode on the Death of Queen Caroline

Kurt Bauer, organ; vocal soloists: Choir and Orchestra of the Dresden Cathedral, Kurt Bauer, cond. EVEREST 3227, $4.98.

It is difficult to believe that this should be the first recording of a magnificent work that Dr. Burney considered among Handel's greatest. The Funeral Ode is an anthem, but unlike the pastoral and dynastic paens which almost all the other anthems are, this is a deeply moving personal tribute to a beloved person. Handel had known the Queen of England since she was a young German princess, and there was a genuine bond of friendship between the erstwhile Hanoverian music master who now taught her daughters) become the master of opera in London, and the gentle and patient Queen, eternally suffering from the escapades of a philandering husband and a wretched son. Among Handel's mature compositions this 1737 work is the one that comes closest to being genuine church music; since there was no existing English Requiem before him, he fell back upon the experiences of his youth, the German cantor's art. The tremendous opening chorus, "The way of Zion mourn," intones the old chorale tune "Herr Jesu Christ, du Lamm Gottes," with his very few instances where Handel quotes a Lutheran hymn. Similarly, at "Their bodies are buried in peace" we hear the strains of the great funeral motet of Jacobus Gallus, used and admired in Saxony since the sixteenth century. Yet the general tone of the anthem remains English, for it was the language of the King James Bible that shaped Handel's choral style.

The orchestral numbers on the sleeve are inept, full of mistakes, and say nothing about the composition they are supposed to introduce. We are told, for instance, that Handel was "Kapellmeister to the Duke of Chandos," which—even if it were true, which it is not—would make James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon and Duke of Chandos, a German-speaking Hanoverian like George I. Neither the text nor even the number of the psalms is printed. So I just put the record on the turntable and listened. The choral singing is not bad and I was not unduly worried about my inability to understand a single word—except for some fine English choirs one seldom gets the words in choral recordings—but something was wrong and I could not immediately identify the trouble. Gradually it dawned on me that the chorus was singing in German and even though I could not catch the words I did miss the typical English cadence and inflections. It is one more example to show that one cannot triflje with the language of vocal works; the rise and fall of the original words is an essential part of the musical style.

The chorus, which trained and sings with good balance, but it is poorly recorded; it seems to me that this group must be considerably better than the recording makes it appear. The tapes were probably made right in Dresden Cathedral, which would account for the distant sound; a church is seldom the best place for lively sound. While on the whole things are in good order and in good taste—this is a remarkably good vocal-instrumental ensemble to be maintained by a chorus—attacks are at times somewhat tentative, the rhythm a little soft, the orchestral sound pale, and the continuo weak. In a word, the Dresdeners play and sing like church musicians, every note is a contribution of the locale and poor recording techniques to the general paleness. But Handel cannot be performed in such a surdewed way, not even when the piece is funeral music; he was not a church musician, and in his music the vertebrae must always be in evidence. Still, there are many nice moments in this recording, and since this is the only available release of a great masterpiece, we should be grateful for it.

H.P.H.

HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 93, in D; No. 94, in G ("Surprise")

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7006, $5.79.

One might best describe this record by adapting the terminology of the wine taster and calling it triple sec. The style is flinty, sparkling clear, and technically perfect.

Reviewing all twelve of the Haydn "Salomon" Symphonies in these pages in January, I expressed the desire to hear this music in authentic scoring and played by an orchestra and conductor of first rank. Well, here it is—at least the first two of the twelve symphonies. No one can fault Szell's Haydn in technical or musical terms. Though I might cavil at the apparently large body of notes in proportion to the wind band, the former play with that chamber music clarity and flexibility exhibited only by the Cleveland Orchestra under Szell. Always a superb master of form, Szell's sense of tempo and his ability to join sections rhythmically is as extraordinary as ever: one problem after the other is solved with consummate musicality. The opening Adagio are beautifully balanced in tone color, with just enough emphasis on the touches of "purple" harmony. I have never heard either Finale played with such dash and precision.

But Szell still falls a mile short in human terms. His Haydn lacks geniality, a sense of being rooted in a native soil. Where Haydn is playful, Szell's wit is intellectual. In the "Bronx Cheer" in the slow movement of No. 93 or the timpani interjection in the Finale of No. 94, for instance, Szell almost appears to view Haydn as just a bit crude. Beecham, operating with a quite different sort of musical instinct and by no means as formidable a technique, offers a more human Haydn; he placed the problematic bassoon blast in the context of the whole movement, not as a low comedy intrusion. This qualification aside, the sheer musical beauty and kinetic excitement of these performances place them among the finest Haydn records we have.

Columbia's recording favors the strings over the winds; the latter are not obscured, but they seem a mile distant. The sonics have a body admirably suited to the text of the music and realistically reproduce the sound of the Cleveland ensemble. My review copy, however, had a distinct postecho not only audible after a sforzando but also casting a slight haze over the tuttis.

P.H.
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Instrumental soloists; Concerto Amsterdam.

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

JANACEK: Sinfonietta

†Prokofiev: Suite for Orchestra, Op. 110

Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL 40075, $5.79.

Just a few weeks before receiving a copy of this record I heard Janáček's Sinfonietta played at Carnegie Hall under the direction of Rafael Kubelik. It was perhaps the best performance I've ever heard of this work—vigorously, dancelike, buoyant, enthusiastically youthful. It is with that memory so fresh in mind that I came to review this record. and Rozhdestvensky does not approach the magical wonderfulness of Kubelik's triumph. Pitted against its recorded rivals, however, the Melodiya/Angel disc is a welcome addition to the catalogue. The playing of the Moscow Radio Symphony does not equal the suave perfectionism of Szell's Clevelanders. The wind playing there is particularly laudable, and in general Szell's performance is admirable in its balances and overall integration; but it is static interpretatively—above all, static. Rozhdestvensky is far less so. His tempos are quicker than Szell's, and he comes close to achieving the light and festive mood one desires in a performance of this effervescent work. The first and last movements of the Sinfonietta are showpieces for brass and the Moscow ensemble possesses that heavy vibrato long associated with Eastern orchestras, a sound that requires a certain degree of adjustment in the ears of one accustomed to the smoother ambience of Western orchestras. Having made the adjustment I still found the brass sound much too, well... brassy. A certain metallic edgeiness was present, partially corrected by a slight attenuation of the treble.

The Prokofiev Suite contains a sampling of waltzes from Cinderella, War and Peace, and the movie Lermontov. The performance is big, ripe, warm, and rich with a goodly dose of rhythmic snap.

S.L.

Lutoslawski: Quartet for Strings

†Penderecki: Quartet for Strings

†Mayuzumi: Prelude for String Quartet

La Salle Quartet, DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 137001, $5.79.

The earliest of these three examples of the modern string quartet is that by the youngest composer: Penderecki, whose quartet dates from 1960. It is also the most immediately striking, with all its hangings and knockings in addition to the more usual "far-out" string sounds— and it will prove, I suspect, to be the least durable as well. Although Penderecki's effects come through more clearly (fewer problems of ensemble here) than in his orchestral works, this is a fairly simple-minded piece.

Far more interesting is Lutoslawski's much longer work, written in 1964 for the Swedish Radio. Not a highly complex work, it is nevertheless a serious one, in which a real sense for shape is evident. Many sections are constructed according to a sort of "mobile" technique, by which the players start together but proceed independently for a while, after which an arrangement is made to bring them back into strict ensemble (there is no score, in the traditional sense, for these parts of the quartet—it would be misleading to imply that particular notes should sound simultaneously). These sections "work" because their harmonic content is regulated in such a way that no matter how the details fall out, the total "harmonic field" is bound to be substantially the same at a given point. Like Penderecki, Lutoslawski makes great use of cluster chords, but with the important difference that he relies mostly on small ones; thus the harmonic content can be varied somewhat. And the frequent glissandos and quarter tones function as extensions of thematic material derived from the clusters, not merely as chic coloration.

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Lutoslawski has obviously thought about the problem of deriving structural principles that will integrate such devices and make them really useful in putting together a coherent longer work, and he has come up with a piece of ingenuity and craft, projecting a distinct musical idea in a precise, if as yet relatively unsophisticated, language.

The Mayuzumi Prelude (also from 1964) has a simple curve of increasing activity, starting from nonvibrato sustained notes with little pizzicato intrusions (sometimes pizzicato glissandos, which sound very oriental), and gradually working up to a climax of fast, repeated strummed chords while the players retune strings to produce another quasi-sliding effect; a brief epilogue follows. By comparison with what precedes, the climax is somewhat conventional, but the piece really sounds, with great clarity and a very distinctive surface.

Not the least of this disc's pleasures is the playing of the La Salle Quartet, one of the great chamber ensembles, and highly skilled apostles of this repertory. They have previously recorded the two Polish works for Muza (XL 0282), but the new performances are even better, especially in DGG's crystalline sound.

D.H.

MARTINO: Concerto for Wind Quintet—See Wuurinen: Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players

MAYUZUMI: Prelude for String Quartet—See Lutoslawski: Quartet for Strings.


MOZART: Church Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra: Nos. 1-2, 4, 8, 11-12, 14-17

Pierre Cochereau, organ; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Kurt Redel, cond. PHILIPS PHS 900185, $5.79.

Mozart wrote seventeen church sonatas in all between 1772 and 1780, while he was employed at the Salzburg Cathedral, first as Konzertmeister, then as organist. Inasmuch as his disputes there with Monsignor Collredo have been well documented, there is no need to go into that story except to point out that Collredo, who probably detested music and was bored with the Mass, had ordained that even the most formal High Masses were not to last more than three quarters of an hour. He further discontinued the singing of the Gradual between the Epistle and Gospel and directed Mozart to supply a short and light instrumental piece.

Hence, we have seventeen light-hearted examples (ten are included on the present disc) of Mozart at his bubbling best. Aside from the pure pleasure they afford, they also make it possible to follow Mozart's increasing mastery of the medium as, from first sonata to last, the form becomes richer and the organ part becomes increasingly more independent. All are single movements and cast in a rudimentary sonata-form with two contrasting themes and very short development sections. In the first three the organists play from only an unfigured bass part, while in the next six sonatas the bass part is figured. From this point on the organ parts are fully written out, and in the last sonata we have a full-blown keyboard concerto movement, complete with an opportunity for a cadenza. Most of the sonatas are scored for two violins, organ, cello, and bass; however, oboes, trumpets, horns, and timpani are added to three of these miniature masterpieces (none of which is even five minutes long).

In the first nine of these sonatas (of which four are included here) the organ is used solely as a continuo instrument. M. Cochereau is content, however, to do very little more than fill in the required harmony and to do so as quietly and unobtrusively as possible. There are so many opportunities for really imaginative continuo realizations that it is rather disappointing to be unable to determine most of the time even if the organ is playing at all. Part of the problem, of course, is the tremendous reverberation of Notre Dame Cathedral and Philips' rather distant microphone placement, which muddles the texture to the point where individual lines are very difficult.
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Could Mozart be contemplating the two new recordings of his K. 503?

to distinguish. Also, the music demands an articulate, classically voiced organ which can come through the orchestral texture without overwhelming it. The Cavaillé-Coll organ at Notre Dame is most definitely not in that category.

In the remaining sonatas the more independent nature of the organ part assures that it will be more often heard, though there are still no bursts of imagination until the cadenza of the seventeenth sonata. I think M. Cochereau goes into some keys that Mozart didn’t even know about... at least he gets there by means that would have raised the Wunderkind’s eyebrows.

If one can overlook the blurred acoustics and resign himself to being unable to distinguish the polyphony, one will probably very much enjoy the spirited and stylish orchestral performance ably led by Kurt Redel. However, all these virtues, plus many more, can be found in Marie-Claire Alain’s much more exciting performances with the Jean-Francois Paillard Chamber Orchestra, available in this country on the Westminster label. The extremely small ensemble there plays with crystalline brilliance and the organ is an ideal instrument, ideally recorded. Mme. Alain’s two-record set includes all seventeen sonatas plus three other works for organ solo (originally written for mechanical organ works) and can be most warmly recommended. C.F.G.

**MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra: No. 23, in C, K. 503; No. 8, in C, K. 246**

Géza Anda, piano; Camerata Academica of the Salzburg Mozarteum, Géza Anda, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139384, $5.79.

**MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra: No. 23, in C, K. 503; Serenade for Winds, No. 12, in C minor, K. 388**

Daniel Barenboim, piano; Wind Ensemble of the New Philharmonia Orchestra (in K. 388), New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. ANGEL S 36536, $5.79.

Whoever ventures a recording of K. 503 is up against the highest standards of the genre: Szell and Serkin, Szell and Fleisher. For its Anda version, Deutsche Grammophon would be wise to plead solo clementere, but the reviewer cannot stop there. This is a concerto laid out along spacious lines, the performers must avoid haste in order to unfold the large panorama. Anda, who directs from the keyboard, proceeds too swiftly and with too large brush strokes; he fails to differentiate sufficiently between the straightforward symphonic elan and the lyric element. The first movement is too fast and impetuous, and the relentless drive reduces the elegant figurations to mere runs without melodic values. There is none of the elasticity and give-and-take in tempo, phrasing, and dynamics that is so characteristic of this particular style. The second movement is unpoetic, while the third misses the piquancy of the musical substance by once more following a fast and unyielding tempo. Anda plays fluently and securely, but without much inflection and sensitive articulation. A rondo theme should be presented with delicacy and a little teasing at each appearance, but Anda and his orchestra land on it in a “here we are” manner. Finally, Anda’s cadenzas (Mozart did not write any for this concerto) are cold, out of style, and irritating with their harmonic mayonnaise.

The Angel recording is even more unsatisfactory. The octogenarian Otto Klemperer is by no means a man no longer able to discharge the exacting office of a conductor; he has a definite concept of this work and enforces his intentions, but the concept, sadly, is one which in its execution deliberately dismantles a magnificent musical edifice. Under Klemperer’s hand the great opening tutti is ponderous rather than festive. The marvelous sudden cloud between the radiant fanfares cast by the bassoons and oboes is taken as a mere detail: and indeed, the details throughout are not always organically related to the whole. Klemperer is so intent on underlining every accent and raising little sides to prominence that the grand line is lost while we try to absorb the significance of the emphasis. The tutti are somewhat muddy, which may be the engineers’ fault, but the conductor’s allegro assai at the end of the first movement is no one else’s fault; it beats anything that any church musician ever did to a piece in Messiah.

Barenboim holds his own fairly well in this movement. He has a fluent technique, good tone, and he is obviously a very talented young man, but his frequent dynamic alterations within the phrase, and especially at phrase endings, are out of bounds in this style. Barenboim furnishes a cadenza that Grieg could envy and Paderevski could not play more archly. In the second movement both conductor and soloist employ unnecessary microdynamics, but their worst shortcoming is the loss of continuity. Mozart marked this movement “Andante;” but it is really an adagio, a fact both artists recognized by using an appropriate tempo; unfortunately, they proceed note by note. Compared with the beautifully poetic reading of Fleisher and Szell, this is a mannered, heavy-gaited, and sentimental performance, and these adjectives are never applicable to Mozart.

The saucy rondo theme is played just a shade more slowly than its character requires, but the shade is sufficient to rob it of its piquancy. It is here that Barenboim’s lack of maturity shows most disadvantageously. Large portions of the solo part consist of figurations, but these figurations are not enough: Fleisher plays them, with many dynamic changes: they are brilliant virtuoso runs that constitute a foil to the sharply symphonic substance in the orchestra. This is indeed the crux of the Mozartian idea of the concerto: the contrast and the logical symphonic deployment in the orchestra with the capricious, improvisatory material of the solo. The runs, even the trills, are not condiments but integral parts of the melodic design which must not be permitted to sound like mere ornaments. Fleisher’s delicate but masculine figurations never leave one in doubt about their role in the ensemble, but Barenboim allows the tone to become

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thin and his rubatos and deflected phrase endings are decidedly un-Mozarteian.

The DGG recording backs up the Concerto with another, K. 246, which again opens fast and busy. Such a tempo is not impossible if there is daylight between the notes, but this orchestra, while technically competent, is not capable of achieving such transparency and airiness while under remote control in amateur hands. These concertos call for the most experienced and fastidious orchestral technique, the kind George Szell demonstrates in his concert recordings: the orchestra cannot be coached and manipulated as a side job. Listening to this opening movement one is again annoyed by the inflexible onslaught and is compelled to ask: "Where is the fire?" The performers relent somewhat in the slow movement and things become a little less congested, but the woodwinds—featured soloists to a man—do not sigh, they only complain, and Ando is thin and sentimental where he should be "romantic." The third movement comes off best, because for once the tempo is sufficiently relaxed to permit better articulation, but on the whole the impression one gains is that Ando, a distinguished pianist, is temperamentally unsuited for Mozart.

As to Angel's complementary piece, the blurb on the recording calls it "Serenade 12 for woodwind octet": I trust that the two horns, one fourth of the "woodwind" ensemble, are made of brass. Once we hear there can be no doubt about it, because in this recording they are handled like orchestral instruments, far too prominent for chamber music. Incidentally, since when does such a chamber music piece require a conductor? The net result is that Klemperer largely succeeds in eliminating the intimate tone and quality and adds a lead keel to the hull, This just is not good chamber music and the situation is exacerbated by pinched, wailing oboes and dry-throated clarinets lacking the velvet so characteristic of the instrument. The horns are good—when not pushed—and the bassoons excellent. It is a pity stringing did not turn out better, for the Serenade is a major work, full of imagination and of an astounding expressive range from the tragic to the jovial. Mozart even teases us with some tricky canons which sound like an innocent minuet. How about getting one of our own superlative wind ensembles to make another try? P.H.L.

MOZART: Mass No. 18, in C minor, K. 427
Maria Stader, soprano; Nedda Cassi, soprano; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; Heinz Reihfuss, bass; Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra. Jean-Marie Auberson, cond. VANGUARD ETERNYAN SVR 258/59, $5.00 (two discs).

This work has been called the only composition in its genre to be worthy to stand between Bach's B minor and Beethoven's D minor Mass. One can easily see why. It more than lives up to the title "Great" which has traditionally been bestowed upon it, not only in regard to its proportions but also in regard to the quality of its music. Written in 1782-83, at a time when Mozart had only recently discovered the music of Bach, it clearly reveals the composer's preoccupation with his predecessor, a fact evident both in the contrapuntal nature of much of the writing (particularly that of the choral ensembles) and in the enormous scale of the over-all conception.

Unfortunately, the Mass was never finished (most of the Credo is missing), surely one of music history's great losses. In 1901 Alois Schmitt, a German musicologist, completed the work by borrowing sections from the composer's earlier Masses, and this is the version recorded here (with the substitution of a different "Cunctipotens'" the one chosen by Schmitt having since been discovered to have been written by someone other than Mozart). While the added portions are not of equal interest, they at least make the work performable as a complete Mass. It is particularly irritating here, however, where the additions are all included, that cuts are made in the "Laudamus te" and "Et incarnatus est" from the finished part, presumably for the purpose of simplifying things for the soprano (at least in the latter case where the cut contains an elaborate coloratura section).

Nor does the recording recommend itself on the basis of the performances. Without exception the soloists sound strained and uncertain, and there are glaring intonational lapses, particularly on the part of Miss Stader. The chorus is no better, singing the louder sections at something approaching a scream, apparently in an attempt to make up for what they lack in numbers. The orchestra plays reasonably well, but the voices are so closely miked that it is barely heard in sections with elaborate choral parts. For comparison I suggest you listen to the Epic version under Rudolf Moralt and Teresa Stich-Randall as soprano soloist. A handsome performance, this is one of those mono-only discs which is apparently doomed to immediate extinction. The tenor there, as in the present Vanguard set, is Waldemar Kmentt, who seems much more relaxed in the earlier surroundings. The Epic recording is also interesting in that it uses a somewhat different completed version from the one by Schmitt.

R.P.M.

MOZART: Quintet for Strings, in C, K. 515
++Mendelssohn: Trio for Piano and Strings. No. 2, in C minor, Op. 66
Jascha Heifetz, violin; Israel Baker, violin (in the Mozart); William Primrose, Virginio Majewski, violas (in the Mozart); Gregor Piatigorsky, cello; Leonardo Pennario, piano (in the Mendelssohn). RCA RED SEAL LSC 3048, $5.79.

Right off it is apparent here that the performance of Mozart's K. 515 is of a pattern long established by Heifetz in the several-years-old Heifetz/Piatigorsky series: that is, aggressive—almost
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intimidating—style of chamber playing that bears the stamp of Heifetz the Soloist. Tempos are brisk, accents vehemently stressed. Chief emphasis is on constant energy—push, push, push! This ceaseless energizing borders on anxiety, and quite frankly, the performance made me nervous.

Things work differently in Mendelssohn's gorgeous—and shamefully neglected—C minor Trio. The performance is among the least frenetic of the Heifetz/Piatigorsky recordings yet released. Tempos are generally slower than those chosen by the Beaux Arts Trio in its World Series disc. Heifetz/Piatigorsky's conception of restraint and grandeur is consistently maintained throughout all four movements. Much greater contrast is found in the Beaux Arts essay—a quite turbulent exposition of the Brahmsian first movement, a freely sentiment alan dic, an effin Midsummer Night's Dream kind of scherzo, and an impetuous finale. Many compara
tive listennings I find myself equally convinced by both accounts.

RCA's sound is close-up and very well defined.

S.I.

MOZART: Symphonies: No. 29, in A, K. 201; No. 39, in E flat, K. 543

Sinfonia of London. Colin Davis, cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1378, $2.50.

More and more, Colin Davis seems like the maestro destined to take Klemperer's place some day. Everything about Davis' work in these symphonies brings the older maestro's the strongly granitic rhythmic pulse, the preference for orchestral sonorities that favor clarity and gruff directness over sensuousness, the purist attitude towards textual details.

As in Klemperer's recordings, Davis' Symphonies No. 29 starts with a leisurely tempo for the first movement, a true allegro moderato rather than the winged alla breve of the usual performance. Appoggiaturas are played on the beat, giving a different profile to the second theme—again, Klemperer did likewise.

Though I prefer a lighter touch in K. 201 (such as that of the Canetti/Philharmonia performance, which I hope Scarrphin issues soon), I find Davis well-nigh ideal in the overside K. 543. The recorded sound here lacks the swimming acoustic of his earlier LSO reading for Philips, with the result that the strings have more clarity and the important timpani parts an impressive bite. Then too, Davis has readjusted certain details of his phrasing, and the finale, especially, makes more point now, with the appoggiaturas played on the beat rather than in the conventional way as formerly. My only regret is that this time Davis eschews the first-movement exposition repeat which he took in the earlier version. This record is, unquestionably, a genuine bargain.

PENDERECKI: Quartet for Strings—See Lutoslawski: Quartet for Strings.

PFEIFFER: Electronomusic: Nine Images

RCA VICTROLA VICS 1371, $2.50.

John Pfeiffer defines his "electronomusic" as "a kind of exploration of an aesthetic idea without stretching the musical credibility gap to the extreme." To be sure, the "musical credibility gap" has a way of marching on; some of the effects Mr. Pfeiffer now finds safe were violent-ly iconoclastic ten years ago, and many of them have really become clichés. But Pfeiffer handles everything with cheerful clarity, precision, and fine control of effect.

The first of his nine Images are the weakest because in his search for a bridge between convention and innovation he inflicts electronic sound towards the sounds of traditional instruments. The first Image sounds like a solo for a somewhat distraught harpsichord, the second like a snatch from the slow movement of a particularly marshmallowy violin concerto. Pfeiffer is at his best in a piece called Moments, which doesn't try to sound like anything but electronic music and does so with great style, economy, and humor. The perky command of a piece called Orders is most entertaining, even if military orders are not what the title signifies, and After Hours, which takes off from the sound of a typewriter, is also very successful. But Pfeiffer's attempt at a twelve-minute piece in Forests is disastrous, and some of his other "images" are a bit on the trivial side. A.F.

POULENC: Orchestral Works

Sinfonietta: Music for "Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel"; Two Marches and an Intermezzo, Suite Française.

Orchestre de Paris, Georges Prêtre, cond. ANGEL S 36519, $5.79.

Nowadays we tend to think of Francis Poulenc as the rather serious composer of a Mass and The Dialogues of the Carmelites. This collection from the composer's relatively small output of works for orchestra reminds us of the lighter side of Poulenc, who, especially in his youth, was inclined to bright wit and acid mockery.

The major work here, the Sinfonietta of 1947, is a throwback to the youthful style represented by the other, shorter pieces on the disc. Poulenc himself was apparently aware of this return to his earlier manner, for he not only gave the piece a diminutive title but also said of it, "I was dressing too young for my age." Indeed with its Stravinskian echoes—especially of Le Baiser de la fée—the Sinfonietta frequently does sound more like the 1920s than the postwar period. Yet, though eclectic in style and free in form, the piece displays extraordinary craftsmanship and its materials are both honest and interesting.
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It seems to me that Georges Prêtre finds his proper métier in this music, and the orchestra has a delightfully French sound completely appropriate to Poulenc. The strings are, for a new orchestra, exceptionally well blended; the flutes and clarinets have that typically French warmth and refinement; and the acidity of the oboe is beautifully controlled, especially when it blends with the violas. Even the vibrato of the horns sounds right in this music.

So far as I know, none of this music has been widely available before on records. Though the shorter pieces, delightful as they may be, are trivia, the Sinfonietta deserves to be better known. The present record should further its cause.

P.H.


John Browning, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3019, $5.79.

The Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto has been lucky on records: of the some dozen versions in the current Schwann catalogue, most of them are very good indeed. The present Browning/Leinsdorf collaboration (their second in this work) belongs in the top rank. In the main, these artists are a bit more genteel, graceful, and elegant here, less cold-bloodedly dynamic and hard-hitting than on their older set for Capitol. RCA’s more reverberant sound contributes to the effect, though one certainly does not lose percussion detail (those castanets in the first movement come out marvelously well). My personal preferences for this work remain the earlier Browning/Leinsdorf account, the Argerich/Abbado (with a more volatile vein of lyricism and even more realistic sound than RCA’s), the Graftman/Szell (remarkably solid in the “Age of Steel” rendition), and the version led by Piero Coppola with the composer himself as soloist. Aside from the immense documentary value of the last-named reading, it also has—1932 sound notwithstanding—a uniquely appealing charm. But, to repeat, the new release merits the highest consideration.

The left-hand concerto (written for, but rejected by, the one-armed pianist Paul Wittgenstein) has naturally been less frequently tackled. Browning’s account is a bit lighter in texture than Rudolf Serkin’s altogether inspired Columbia version with Ormandy. The difference is one of elegance and fluency as opposed to titanic savagery, and the two supporting conductors share the views of their respective soloists.

I regret to add that my review copy of the new release had alarmingly noisy surfaces in Concerto No. 3 and some sudden intrusions of what sounded like tape hiss in sections of the Fourth’s slow movement.

H.G.


PURCELL: Consort Music for Strings and Harpsichord

Overture in D minor, Z. 771; Pavane in B (lat. Z. 750); Ground in D minor, Z. 222; Overture and Suite in G, Z. 770; Pavane in A minor, Z. 749; Fantasia: Three parts on a Ground, in D, Z. 731; Overture in G minor, Z. 772; Suite D, Z. 667; Pavane of Four Parts in G minor, Z. 752; Sinfonia’s Farewell; A New Ground, Z. T 682; Sonata in A minor, Z. 804.

Lehndort Consort, Gustav Leonhardt, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9506, $5.95.

This is an absolutely marvelous release. The music is glorious, the performances—using mostly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century instruments—are exemplary in both style and musicianship, and the recording is flawless.

Not all the pieces included employ continuo support for the strings. The three Pavans are for strings alone, and further variation provided by the D minor Ground, the D major Suite, the little minuet entitled Sinfonia’s Farewell, and the New Ground, all of which are for solo harpsichord, idiomatically played by Leonhardt himself.

The usefulness of Telefunken’s copiously annotated and illustrated “Musik und ihre Zeit” series is enhanced by the fact that it now comes in a full English-language edition. The present album is especially well documented; it has full details of both the instruments and of the works, which are duly provided with Zimmermann numbers for ease of reference. A record not to be missed.

B.J.

RACHMANINOFF: Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in D minor, Op. 28; No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 36

John Ogdon, piano.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

RAVEL: Bolero; Pavane pour une inutile défunte; Mirrors: La Vallée des cloches; Chansons madécasses

Maurice Ravel, piano (in Pavane, La Vallée, and Chansons); Madeleine Gray, soprano (in Chansons); Larmourex Orchestra, Maurice Ravel, cond. Turnabout TV 4256, $2.50 (mono only).

Question: What could possibly justify another recording of Ravel’s Bolero? Answer: Ravel himself conducting the work. It is Ravel’s interesting version of Bolero that is the outstanding feature of the present release—the third in Turnabout’s “Historic Recording” series—inaugurating as the other performances are already available on LP (the piano works on Everest’s Archive of Piano Music series, the Chansons on Angel).

Although Ravel’s so-called objective attitude towards his own works has become something of a legend, it is still a bit startling to hear these almost unfalteringly mathematical interpretations. Ravel’s version of Bolero, recorded shortly after the work’s premiere (which Ravel did not conduct) on November 22, 1928, must be the slowest on records—even slower than the quarter-note = 72 metronome marking indicated on the score (I timed it at sixty-six). Interestingly enough, the slow tempo does not tend to drive one crazy, as Ravel is said to have desired; rather, it actually intensifies, at least on the intellectual level, the effect of the work’s celebrated crescendo. On the other hand, I cannot imagine anybody dancing to the Ravel reading, although the work was conceived as a ballet.

For reasons I am not sure I understand, several of the instruments playing solo passages sound flat in some spots here, especially the tenor saxophone. Besides this peculiarity and the slow tempo there are certain instrumental effects—particularly a few trombone slurs—that distinguish this recording from others available.

Turnabout’s engineers have done a good job of transferring the work from the original 78s to the present LP. There are the inevitable changes in hiss level, and there is one section where the beat is broken (at measure 273) at a record change—a serious flaw for a work and interpretation of this nature. On the other hand, the sound is clean, and the various instrumental groups are well defined. Obviously, the important orchestral effects are not going to have their full impact on a recording of this vintage, but all things considered, the sound is quite passable. Turnabout should also be congratulated for not “rechanneling” the work in phony stereo.

A colleague of mine recently asked a fairly sophisticated group of students to state their preference after having heard, without knowing which work was which, both Gieseking’s and Ravel’s interpretations of the piano works recorded on this disc. Almost all preferred the Gieseking. I rather imagine most people would react in the same way. Again, Ravel uses slower-than-what is typically intended tempos, and his playing, particularly in the Pavane, is surprisingly mechanical.
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Maurice Ravel conducts his own Bolero and achieves a startling performance, and détaché (perhaps due to the recording’s piano-roll origin). The piano sound on this recording is good and particularly unwavering.

I have little to add to what has already been said about the celebrated Madeleine Gray performance of the Chansons mélodrames on this record. As is the case with the other selections here, it would not be my own favorite version of A;

“Veritably a Dilly”: The Disc Debut of Composer Terry Riley—In C

Terry Riley’s In C is one of the definitive masterpieces of the twentieth century. It is probably the most important piece of music since Boulez’ Motet sans matre; conceivably it is the most important since the Socré. For it defines a new aesthetic, and a most important one.

This aesthetic involves the endless repetition of the same short phrase and instrumental effect and their very slow and gradual change over a considerable length of time. The repetition both numbs one’s sensibilities and makes them more alert. The subtlety, smallest variation, such as might well pass unnoticed in another context, takes on monumental meaning; the hearer is thrown into a kind of trance and at the same time is made infinitely more alert than ever before to what sound is all about.

The score, which the notes aptly call ‘a launching pad’ for the music, is printed in its entirety on the jacket. It consists of fifty-three figures ranging in length from a single sixteenth note to a phrase that would be four or five bars long if there were any bars. Each member of the ensemble goes through these fifty-three figures, but with rests and hiatuses as he desires. Any number of instruments can be employed; in this case, an ensemble of eleven instruments was recorded and then overdubbed twice, ending up with this effect: three each of saxophone (played by Riley), flute, oboe, trumpet, viola, trombone, and vibraphone, two each of clarinet, bassoon, and marimophone; and one piano. (The piano part consists of the one note, C, played in high octaves over and over for the duration.) The triple recording results in an absolutely unique sound. One is aware that it was produced by normal instruments, but their individual timbres are somewhat blurred as they blend into the general hum of the piece.

Columbia’s excellent annotator (not identified) speaks of the work as revealing “a terrifying world of groups and sub-groups forming, dissolving, and re-arranging within a modal panorama which shifts, over a period of about forty-five to ninety minutes, from C to E to C to G.” Of course, not even Columbia has found a way to make a record run forty-five minutes on one occasion and ninety minutes on another; we have here to settle for the shorter version, and it is veritably a dilly. ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

Riley: In C

Instrumental ensemble of the New Music Center, Buffalo. COLUMBIA MS 7178, $5.79.

ROMAN: Drottningholms-musique

Suite

Ninaumann: Gustaf Wasa: Ballet Excédits

Ullini: Il Re pastore: Overture

Chamber Orchestra of the Drottningholm Theater, Ulf Börjlin, cond. NONE- nC H 71213, $2.50.

If accounts of the musical life at the eighteenth-century Swedish court at Drottningholm remind one of a similar milieu associated with Frederick the Great, that is probably because it was all in the family; Princess Louisa Ulrika of Prussia, whom the Swedish heir apparent Adolf Frederick married in 1744, was one of Frederick’s sisters, and was not to be outdone by the artistic splendor prevailing at Sans Souci. She had, it is clear, much on which to build. Her wedding festivities took place to the tunes of Johan Helmich Roman, who had been Swedish court Kapellmeister since 1727; his suite for this occasion contains twenty-four movements, of which thirteen are heard here—enough to show that he was much influenced by Handel, that he had a nice way with both triumphal brassy movements and pastoral woodwind ones, and that he knew how to create considerable variety within the suite form.

Next on the scene after Roman’s retirement was the Bolognese, Francesco Antonio Ullini, who wrote five operas.

Ravel: Sonatine: Le Tombeau de Couperin; Gaspard de la Nuit

John Browning, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3028, $5.79.

Ravel’s peculiar blend of textual complexity and formal clarity is well served by pianist John Browning, who turns in handsome performances of all these pieces. The three works differ widely in effect, despite their obvious similarities. The Sonatine, with its almost pristine eighteenth-century associations, seems somewhat dated to my ears, although I can’t help being impressed by its technical perfection. Le Tombeau de Couperin, whose title is even more specific in its reference to an earlier musical style, nevertheless seems much less stereotyped, and the brilliant pianistic writing and less than reverent tone of these character pieces still hold considerable musical interest. Finally, Gaspard de la Nuit is blatantly virtuosic in conception and much more voluptuous in sound and rhapsodic in construction than either of the other two pieces.

All three works supply attractive vehicles for Mr. Browning, and he polishes off each in its turn with disarming ease. His approach to Ravel is reminiscent of that of Gieseking in its steady clarity and somewhat detached emotional character, but Browning brings to the pieces a softer, warmer touch and a more fluid and lyrical rhythmic conception. All and all, the disc is a very pleasant affair, and the piano sound is excellent. R.P.M.
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for Drottningholm, of which Il Re pastore was the second. The overture won't demolish Mozart's reputation, but it is well put together, with a fascinating middle movement in the minor that is particularly effective.

It was Lovisa Ulrika's son Gustav III (destined for assassination and immorality via Verdi's Ballo in maschera) who brought Johann Gottlieb Naumann to the court for a series of visits, during which the composer wrote the first Swedish opera, Gustaf Wasa. Not much can be surmised from the two ballet excerpts here, except that Naumann could turn out a pas de deux as well as the next man and do pleasant things with a solo flute over string accompaniment. The performances are elegant, beautifully phrased, and worthy of any court on the map.


Without a doubt, this is the "prettiest" recording of Schoenberg's 1942 Piano Concerto that we have yet had—and I don't mean the statement in a derogatory sense. It is no mean achievement to play the piece so cleanly, with nothing sounding scratchy or scrabbly, and it is very well recorded to boot. On the one hand, this should go far to convince skeptics that Schoenberg's mature works need not be hard to listen to, for the lyrical side of the music is strongly emphasized—in fact, so strongly as to be, on the other hand, something of a misrepresentation of the force and vigor that is also a significant element of the piece. The tempos are often too slow (the total timing is a fifth again as long as the average of other recordings) that the line is not sustained—naturally in the Adagio but also in the more moderate opening movement, while even the Giocoso finale loses momentum very easily. Although Serkin and Ozawa give a performance that is obviously carefully thought out, I can't agree that this is anything like a full picture of Schoenberg's conception. Gould and Craft (Columbia MS 7039) come closer, despite some oddities and far less beautiful orchestral playing, while Brendel's ancient and foggy recorded Turnabout disc (TV 4051) was probably the best performance of all, judging by what one can hear of the pianist's forceful, long-breathed phrasing and brilliant technical command (the stereo of that disc is faked, by the way, and can hardly be an improvement on the already superresonant mono). Since the Turnabout also contains Marzheuer's fantastic reading of the Violin Concerto, it should be in any Schoenberg collection: the Serkin-Ozawa might then be an interesting complement, at least until we get a remake from Brendel.

The Op. 23 Piano Pieces suffer from a similar fondness for slow tempos, especially the third piece, which is taken at something like half the indicated speed. Great clarity of voice-leading certain results, but the relationship between one note and the next virtually disappears. On the other hand, the marvelous late Phantasy comes off quite well. Steinhardt plays very accurately, and the tempos are altogether reasonable (although the return to "Tempo 1" in the middle of the piece is rather too fast). All told, this is a considerable improvement on the Bader-Gould version in the Columbia series.

D.H.

SCHUBERT: Moments musicaux, D. 780; Fantasy for Piano, in C, D. 760 ("Wanderer")

Wilhelm Kempff, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139372, $5.79.

Kempff approaches the six Moments musicaux (Moments musicaux, if you accept Schubert's own bad French) with an intriguing blend of Beethovenian asceticism and the yielding graciousness of a born lyricist. He displays a marvelous wealth of subtle shading and tone color, but these niceties of romantic refinement are always tempered by an innate classical rigor. Clarity would seem to be his uppermost pursuit here—clarity of sonority and clarity of structure. There is consummate attention to part writing, and details such as forte-pianos and sforzandos are executed with refreshing "ping." Kempff also achieves symmetry by observing the repeats.

Rhythmically and in terms of tempo there is a certain forthright solidity. Some of Kempff's tempos indeed are sufficiently different from "traditional" choices to merit discussion: I have nothing but praise for the pianist's refusal to rush the daylights out of No. 4. Schubert, after all, did write Moderato there (and Schnabel—to take one admirably extant example—seems to think that the word was "Agitato"). Kempff's very leisurely handling of the treacherous dotted-rhythm chords in No. 5 is, for me, a positive revelation. How big and noble the work sounds, played in this manner! On the other hand, the brisk one-to-a-bar speed for No. 6 struck me as making for an uncomfortable tightness. I could also quibble with Kempff's old-fashioned before-the-beat execution of appoggiaturas and with the absence from his reading of any of those delicious variants revealed in some of the Urtext editions. But quibbles or no, Kempff's Moments musicaux are not to be missed.

I have suddenly realized that I don't much care for the Wanderer Fantasy. The emphasis on technical rhetoric, it seems to me, is a bit outsized, and the thematic material has a way of falling into banal four-bar segments. An exceptionally nuanced performance (such as the ancient Curzon edition) or one played with feline tautness (the deleted Fleisher) can temporarily change my opinions, but Kempff's, I am afraid, does not. His rhythmic scansion is a little
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GRIGORY SOKOLOV: Sinfonia, Op. 22


For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

SCRIABIN: Piano Music

Etudes: Op. 3, Nos. 1 and 2; No. 4; No. 5; No. 6; Etudes: Op. 73, Nos. 22; No. 23; No. 24; Poème—Nocturne, Op. 61; Preludes, Op. 11: Nos. 5, 14, and 24; Sonata for Piano, No. 4, Op. 30; Vers la Jeune, Op. 72.

Hilde Sonner, piano. MERCURY SR 90500, $5.79.

In this collection you get a well-balanced anthology of Scriabinean music. Miss Sonner has admirably captured her landscapes from Scriabin's entire output, and the result gives a fair representation to the early Chopin-derived pieces (the romantic Left-Hand Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 2; the thin and delicate Etude, Op. 8, No. 12)—so obviously inspired by Chopin's last Preludes, Op. 28; the group of Preludes, Op. 11) as well as to the tenuous fantasy and febrile mysticism of the late period (Vers la jeune, Op. 72; Guirlandes, Op. 73, No. 1; Poème—Nocturne, Op. 61). The Fourth Sonata, with its serene beginning and zany excursions into the realm of early jazz might be taken as the piano-solo equivalent of Milhaud's Création du Monde. It stands midway between the polarities represented in the other pieces here. Scriabin's idiom is of a very personal sort; and while one might detest some of this music, there is no escaping the evidence that this post-impressionist composer has a poetic gift unique to his time.

At a recent Carnegie Hall concert Hilde Sonner played some of these same compositions with admirable projection and authority. This recording is, in comparison, disappointing. Part of the trouble here seems to be the tubby, bass heavy, studio-bound reproduction of the piano. Granted, one doesn't seek a percussive tone for romantic music, but surely it is not unreasonable to want some grace, line, and delicacy. And sonics aside, for all Miss Sonner's musical instincts and technical precision, she takes cautious tempos for the Left-Hand Nocturne and Op. 8, No. 12 Etude. It all suggests that this artist might have been suffering a case of mike-fright.

As Scriabinian collections are hardly commonplace, Miss Sonner's musicianly virtues entitle her efforts in this area to respect, but one hopes that her subsequent releases will better represent her potential. H.G.
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BY CONRAD L. OSBORNE

IN VIEW OF THE NUMBER of more or less standard operas that do not yet have a really satisfactory recording, the good fortune that has attended Ariadne is astounding. This is the opera’s fourth complete recording, and it is the fourth recommendable one—a record I believe is unmatched by any other opera.

And despite the fact that these recordings have been accomplished over a twenty-five-year span, none is really out of the running from a sonic standpoint. Of course, it can hardly be argued that the performances of the 1944 recording (to be released, not earliest to be released) does full justice to the delicacy of handling of the opera; the DGG version is the preservation of a broadcast of a live performance from the Vienna State Opera in June 1944, in celebration of the composer's eightieth birthday. Yet the sound of the recording is surprisingly good. Considering its origin, and the aura of the occasion, somehow transmitted on discs of vinyl, is even brighter than is indicated by a listing of the principal participants: Maria Reining, Alda Noni, Irmgard Seefried, Max Lorenz, Erich Kunz, and Paul Schoeffler, under Karl Böhm.

The next issue is a studio recording made a decade later—Ariadne's first version, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Rita Streich, Seefried again, Rudolph Schock, Hermann Prey, and Karl Dönhö, Von Karajan conducting. I recently included it in my little list of the mono recordings most worth preserving, and after rehearing good chunks of it I find no reason to strip it of rank. The orchestral playing is expert, Schwarzkopf and Streich just about irreplaceable, and Streich very pretty and accurate if not as characterful as one might wish. Seck’s tight, strained Bacchus is a drawback, but so is nearly everyone else's attempt at this role.

The first stereo version was RCA Victor's, which dates from 1961, led by Erich Leinsdorf, Leinsdorf pumps along too much. The polyphonic scenes burdened on the whole turns in one of his best recorded operatic performances, led by splendid playing from the Vienna Philharmonic. Leonie Rysanek’s Ariadne has neither the aristocratic air of Schwarzkopf's nor the way with words of Reining's, but her work is undeniably exciting at the vocal climaxes. Seni Jurincic is simply a great Composer—finer, even, than the magnificent Seefried—and both Roberta Peters and Jan Peerce are way above their norms as Zerbinetta and Bacchus.

So the new Angel entry moves into a picked field. Perhaps it is the special quality of this opera (and its special difficulty) that has saved it on records; the cast requirements are so severe and unusual and the orchestral demands so high (in terms of quality, of course, not quantity) that one would not dream of undertaking the piece without an extraordinary assemblage of talent. In the case of the present release, a firm base is provided by Kempe and the Dresden orchestra. One is aware from the start of a remarkable warmth and fineness of grain in the playing, with the result that when the solo does betray a slight high-register quaver, it really jars. The playing of nearly all the little solo and chamber passages is exquisite, particularly in the strings—something of great importance in this transparent, exposed score. Fortunately, the quality of Kempe’s reading is maintained not only in the languishing lyric passages one expects from him. The orchestral and vocal ensemble in the commedia scenes is close to a brisk perfection, and is balanced and proportioned to a turn. And the big moments are given full measure, as with the gorgeous orchestral rucket that leads into Ariadne’s cry of “Theseus!” as Bacchus breaks the dance in the final scene.

The most solid asset among the singers is Gundula Janowitz, whose Ariadne is the finest work I have yet heard from her. This is one of those voices that seems made for the Straussian line: cool, even, full, with an easy play from mezzo-piano to forte. Her particular sort of musicality, or temperament, also fits her into the role; she has a fine instinct for phrasing the music, and treats the words more meaningfully than has sometimes been the case in the past. It is marvelous to hear a voice that works so cleanly at low dynamics yet stays right on the track when let out—it really soars at places like “Du wirst mich befreien” (in “Es gibt ein Reich”), or, two pages later, the sweep up to the B flat on “du nimm es von mir.” She is also surprisingly lively as the Prima Donna in the prologue, though she didn’t quite get the universe of contempt for Zerbinetta into “Abstand! Ha ha ha! Eine Welt, hoffe ich!” that Schwarzkopf manages.

The Zerbinetta is a newcomer to the international recording scene, Sylvia Geszty. She is in most respects altogether excellent. She gets more than a suggestion of the character across; is almost frighteningly accurate with the rhythms—all those triplets, dots, and triplets of triplets in The Scarecrow are truly put in their places; tosses off staccatos with the best; and travels right up to a sustained top E natural without losing the bottom. Regrettably, the sound per se is simply not very attractive. Sometimes (usually when she is singing rather softly in the upper range) she flies over into a pretty timbre; but sustained tones too often have that wavy, edgy quality associated with Slavic female voices, and sometimes a wobble too.

Also slightly disappointing to me is the Composer of Teresa Zylis-Gara, a young lady of whom good word has traveled across the water and whom we are about to hear as Elvira at the Me. The Semele is a lovely one, and of roughly the correct weight and quality for the role. But her use of it seems incomplete as yet: the middle has a kind of body which she cannot carry up comfortably, and thus when she tries to remove the pressure to sing softly (as she must a good share of the time), the sound turns innocuous and she loses the ability to articulate clearly. This has some exacting moments, seems musical, and may be a better singer than she shows here. But her Composer is not on a level with that of Jurincic or Seefried. As for the trio of Nymphs, they are musically accurate but vocally weak, with the exception of Miss Burmeister, who sings steadily.

On the male side, honors must go to the low voices. Hermann Prey repeats his triple turn. (I refer to his/) He has some compelling Peerce, the only Bacchus to sing with true line and actually to shape the phrases. He accords the words their dignity, and brings some excitement to these phrases that head for the top, return to earth for a second, then head right back.

Despite the reservations I have voiced, this is an excellent performance. Its very fine, admirably balanced stereo sound may well be a factor in elevating it above other versions for some collectors, though not for me. If I were forced to pick one Ariadne, I’d close my eyes and point.

Strauss, Richard: Ariadne auf Naxos

Gundula Janowitz (s), Ariadne and Prima Donna; Sylvia Geszty (s), Zerbinetta; Teresa Zylis-Gara (s), The Composer; Erika Wüstmann (s), Najade; Adele Stolte (s), Echo; Annelies Burmeister (c), Dryade; James King (t), Bacchus and The Tenor; Peter Schreier (t), The Dancing Master and Scaramuccia; the Hans-Joachim Roitzsch (b), Basilella; Hermann Prey (b), Harlekin; Theo Adam (b), The Music Master; Siegfried Vogel (bs), Truffaldin; Orchestra of the Dresden State Opera, Rudolf Kempe, cond. ANGEL SCL 3733, $17.37 (three discs).
If you have heard the BOSE 901 Direct/Reflecting™ speaker system, or if you have read the reviews, you already know that the 901 is the longest step forward in speaker design in perhaps two decades. Since the superiority of the 901 (covered by patents issued and pending) derives from an interrelated group of advances, each depending on the others for its full potential, we hope you will be interested in a fuller explanation than is possible in a single issue. This discussion is one of a series on the theoretical and technological basis of the performance of the BOSE 901.

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Yet though it is as important as frequency response, spatial property has played little part in the design of speakers prior to the 901. Measurements of a speaker, on-axis in an anechoic environment, deliberately avoid spatial property ("room effects") because in order to measure spatial characteristics, the speaker and the room must be considered as a system. No way was previously known to distinguish the contribution of the speaker from that of the room. In a room, "the Sound Pressure Level drops off as the distance from the source increases until the direct field becomes smaller than the reverberant field. Beyond this point, the intensity is independent of distance and its variation with room position is a function only of the standing wave pattern in the room." This becomes significant for loudspeaker design "when we examine the sound field in concert halls and find that for virtually all seats, the reverberant field is dominant. Even for a large hall such as Symphony Hall in Boston, the reverberant field equals the direct field at about 19 feet from the source." In the reverberant field, "since the energy in this field arrives at any point via reflections from the surfaces of the room, the angles of incidence of the arriving sound energy are widely distributed.

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These spatial characteristics are combined with three other essential advances to provide the full range of benefits offered by the 901. They will be the subjects of other issues. Meanwhile, if you'd like to hear what spatial property means, ask your franchised BOSE dealer for an A-B comparison of the 901 with the best conventional speakers he carries, regardless of size or price.

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"From 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', Dr. A. G. Bose, a paper presented at the 1968 convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Copies of the complete paper are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents."
SMETANA: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")—See Dvořák: Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American").

STRAVINSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D—See Berg: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.

STRAVINSKY: Four Etudes, Op. 7; Ragtime; Piano-Rag-music; Sonata; Serenade in A; Tango; Circus Polka

Noël Lee, piano. NONESUCH H 71212, $2.50.

Although this disc does not contain all the Stravinsky solo piano works, it does cover the major ones, except for the Three Movements from Petrushka. The Sonata and Serenade in A (from 1924 and 1925 respectively) are the relatively well-known pièces de résistance here, in the "classical" idiom that often has more to do with black than with the later twentieth century, and always more to do with Stravinskian ideas of phrase structure and metrics than with anything else.

Less often encountered are the Four Etudes (1908), brilliant but conventional works in a kind of late-nineteenth-century Chopinesque idiom; the first two are studies in cross-rhythms, thus hinting at future developments. The two "jazz" pieces, from 1918 and 1919 respectively, explore the syncopated idiom first broached in L'Historie du Soldat, Ragtime, originally for eleven instruments, is played here in the composer's rather tame piano version, and isn't nearly so much fun as the rather more difficult Piano-Rag-music.

Finally, there are two entertaining trifles from the early 1910s, which probably owe their existence to financial inducements as much as to musical necessity. The Tango is a dead-pan satire, which has twice been orchestrated, first by Felix Guennher for full orchestra, again in 1953 by the composer himself for a smaller ensemble (the latter version has been recorded by Stravinsky but still awaits release); Dorati, on Mercury, plays the Guennher version said to have been "examined and approved" by the composer. The Cirque Polka was, of course, originally created for the Ringling Brothers' Band, and is best known in the later orchestral version.

Mr. Lee's performances are reasonably competent, although consistently on the heavy-handed side, especially by comparison with Charles Rosen's superb recording of the Sonata and Serenade (Epic BC 1140), which has far more dynamic subtlety and accentual variety. Since a similar coupling, played by Beberidge Webster, is promised by Dover, I recommend either of two alternatives: Rosen or patience, depending on whether your main interest is the bigger pieces or the smaller ones.

STRAVINSKY: Sacre du printemps; Fireworks

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3026, $5.79.

A few months ago we had the first recording of The Rite of Spring from Russia; now, here is the first one from Chicago, and it certainly suggests that environment, rather than heredity, is more important in these matters. The Chicago Symphony may be the best orchestra in America, and this is the best-played performance of this piece that you are likely to hear. Ozawa's reading is very straightforward—no fussiness, no frenzy—and the results are extremely satisfactory, particularly since they are so well recorded, with lots of dynamic range and clarity (the percussion has rarely come across in such detail, particularly the vicious timpani parts at the end of the Danse sacrale—but there is also some impressively soft playing at the beginning of Part II).

Among currently available recordings, two others lay claim to special distinction. Boulez (Nonesuch H 71093) has the advantage of price, but also of a very special clarity; his orchestra doesn't quite reach the Chicago level of ensemble and balance, but the highly pointed, brilliantly accented playing produces a remarkably transparent sound. On the debit side is a slight tendency to gain speed, some erratic dynamics, and a less satisfactory recording job. The other competitor is the composer's own version, which has a quite unique rhythmic force. If only he could have had the Chicago Symphony to play for his recording...

The brief Fireworks is also well played; three cheers to whoever thought to put it before the major work—a much more sensible arrangement than the usual. The Alfred Frankenstein provides an interesting liner note, giving Nicolas Slonimsky's more literal translations of the various titles to the sections of the ballet; unfortunately, he has been betrayed by the label department, for still another set of title translations, which he promises "will be found on the labels," has been omitted therefrom. (Incidentally, the new RCA label is a good piece of design, with lots of room for good big type and the side number given so large that you can read it on the moving turntable even if your head doesn't revolve at 33 1/3 rpm.)

Wanda Wilkomirska, violin. Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Witold Rowicki, cond. HELLIDOR H 25087, $2.49.

Although many people consider Szymanowski's First Violin Concerto to be one of the twentieth century's major works in this form, it is rarely played—perhaps understandably so, as there are no big tunes in the piece nor is there much opportu-
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The tradition of

an exciting present-day candidate among Italian mezzo-sopranos to carry on the noble tradition of Stignani, Barbieri, and Simi- onato; she has proved in recent years to be an accomplished artist and the possessor of a richly beautiful voice. This record offers an opportunity of listening to her work in a wide variety of styles, reaching from the preromantic Cherubini all the way through the nineteenth century to the verismo school. It is an impressive recital, though, for technical reasons, it does not give a complete picture of her skillful vocal style.

I hasten to say that there is nothing wrong with the technology of this record: it is well balanced and competently taped.

The orchestra sounds fairly small and the dynamic span has obviously been kept short—a studio job with close micro- phoning. Consequently, Miss Cossotto rarely needs to project, as she would do in a concert hall or on record. All of this makes for happy listening at the hearthside, but tells us not as much as we might wish to know about the sing- er's over-all character.

One result of the restrained dynamics is a certain lack of emotional intensity in, for example, the opening Cavalleria aria, very much underplayed though faultlessly sung. Ulrica's invocation, from Ballo, is also impeccably in its vocalism but is entirely without chills or shocks—and slackness in Ulrica's one big scene cannot be permitted.

The happiest results are to be found in the Adriana and Giocunda arias, where the artist's involvement is total and her shaping of the vocal line proclaims her caliber as an artist. The Nabucco aria (Fenena's prayer in the finale) is clean, firm, and very moving. And the Cheru- bini excerpt shows how capable this singer is of projecting a sense of tragedy while retaining every element of dignity.

But Rosina's aria from Barberie lacks sparkle entirely, in the sense that Gar- ganza and Simionato have led us to ex- pect it. Although it is all very well for mezzos to reclaim this material from the higher voices and to restore the practice of Rossini's day, they must have the temperament to bounce this music about and have more fun with it than Cossotto does here.

There is no question, however, that this record contains some very enjoyable singing by an important artist, Gavaz- zeni's work is on the slack side but his musicians play well. The stereo is genu- ine, not the electronic kind sometimes offered on this label.

VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES:
Zarzuela Arias


Victoria de los Angeles, soprano; Coro de Camara del Real, members of the Spanish National Orchestra, Rafael Früh- beck de Burgos, cond. Angel S 36556, $5.79.

Here we have a zarzuela anthology far removed indeed from the spirit of the Caballé/Marti collection of bouncy and swashbuckling duets (RCA LSC 3039) reviewed here in December. Victorio de los Angeles' way is quieter, gentler, more refined. She approaches this music as a miniaturist, concerned to shape each song
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with the utmost delicacy and skill. Since both records give high pleasure, who is to say which way is the right one?

On the present disc we hear a dozen fresh and appealing melodies from the zarzuela melodists, each one rich with opportunities for individual decoration and character insight. The skill of Miss de los Angeles is breathtaking, and her ability to propel emotion fully and convincingly without resorting to a single "broad" effect—there is hardly a note in the record that exceeds a mezzoforte level—makes the entire recital a cumulative work of art.

The playing of the instrumentalists and the recording balance are appropriate and proficient. Recommended without reservation.

G.M.

ENGLISH SECULAR MUSIC OF THE LATE RENAISSANCE

Weelkes: The Cryes of London; Since Robin Hood; Thule, the period of cas- tration; Vautier: Weep, weep mine eyes. Tomkins: Alman. Ravenscroft: Rustic Lovers. Gibbons: Do not repine, fair sun. Peerson: Sing, love is blind, Dering: Country Cries. Anon.: Hey down a down a down; Take heed of time, tune, and ear.

Purell Consort of Voices; Jave Consort of Viols; Grayston Burgess, cond. CANDIDE 31005, $3.50.

This record is a splendid follow-up to the same group's "Music of the High Renaissance in England" on Turnabout TV 4017/TV 34017. "Even at twice the price this record would be a bargain," I said when reviewing that issue. This new set (also on a low-priced label, just a dollar more than the Turnabout) is equally desirable.

The repertoire here is still more unfamiliar, yet there is not a dud on either side of the disc. The only really well-known pieces among the others are played by THOMAS WEELKES. The Thule madrigal is very well done, though a little more work might have clarified the words of the first two lines. Weelkes' Cryes of London is not so touchingly human as Orlando Gibbons' similar setting, but it is charming enough, and the singers do it with a nice feeling for the accents of their native capital.

There are several pieces on the record that I have never heard before. All of them have their beauties, and they are cleverly varied in texture and pace. The performances are excellent, with Ian Partridge's lovely tenor once more in evidence. Recording first-class. Highly recommended.

B.J.

SIEGFRIED HILDENBRAND: "Historic Organs of Switzerland"


Siegfried Hildenhain, organ. TELE-FUNKEN SAWT 9514, $5.95.

A recording session in Madrid: Victoria de los Angeles and son Juan.

"The recordings of this organ in particular will convey to the lover of organ music and historic instruments something of that atmosphere which can only be created by an organ kept safe from all perfectionism through its unaltered character." So read the jacket notes in describing the organ of St. Antonius' Chapel at Münster, heard here in the Johann Speth work, and these words sum up pretty well the dominant impression conveyed by the three instruments documented on this delightful disc. All three organs—located in the German-speaking Valley of Valais in Switzerland and built at various times in the eighteenth century—are beautiful examples of the baroque organ builder's art at its finest: voicing is warm, light, and transparent and there is a preponderance of bright and sparkling upper-work. The most interesting of the three is the fine ten- rank St. Antonius instrument, for which the wind is still supplied (somewhat unsteadily) by a pair of hand bellows.

For the Pachelbel and Frescobaldi pieces Hildenhain uses the organ of the "Liebfrauen" Church at Münster, for the French pieces and the Buxtehude that of the Parish Church ("Maria Geburt") at Reckingen. All are played with typically German precision and accuracy. For the pieces by Jean Adam Guillaume Guillaume, Louis Marchand, François Couperin, and Nicolas Lebègue he changes hats effectively and adopts an appropriate French style—but he remains unmistakably a German playing French music.

It's a pity the instruments couldn't have been put into better tune for the recording, but perhaps the slightly sour mixtures add to the "atmosphere"—and there's plenty of that on this wonderfully attractive recording. First-rate sound, and jacket notes providing a partial history of each organ, a complete stop list for each, and photographs Hildenhain uses for each piece.

C.F.G.

BARRY MORELL: "Famous Tenor Arias"


Barry Morell, tenor; Vienna Akademie Chorus; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Argeo Quadri, cond. WESTMINSTER WST 17148, $4.79.

There are some fine ringing tones on this record, and a generous measure of very acceptable tenoring. Mr. Morell knows how to mold a good singing line, holds his intonation impeccably, and seems confident in the climaxes and cadences. He is happiest in those arias (Puccini, Ponchielli, and Cilea notably) where the tenor is affirming a single, uncomplicated passion, proclaiming his love in the major key. At other times, and particularly where more complex emotions are involved, he is sometimes a little square, and shows a want of sublety.

He has not the insouciant manner, for instance, to do much with Verdi's Riccardo in Ballo, in the scene where he lightheartedly asks the fortune-telling gypsy to proclaim his fate. And he is plausible and self-pitying in the aria preceding the death scene from that opera (which, incomprehensibly, is placed ahead of the earlier aria). Unlike certain other tenors, Barry Morell rations his sobs severely—but he does not always avoid those lapses in taste which are the hallmark's of the entire val razza.

The work of Maestro Quadri and his players and singers is very good indeed, and the recording is excellent.

G.M.

BEVERLY SILLS: "Bellini and Donizetti Heroines"

Beverly Sills, soprano; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Jussi Jalas, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 76.

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IN BRIEF

DEBUSSY: Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune; Jeux; Nocturnes. Women's Chorus of the Vienna State Opera (in Nocturnes); Vienna New Symphony, Max Goberman, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0226, $2.49.


RACHMANINOFF: Études tableaux. Opp. 33 and 39 (complete). Beveridge Webster, piano. Dover HCR 5284 or HC RST 7284, $2.50.


WILLIAM GOMEZ: Guitar Recital: Works by Sor, Tarrega, De la Maza, Torroba, Villa Lobos, Albéniz, Pipó, and Tansman.


With four Fauns, three Jeux, and two and two thirds Nocturnes already listed in the catalogues of various CBS affiliates, it's hard to imagine why anybody at Odyssey thought this record worth releasing. Obviously recorded under minimum rehearsal conditions, by an orchestra unfamiliar with the scores (how else to explain such appalling inconsistencies as the flutist's random variation of breath puffs, and in the few thought repetitions?), these readings are listless, mucilaginous, innocent of necessary dynamic variation, and replete with sloppy execution. Just what this disc adds to the Columbia catalogue is a mystery to me—unless perhaps the company's management feels impelled to offset the best recording of Jeux and the Faun (Boulez) with the worst. D.H.

In this well-recorded disc the Klien duo offers a welcome supplement to its first volume of French four-hand music. Although these artists do not strive for the secco qualities of the authentic French school and some listeners may find their treatment a mite ample and bass heavy in sonority, the Kliens do give us remarkably lively and unaffected playing. Their rhythmic handling of the Brazileiro samba from Milhaud's Scaramouche, for example, makes the Gierth/Lohmeyer rendition on Mace sound hopelessly square in comparison. The Kliens also capture the hushed stillness of the Debussy pieces, and invest the Ravel with a frail lyricism devoid of preciousness. H.G.

Thirteen here proves to be a most unlucky number for Miss Nixon. Her voice is a pale shadow, often overpowered by the piano; her projection of English is so faulty that it is often impossible to follow her even with the texts as given on the record jacket and her Chinese is, if anything, even less unfathomable. Among her thirteen Ivé songs are all the chestnuts and a few of the composer's less familiar songs. On the overside of the record are two short cycles to Japanese and Chinese texts, conscientiously set by Alexander Goehr and Gerhard Schürmann but not very interestingly.

Rachmaninoff's two sets of Études tableaux are not among that composer's most accessible works. They tend to be a bit caustic, brooding, and very modernistic—somewhat in the macabre vein of the composer's Fourth (and least popular) Piano Concerto. Webster sweeps through the essentials of the writing with probing force. He commands a big, bleak sonority, a persuasive grip over technical and structural matters, and a terse, rather unpretentious purpose. His sometimes copious use of sustaining pedal and his tonal monochromaticism give these pieces a Prokofiev cast, but the result is, in the end, surprisingly persuasive. Dover's sonics are of breathtaking plangency and realism. H.G.

If, like me, you haven't heard any Max Rudolf performances for several years, you're likely to be as pleasantly surprised as I am by his marked growth in both executant assurance and interpretative illumination. The present readings, notably candid, harmonious, and orchestral, demonstrate what a fine orchestra he has made of the Cincinnati Symphony. And for good measure conductor and players combine to achieve the authentically Viennese lift missing in most American (and many European) Strauss performances. Above all, I salute Rudolf for giving us what surely must be the full-length score of Wine, Women, and Song—one of the longest of Strauss waltzes and one too often brutally abbreviated in concert and recorded versions.

A thoroughly attractive recital by a guitarist who takes naturally to the free-flowing rhapsodic style of Villa Lobos and who, at the same time, can tick off the neat, clockwork accompaniments in works by Sor, Pipó, or the anonymous composer of a piece titled Jeux interdits. This disc is well balanced between the two kinds of music, and culminates in four works by Tansman—by turn Debussyan, assertive, moody, and outgoing. Gomez displays a light touch in the exotically Spanish Fandanguillo of Torroba and a nice way with the fast, bell-like lines of De la Maza's Habanera. He is an admirable instrumentalist.

Jan Peerce made his Metropolitan Opera debut thirty years ago and some showed audiences that he had a firm, even, and clear (if not overly large) voice matched to a musically refined and graceful temperament. He has given devoted service and much pleasure. To record, at age sixty-four, a program brimming with such tenorial blockbusters from the standard repertoire has taken a certain amount of boldness, but it was perhaps asking too much—both of Mr. Peerce's resources and of his listeners' comprehension. The gentler things work best. The others are often belted or pushed too hard; and too often legato and pitch control give way, "E tard," as Violetta might have said.

G.M.
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Side A

Side B

REPEAT PERFORMANCE
A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

BACH: Ein musikalisches Opfer, S. 1079.
Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15063, $2.49 [from London CS 6142, 1955]

Live performances of the Musical Offering generally insert the trio sonata and two ricercares among the ten canons, although—despite the pregnancy of Frederick the Great's theme that forms the basic material for each number—and Bach's ingenious musical solutions—these ten studies could hardly have been meant for continuous performance. This disc, however, groups all on one side prefaced by the ricercare a 3 (unfortunately without separating bands). The arrangement is a sensible one for those who wish to confine their listening to the musically richer trio sonata and ricercare a 6 on Side 2.

The performances are scholarly, stylish, and impeccably played by the well-chosen soloists of Münchinger's excellent Stuttgart ensemble. Perhaps to insure absolute polyphonic clarity, the tonal ambience tends to be a bit chilly, not altogether inappropriate for this music. Early stereo notwithstanding, the sound is splendidly clear and lifelike, with each instrumental line in perfect phase and balance.

BRAHMS: Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80; No. 2 in D, Op. 73.
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Seraphim S 60083, $2.49 [from Capitol SG 7228, 1960].

There are numerous lovely moments in the Symphony—Beecham could hardly fail to respond to the over-all pastoral mood of this work—but on the whole the performance is something of a lame duck. All the notes are precisely in place, but one senses a lack of involvement and a point of view that might have given the music some sort of lively immediacy. Brahms just doesn't seem to be Sir Thomas' composer. The Academic Festival is also curiously lackluster—one would have imagined that here the conductor might have found congenial material. The pleasantly warm, natural sound highlights the many textural beauties of the performance.

DONIZETTI: Lucia di Lammermoor.
Maria Calla (s), Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Tito Gobbi (b), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Florence May Festival 1953, Tullio Serafin, cond. Seraphim 1B 605032, $4.98 (mono only) [from Angel 3503, 1953].

America had not yet heard Maria Callas in the flesh when this recording was first released. Its appearance certainly gave the opera public something to ponder and the performance's dramatic impact has not lessened a whit during the intervening fifteen years. First of all there was the presence of Callas herself—and no one need be reminded at this date of her remarkable qualities as a singing actress. More specifically, Callas was perhaps the first singer in generations to show that the role of Lucia had more potential than simply as a pretty vehicle for a chirping coloratura.

No one is going to pretend that the work is a startling study in Freudian psychology. Nor does Callas. What does emerge is a relatively forceful, well-sung performance, a five-act piece in which Lucia appears as a vivid portrait of an unstable, passive woman destroyed between her opportunistic brother and her insensitive lover (and Edgardo is in his selfish way even more despicable than the bullying Enrico). Yet with all her acute understanding of the dramatic side to Lucia, Callas never fails to make complete musical sense. Listen to the arisso passages leading into the slow section of the Mad Scene: each phrase is thoughtfully molded and weighted with precise musical purpose, building logically and surely to the first line of the cavatina, "Afigh son ton," the pathetic expression that sums up Lucia's tragedy. This is a rich, superbly sung performance that yields new perceptions with each repetition.

DI STEFANO'S Edgardo and Gobbi's Enrica are both forceful, well-sung characterizations, perfect foils for Callas' Lucia, and Serafin's sure, point-and-slash pacing of the score (presented here with all the traditional cuts) is also very much to the point. The sound is a trifle boxy but a faithful replica of the Angel edition. Definitely a basic item for every opera collection.

HANDEL: Music for the Royal Fireworks; Concerto a due cori, in F. Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 289, $2.50 [from Bach Guild BGS 5046, 1963].

The notes for this recording maintain that the finest wind players in London were recruited for the sessions. After reading the instrumentarium, one might possibly assume that all the wind players in London participated: twenty-six oboes, fourteen bassoons, four contrabassoons, two serpents, nine trumpets, nine horns, three sets of timpani, and six side drums. No stereophile will be able to resist this grand noise. Mackerras has managed to coax everyone to play with balance and in tune and with considerable dash. All in all a unique sonic delight.

The Concerto, a pastiche of eight brief movements largely borrowed from earlier Handelian works, makes an equally delightful racket with its two
wind bands creating some charming antiphonal effects. Reproduction is crucial for a disc of this sort and Vanguard's bright, open-air acoustic is perfect.

SCHUBERT: Die schone Mullerin, D. 756, F. 187, Wunderlich, tenor; Kurt Heinz Solze, piano. Nonesuch H 71211, $2.50 (rechandeliered stereo only) [from Eurodisc 70880 XK, 1957].

Wunderlich's innate musicality and beauty of voice almost disguise the fact that his interpretation of Schubert's cycle at the early stage of his career caused the listener to hesitate to the merely dull. His DGG version, recorded shortly before his death in September 1966, is a thousand fold improved in this respect, although the tenor's full potential as a lied er singer remained unrealized. The accompanist here is hardly an attractive proposition either—I have never heard these piano parts played to prosaically. A further deterrent is the atrocious job of rechanneling the warm, rich sound of the Eurodisc original into a harsh, pinched acoustic, robbing the voice of its natural sweet, full-bodied tone. True, the DGG runs to an extra side and costs almost five times as much, but artistically, it's a losing bargain. Each issue comes in a poor second.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15083, $2.49 [from RCA LVT 1004]. Strange are the ways of record companies. When Stanley Kubrick required the opening "Sunrise" music from Also sprach Zarathustra for his 2001: A Space Odyssey, only the Decca London recording with Karajan would do. Decca agreed, provided, for some odd reason, that there later would be no mention of the fact in the film's publicity (if you watch the credits at the end of the movie, you will see the title of each composition used for the sound track followed by the performers—except for Zarathustra). One of the engineers who worked on the Karajan recording saw Space Odyssey, recognized the performance, and the word was out. By then, the soundtrack album on M-G-M—whose DGG affiliate had provided most of the music—was doing a brisk business (as was a hastily compiled potpourri by Columbia based on Kubrick's musical selections and three other recordings of the complete Zarathustra), and London suddenly realized its mistake in losing out on a legitimate slice of the pie. Hence this quickie release of the "original" recording, adorned with a proud note on the jacket that clearly throws anonymity to the winds.

For those in search of a performance of Zarathustra rather than the ninety seconds included in Space Odyssey, this one ought to have done Karajan's slick and slightly cynical reading of the score is just what the music calls for. The Vienna Philharmonic plays to perfection, and the sound is exceptionally vivid. Unfortunately, the disc is disqualified by an error in the pressing that causes an excruciating waver in pitch at the end of each side. (Apparently haste does make waste.) Luckily there is an equally fine performance with Reiner and the Chicago Symphony on a Victrola budget version.

WAGNER: Göttterdammerung: Daybreak; Brunnhilde and Siegfried Duets; Siegfried's Rhine Journey: Immolation Scene. Helen Traubel (s); Lauritz Melchior (t); NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1369, $2.50 (mono only) [from RCA Victor L M 242 and LVT 1004, recorded in 1941]. A marvellous disc this—not only a splendid memento of the grand Traubel/Melchior, performances of Göttterdammerung at the Met during the early Forties but an example of Toscanini's Wagner conducting at its blazing best. Traubel carries most of the vocal burden here and her powerful, steely soprano sweeps through Brunnhilde's phrases with ease (barring a few questionable top Bs that give her some trouble). This is exactly the sort of music in which she was most exciting—the really heroic Wagnerian heroines where she could peal forth uninhibited floods of tone. And Melchior's Siegfried reminds us again of the current dearth of tenors capable of doing justice to the role and he handles his assignment brilliantly.

Toscanini's taut accompaniments have the typical lean, lean clarity that he brought to Wagner: many might prefer a plusher orchestral texture and more flexibility in shaping the fine here both and in the Daybreak and Rhine Journey music, but there is certainly a great deal to be said for this intensely ecstatic and beautifully executed performance. Naturally the sound is dated, although decidedly on a par with many Toscanini discs from a later decade.


On the face of it, Knappertsbusch in this repertoire sounds about as probable as Kleineper, say, in An American in Paris. Oddly enough, while many of the conductor's large-scale studio recordings fell pretty flat, this collection of pop concert miniatures could not be more delightful. The Nutcracker is light and airy (save for the Waltz of the Flowers, which is a bit ponderous), full of careful attention to instrumental details over looked in most other versions. The items on Side 2 receive an appropriately larger orchestral sonority and benefit hugely from the Vienna Philharmonic's special virtuosity in the string and brass departments. Fine warm, natural-sounding acoustics.

PETER G. DAVIES

February 1969

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February 1969

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In trying to convert a skeptic, a country-and-western music buff will often say, "Yeah, but listen to what they're saying, man, not what they're playing." They're right, in a way; in c & w the music has always been the weaker half of the equation. Country-and-western melodies range from the dreadful to the tolerable. Now and then one turns up that is good.

The lyrics are usually written by the music. To be sure, there are plenty of them about hearts that are brokkin', and tear-draws that fah-wull. But then there is Merle Travis' grim documentary of life in the coal mining country of eastern Kentucky, "Steam Train, Time, and there's Roger Miller's sayings, which one lyricist fit to be called a poet, and that's John Hartford. He is, not surprisingly, a country-and-western writer, with roots in folk music.

Hartford's third album for RCA Victor, Gentle On My Mind (LSP 4068), contains the tune of that name, which Hartford wrote and recorded as a single, only to have Glen Campbell's recording of it come in the winner. Hartford sings this and the other songs of the album passably well—though I like Trini Lopez' record of the tune better than anyone's. It's worth noting that there is a minimum of drawl in Hartford's work; he sings like the lyrics suggest he is, an articulate and literate man.

Most of the current pop "poets," particularly Dylan, make too lazy-to-work-it-out use of the English language. They're like the little kid who can't get the nose in the right place in the drawing, and finally sticks it in under the arm pit, and argues, "That's the way I meant it." Hartford, in a different bag. Even his soliloquies have the feeling of sure-handed control. One can sense that his distortions are effects, not blunders. I am reminded of Van Gogh's painting of a wicker-bottomed Provencal chair. It looks at first as if he couldn't get the perspective right. But then you realize that the flattened effect is that of photographs taken through a very long lens. Van Gogh was able to see that way.

Now the Hartford specializes in distortion: on the contrary, he throws the language out of joint only occasionally, and for firm purposes. And he can be penetratingly direct, as in this lyric:

All around somebody else's pad
You stumble as you chase the latest lad
If you're confused with all the things you find
Just wait till the crowd makes up your mind.


One of the best lyrics Hartford has done is The Six O'Clock Train and a Girl with Green Eyes. But my favorite is the one that made it so big. Full of marvelous lines, it's one of the best montages of contemporary America I've seen.

Though the wheat fields and the clothes lines
And the junkyards and the highways come between us,
And some other woman crying to her mother
'Cause she turned and I was gone,
I sto' might ran in silence,
Tears of joy might stain my face,
And a summer sun might burn me till I'm blind,
But not in where I cannot see you
Walkin' in the backroads
By the rivers flowing gentle on my mind.
I pour my cup of sorrow
Back from the gurglin' cracklin' cauldron
In some train yard
My heart a burnin' crowd gentle pile and a
Dirty hat pulled low across my face.
Through cupped hands round a tin can
I pretend I hold you to my breast and find
That you're wavin' from the backroads
By the rivers of my memory.
Ever smilin', ever gentle on my mind.


Gentle On My Mind is an exquisite song. Many musicians dislike it. It has no melody, they say, to which I say: its line is rhythmically interesting. They say its endlessly repeated simple chords offer the arranger or player nothing to work with. And that's true. But the music in the end does what it's supposed to do: helps Hartford tell the story.

Yet the musicians are right, in the larger sense. Where Hartford falls down is in the music. He's nowhere near as good a composer as he is a lyricist, and too many of the tunes are rewrites of Gentle On My Mind—or for that matter, of Hartford's first two albums. He should either collaborate with a composer whose music is as good as his lyrics; or he should study music at some school until his tunes are worthy of his words. He's repeating himself, clearly, because he doesn't know any other ways to express himself in music.

But Hartford is no fake, like so many of the current pop heroes. He's for real. And he's adding importantly to the solid body of country-and-western lyrics. What a beautiful, beautiful talent. I do hope it grows.

Gene Lees
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February 1969
JOSE FELICIANO: Souted. José Feliciano, vocals and guitar; Mike Melvoin, Al Capps, and George Tipton, arr. Younger Generation; Sad Gypsy; Hitchcock Railway; eight more. RCA Victor LSP 4045, $4.79.

Last summer when José Feliciano became a hit, rock-and-roll was starving for heroes. Most of the big groups were disbanded or sleeping. Dylan was quiet. Feliciano came along and, as they say, ruined everybody's scene.

While Feliciano has become a prince in the rock world, he is not of it. The separating factors are his firm Latin roots and his intense technical mastery, both vocally and as a guitarist. No matter what anyone tells you, rock is a sub-cultural field. Its purveyors are interested in feeling, not craft, and many even think that craft impedes soulfulness. The more practical among them are realizing that, after the first free-rider flush, antiaircraft spells antigrwoth. These are the people who are finally looking beyond the preoccupations of rock mythology toward the real challenge: their instruments, their fingers, and the mysterious art of music.

Feliciano is an example of what can happen when an accomplished musician makes a successful shift to rock. Instinctively he raises the quality of every song he touches. At the same time, for all his skill, Feliciano is nonmoralistic. His style is earthy, his voice rough but warm, his message fierce and immediate.

Feliciano has stuck with the winning formula in his new album. Again it works beautifully. Even the rhythm section is the same—bassist Ray Brown and percussionist Milt Holland, both jazz masters. Like all artists who have found themselves, Feliciano knows what material suits him. Included are Bob Dylan's 'I'll Be Your Baby Tonight (a good song poorly recorded by Dylan); Nilson's 'Sleep Well My Lady Friend'; and a blues hit of several years ago, 'Hi-Heel Sneakers.'

A sure sign of Feliciano's impact is already occurring: several blunderers are trying to imitate him. None will come near until they do what Feliciano did: sit down and learn to play the guitar.

Of all the success stories in rock, none is so well deserved as that of José Feliciano. It's a knockout album.

JERRY LEE LEWIS: Another Place Another Time. Jerry Lee Lewis, vocals and piano; instrumental accompaniment. What's Made Milwaukee Famous; Play Me a Song I Can Cry To; Walking the Floor Over You; On the Back Row; All the Good Is Gone; six more. Smash SRS 67104, $4.79.

CHUCK BERRY: From St. Louie to Frisco. Chuck Berry, guitar and vocals; small band. I Love Her, I Love Her; Little Fox; Misery; Mum's the Word; Soul Rockin'; seven more. Mercury SR 61176, $4.79.

FATS DOMINO: Fats Is Back. Fats Domino, vocals and piano; The Blossoms, vocal backgrounds and instrumental accompaniment; Randy Newman and John Andrews, arr. Honest Papus Love Their Mamas Better; Wait Til It Happens to You; So Swell When You're Well; Make Me Belong to You; seven more. Reprise RS 6304, $4.79.

Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry, and Fats Domino were three of the biggest-selling and most entertaining acts of the '50s. Berry was probably the finest rock songwriter of the decade, and his singing and guitar playing, though not polished, were perfect for his material. Domino, more than any other black performer with a large white following, stayed close to his roots; even when pounding out clichés like My Blue Heaven, he imposed his personal style of New Orleans jazz/blues vocalizing and barrel-house piano on the material. Lewis was a showman out of the Presley bag, his 'Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On' is one of the all-time great rock singles. If Jim Morrison of The Doors, whose act is distinguished by overt displays of aggressive sexuality, has a spiritual father, it is Jerry Lee Lewis.

Lewis' Another Place Another Time will probably appeal least to pop listeners, although it is fine, straightforward country-and-western music of the pre-Roger Miller type. Lewis, who is obviously enjoying himself, has a warm "talky" voice, and his piano fits as well here as it used to on Great Balls of Fire ten years ago. The title tune was a hit on the c & w charts and the rest of the LP strikes a nice balance between country standards like Walking the Floor Over You and newer tunes like John D. Loudermilk's pop-influenced Break My...
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Mind. Lewis manages to avoid most of the emotional excesses that often plague this style of music.

From St. Louis to Frisco is a great disappointment. Berry has released one other album since beginning to record again last year, and if this is an improvement over that, it is because the back-up musicians on the new release have a near-perfect grasp of all the clichés in Berry's old hits (the submornic liner notes don't tell us who the musicians are—indeed the only information is the somewhat disarming admission that there are only thirty-two minutes and nine seconds of music on the album). Most of the songs themselves are simply the oldies with new and unfortunately inferior lyrics. Whoever encouraged Berry to release this album did neither him nor the record buying audience a favor.

Fats Domino was pretty much his own man in the '50s and it's not surprising to find that he continues to be on Fats Is Back. Warner Bros./7 Arts, which generally takes a respectful attitude towards its pop performers, is to be commended for providing a proper setting for Domino's voice and piano. Producer Richard Perry has succeeded in subtly modernizing Domino's sound—the horn arrangements, for example, are just right—without sacrificing his unique simplicity. The old Fats is here for everyone who misses him, but Fats Is Back will also satisfy listeners whose experience is limited to recent Arp-rock. Attention will inevitably center on the album's two Beatles' songs, Lovely Rita and Lady Madonna (Fats's reading of the first is excellent, though both cuts are weighed down by unimaginative backgrounds by The Blossoms), but Domino is at his best on the simpler, more direct material that fills out the album. This is a happy record.

J.G.

NEW SINATRA!


Do kids today really know what a good marching band sounds like? Small-town school ensembles are inadequate substitutes. And if some of the college football half-time bands are any good, no TV viewer could ever guess from their atrocious, infinitely distorted audio-channel reproduction.

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R.D.D.

SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '66. Fool on the Hill. Lani Hall and Karen Philipp, vocals; Sa-bastio Neto, Dom Um Romao, Rubens Bassini, and Sergio Mendes, rhythm accompaniment and vocals; Dave Grusin, arr. and cond. Festa; Cano Triste; Lata Espliia; six more. A & M SP 4160, $4.98.

Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66 have had a recent string of hits by successfully putting their special stamp upon pre-established hit songs. The group alters such songs as Lennon/McCartney's Fool on the Hill and Paul Simon's Stouf-borough Fair, changing the simple chords and rhythmic patterns to fit their own Americanized-Brazilian style. So expert was the face-lifting that the tunes emerge familiar, yet profoundly better than we remember them in their original forms.

The music of Brasil '66—which was always good—has become so well handled and infectious that it is difficult to stop playing this album once it starts. Dave Grusin's arrangements are inspired, especially When Santana Turns to Snow, and why not? He wrote it.

The rest of the material is by Brazilianians such as Edu Lobo and Baden Powell. (Could the "D. Cammy" referred to on the "C" side be Doris Day?) On Lamento, the guest guitarist is Oscar Castro Neves, the vocalist Gracinha Leporale. John Pianos's fine guitar is heard intermittently. Everyone on the album deserves a credit.

Apparently, after several years of solid success, Mendes has been persuaded to disclose the names of his teammates in print. If you're among the countless people who keep asking who the girls are, take note. They are Lani Hall (who wrote two English lyric translations) and Karen Philipp. Both are reportedly from Chicago, not Brazil, but they've learned to sing Portuguese with competence and fervor. It is Miss Hall who makes the group click. Perhaps, if she's a good little girl, in another few years Mendes will give her the credit she earns. The rest of the group appears to be Brazilian, but while their names are divulged, there is no mention of who does what. Mendes is the piano player. His work, while not unique or more than passingly Brazilian, is clean and strong. One thing is sure: Mendes is the leader of one of the finest musical units at work anywhere.

Don't be put off because there are only nine tunes in the album. The tracks are long.

M.A.

GRACE SLICK AND THE GREAT SOCIETY: Volume Two. Grace Slick, vocals and recorder; Great Society, vocals and rhythm accompaniment. That's How It Is; You Can't Cry; Everybody Knows; five more. Columbia CS 9702, $4.79.

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with whom she sang before Jefferson Airplane. The name of the first volume was Conspicuous Only in Its Absence, reportedly a bit of graffiti written by Miss Slick on the wall of a coffeehouse where some of these tracks were cut. She didn't know how right she was. There is nothing conspicuous in the group's presence, except the ineptitude of beginners. As for Miss Slick, this work was before she developed into one of the better female voices in rock—something that occurred only after she left The Great Society. While it is mildly interesting to note the early attempts of an eventually great performer, it is not worth two albums. The recordings themselves are amateurishly made—further evidence of the group's humble situation.

While there are moments of hope in The Great Society, most of their playing is hopeless. Father features a bumbling saxophone solo by someone who liked John Coltrane but simply cannot play his instrument. The group tries to bolster the embarrassed sax by speeding the tempo, making things worse. In Eden Abbe's Nature Boy, it's strangely safe to hear the way the song's haunting quality caught the imagination of the group, and how they were unable to solve its harmonic demands—simple as they are. Their chord substitutions are pathetic. In all, the album embodies much that is bad about rock—the monotony, the innate lyricism, and musical ignorance; and it reveals little of the good—the humor, the sensitive search for reinstatement. Miss Slick's talent towers above this group she had the wits to leave behind. M.A.


Writer/comedian Woody Allen is a professional whimsey maker, and he's good at it. His wit can tow your high-flying energy level straight down to his own quiet place, full of carefully mumbled asides (“I'm going down the hall, and I look back, and I thought I heard the elevator make a remark...but I didn't want to get involved”) and whacky fantasizes (“I dreamed I was changed by a fairy godmother into a sixty-pound post-puberty”). It's all in the calculatedly innocent readings.

Allen is an old bird, but if you hear this, it will make you laugh. M.A.

RONNIE ALDRICH: This Way "In." Ronnie Aldrich and His Two Pianos; London Festival Orchestra. This Guy's in Love: A Film by Arthur Park; Blowin' in the Wind; nine more. London SP 4416, $5.79.

Ronnie must be one of the London Phase-4 series' best-sellers, so it shouldn't disturb his fans to be told that the present program differs from its many predecessors only in choice of selection—here including such current favorites as Honey, Mrs. Robinson, and By the Time I Get to Phoenix. But one man's bonbons are another's sourballs. I continue to find Ronnie's playing stiffly artificed, jumpy rhythmized, gussied up with tensile decorations, and maniacally—methodically ping-ponged (with practically no attempt at antiphonal interplays) from right to left channels and doggedly back again. Lush Mantovarian strings contribute the only moments of sonic warmth, for the ultraludicrous here pretty dry. Phase-4 recording is only too cruelly candid in its reproduction of the lusterless, brittle piano tone. This way "in," for me, a revolving door that leads immediately out.

R.D.D.
This album shows off Jack's most appealing sides, that of trumpet player. The arrangements are by the imaginative Don Sebesky, best known for his work with the late Wes Montgomery. It was Sebesky's idea to make this album with Sheldon. Its intentions are commercial—in the best sense of the word. There's nothing really far out here, unless it's Sheldon's spoken idea, "Please don't graze in the grass!" in the Latin-flavored tune of similar title.

But turn the album over and you hear Sheldon's incredible warmth as he interprets Johnny Mandel's exquisite Emily. No, it's not the Milt Gabler version, but the Gordon Jenkins reprise, Plus A Theme From My Friends comes out as a cheery waltz. Nature Boy features a sitar. The only unfortunate factor is a sour string section, typical in New York. But Sheldon overcomes. Whether he's playing tenderly, brightly or conversationally, never has a trumpet's tone been sweeter, more sensual.

Jack Sheldon is the complete trumpeter. He never does anything wrong. This is an excellent example of his art. But wait till you hear Freky Friday.

M.A.

**GRADY TATE: Windmills of My Mind.**

Grady Tate, vocals; orchestra, Gary McFarland, assoc. cond. A Little at a Time: Windmills of My Mind: Don't Fence Me In: six more.

Skye SK 4, $5.79.

Grady Tate is a musician who was trained as an actor. In recent years he has sewed up a large part of the recording studio work as a drummer in New York. And all along he's been telling us in Jim and Andy's bar that he's really a singer. It took Gary McFarland and his new label, Skye, to give him a shot at it. Gary produced the album, wrote half the arrangements in it.

Grady's voice turns out to be full, strong, with a vibrato lower register. It bears vague resemblances to Arthur Prysock's and Billy Eckstine's, but Grady is his own man. His intonation is on the button, and so, as one might expect, is his time. If he errs, it is on the side of acting: he overreads the material in places. Some of the material leaves me less than thrilled—the title song, for example, a Michel Legrand tune from The Thomas Crown Affair. The lyric is self-consciously "poetic," according to current fashion: and also, according to current fashion, doesn't really go anywhere or say anything. The track I liked best is A Little at a Time, a straight ballad that permits Grady's natural warmth to surface.

Another good track is the blues T.N.T., and there's an amusingly churchy reading of Cole Porter's Don't Fence Me In.

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GLEN CAMPBELL: Wichita Lineman.
Glen Campbell, vocals and guitar; Al de Lory, arr. and cond. Doc's of the Bay; Words: Reason To Believe; eight more. Capitol ST 103, $4.79.
Not all artists wear success well. Indeed, some cease to be important the moment they begin to feel important. Conversely, success has been good for singer Glen Campbell.
Before his wide-scale acclaim, Campbell was one of the busiest studio guitarists in California. He had acquired a background attitude towards performing. Common among studio players whose efforts are absorbed in enhancing other people's albums. While his competence was evident on his first hit, Gentle On My Mind, his personality was pale.
This Campbell has acquired the ego-consciousness he needed. It's the work of a man who not only is good, but one who knows he's good. Much of the album's success is due to arranger-producer Al de Lory, who has been behind and Campbell's recent hits. de Lory has mastered the trickiest task: complementing the quality of his singer.
Campbell's singing is clean, relaxed, pleasant. His message is unpretentious, leading him to story-songs such as Sonny Bono's You're a Square; Six Little Kids, Billy Edd Wheeler's Come-Go With Me, and Billy Graham's That's Not Home. The stories are not profound; often they're corny, but Campbell makes them charming and believable.
The most interesting track is Jim Webb's Wichita Lineman, bearing the same evocative sadness as Webb's By The Time I Get To Phoenix.
Campbell also gives us the best-yet readings of If I Needed You. An added surprise is Fate of Man, a narrative written by Campbell, a simple tale of a simple old man facing death: "He comes here against his will, and he goes away disappointed."
Along with his singing, Campbell's fine guitar playing, plus a happy moment of banjo picking is also featured. In the end, Campbell's charm comes from the blend of his Arkansas roots, urban outlook, and most of all, his natural musicality.
M.A.

MAURICE LARCANGE: The French Touch. Maurice Larcombe; acc.; Roland Shaw Orchestra and Chorus; Morales: What Now My Love; It Must Be Him; Michelle; eight more. London SP 44110, $5.79.
Still another Janus-like example of Phase-4 strengths (gleamingly bright, almost palpably solid sound) and weaknesses (not enough low, not enough low). Larcombe is one of the most tasteful and imaginative French "musette" or concertina—as well as concert-instrument—accordionists, as he persuasively demonstrated back in 1962 with his Avec moi a la concertina, an album that was accompanied by a small, typical bal musette ensemble. Here, however, he's saddled with a big, wholly un-Gallic symphonic-pops orchestra complete with lush massed strings and wind.
It's a miracle that Larcombe is still somehow able to maintain both his good sense and piquant personality, weaving at least one distinctive tonal thread through Shaw's lush textures. It's his graceful lift and idiomatic accent that alone command one's attention and respect. And for that matter, it's his own two compositions (the haunting It's Only Goodbye and Voulez-vous) which overshadow the more famous—but here more arrangement-handicapped—ones by Brel, Bécaud, Trustel, Distel, et al. R.D.D.

BEE GEES: Idea. Bee Gees, vocal group with rhythm accompaniment. Let There Be Love; Kitty Can; Down To Earth; Idea; I Started A Joke; seven more. Ato 254, $4.79.
The Bee Gees, an Australian rock group, got off to what appeared to be a good start early last year with a song called New York Mining Disaster 1941. It was a false start. Their next hit Muscles, was a treacly mess, dripping with Victorian sentimentality.
This album is an extension of Massachussets. Though their vocal style stemmed originally from The Beatles, they now sound like students of Johnny Ray. No one will attempt to dispute the Bee Gees singing The Little White Cloud That Cried. Their songs are sticky, gooey molasses. They project the sincerity of Jack Paar's tear-laden gestures to televisionland, the deep-felt emotionalism of Richard Nixon's legendary "Checkers" speech.
Backgrounds are thick and muddy. Ever consonant arpeggios from a harp intrude throughout. It's really tacky. Robin Gibb's vocalizing is beset by a juddering vibrato that sounds like he's gagging on a chicken bone and trying to suppress a sneeze at the same time.
God only knows what brought about so unfortunate a transformation. All I know is that whatever potential they exhibited with their first song has not been realized at all.
S.L.

Two albums ago, comedian Bill Cosby ventured into singing. Music lovers every-

where, including lots of Cosby fans, went into shock. Cosby the singer proved to be all the tiresome things that Cosby the comedian never was—sentimental. It is that Cosby knew all along he wasn't much of a singer, but by God, he was a Big Man and he was going to sing. One can't quarrel with the premise. Cosby is a star, and he has the time and the ability to sing amateurishly in public if he wants to. In the same way, one can understand Jerry Lewis when he says that if his children want to be stars, he'll swing all the power he can to force the issue.
What father doesn't harbor such dreams for his children? Unfortunately, all the public can do is endure these ego-enforced promenades and sigh with relief when the wishful thinking fades back to the privacy of the home where it belongs. It is with pleasure that we report the presence of not the first but the second funny Cosby album since the vocal crash dive. The first post-vocal disc was To Russell, My Brother, Whom I Slept With. This is Bill Cosby 200 M.P.H. Both are delightful, but it's hard to believe he's doing his hip, grown-up-child thing. The 200 M.P.H. album relates Cosby's fear and fascination with sports cars ("faster than anything Steve McQueen owns"), parents, pets, and more. Either or both albums may be acquired times that Warner Brothers has held till now, since Cosby has left the label to begin his own company with Roy Silver. It doesn't matter. The point is that both are dependable Cosby.
M.A.

DON SEBESKY: The Jazz-Rock Syndrome. Orchestra, Don Sebesky, arr. and cond. The Word; Shake A Lady; Never My Love; seven more. Verve 6-8756, $5.79.
Mike Zwerin says in his accurate and honest liner notes—and I agree—that there will be no more big bands on the Basic-Herman-Ellington pattern. That day is gone. Those bands will go on being heard as long as their leaders are the vital men they are. If we're going to have new big bands, they'll be built in another pattern. Rock groups are adding horns. Some rock players are digging deeper into music—Sanford Gold and Tony Aless, two of the most respected teachers of jazz piano in the country, are getting students from the rock groups, kids with a real hunger to grow. Mean-
time, jazzmen, out of the sheer need to feed their families, have been making rock dates, adding to this music their thorough musicianship and highly developed taste. It's a love affair; it's more like a shot-gun wedding. But the children could be beautiful.
The effect quality that had crept into jazz is being dissipated by the rockers; and the ignorant amateurism that so long characterized rock is being dispersed—very likely, mind you, by the jazzers. (When you think you know it all, then you sit beside a guy on a date who can play rings around you, you naturally begin to wonder how.)
Don Sebesky, a young arranger and composer (he's thirty) rooted in the big band era, has taken the plunge in this album. He uses musicians who are famil-

High Fidelity Magazine
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CAROL STROMMIE: The Soft Sound of Carol Stommie, Carol Stommie, vocals; Lincoln Mayorga, arr. and cond. In My Life; Inside, Out; Loving Carol; eight music. Pete $1103, $4.79.

I first heard singer Carol Stommie (pro-ounced Stommy) on a radio. What struck me was the fact that I was being sung to instead of at. Miss Stommie was being interviewed on the show, and I had the same feeling of directness and intelligence from her talk.

Unlike nine out of ten new artists, Miss Stommie does not bludgeon the listener with dramatics to get his attention. Her presentation is sure, quietly tasteful, and-of all things - elegant. When was the last time you heard a twenty-one-year-old sing with elegance? Ironically, it is Miss Stommie's refreshing restraint which may make recognition slow when thrown against all the current recorded clutter. On the other hand, her approach makes her a good risk for long-time success as opposed to surface hot-shots with only enough magnetism for a season or two. In short, Miss Stommie has been recorded correctly, whether this first album succeeds or not.

A word of praise for arranger/conductor Lincoln Mayorga. His work for Miss Stommie is a large lesson in how to make a full sound on what must have been a low budget. Using little more than half a dozen instruments and a few background voices, Mayorga has hand-fashioned his music to Miss Stommie's needs in an impressive blend of sensitivities. Mayorga also wrote the music for one of the better tracks, Living for Today.

In all, this is a charming and attractively made debut album, promising a warm future for both Carol Stommie and the newly formed Pete Records.

SAMMY DAVIS, JR.: Lonely Is the Name. Sammy Davis, Jr., vocals; H. B. Barnum, Ernie Freeman, Al Capps, and J. J. Johnson, arr. Good Life, Up-wife! We'll Be Together Again; eight more. Republic R 6308 or RS 6308, $4.79.

Sammy Davis, Jr. has been a durable force in mainstream American entertainment for over a decade. At this point Davis, still a young man, disconcertingly finds himself a member of the old guard-and fading fast.

Like most of his recent work, this album is an attempt to revive a stale career. Davis needs a hit. To find it, he has employed such hit-makers as H. B. Barnum and Ernie Freeman, neither of whom have anything deep to say. The result is a thudding bore. The statement is made with sadness, for Davis is still a knockout talent.

What's more, he's the sort of nervous-energy performer who is likely to re-energize when you least expect it. His problem now is searching, within himself as well as in today's musical climate, until he finds a new key to the golden door.

This album is not the winner Davis is seeking. It's an accident that found a place to happen. What we do now is wait. My bet is that Sammy Davis will win again.

GENE AUTRY: Back in the Saddle Again. Gene Autry, vocals; orchestra. Back in the Saddle Again; You Are My Sunshine; Blueberry Hill; seven more. Harmony HS 11276, $1.89.

Now here's my nomination for The Most Unimportant Record of the Month. Autry's flat, emotionless, newly delivered made him a dull cowboy singer, if one of the most successful of the breed. And those arrangements! The bass player playing one and three and the accordionist chuffing two and four, and when you add violins playing some sort of half-fast counterline. (The strings are in tune, though.) And when they try to swing, as in Cowboy Blues, it's just funny.

To be sure, this release will recall Saturday matinees for a long time: Autry had his following. Personally, I was a Ken Maynard man.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
MILT JACKSON: And the Hip String Quartet. Milt Jackson, vibes; James Moody, tenor saxophone, flute; Hubert Laws, flute; Sanford Allen, violin; Alfred Brown, viola; Ronald Lipscomb, Kermit Moore, or Sidney Edwards, cello; Cedar Walton, piano; Ron Carter or Bob Cranshaw, bass; Mickey Roker or Ulysses Tate, drums. In Walked Bud, Bags and Strings; New Rhumba; five more Verve 6-8761, $5.79.

The search to find a valid use for a string ensemble in jazz continues. In these arrangements, Tom McIntosh's intent was to "plant the strings out of the whole-note approach and really involve them in the music—complete interaction." He has removed the string quartet—violin, viola, and two cellos—from their customary cushion role even to the extent of leaving them out entirely on the only one recorded in the set, For All We Know, where their stretched-out carpet of sound might possibly have been too inevitable.

In an effort to let the quartet swing and do its own thing, McIntosh gives them strong, riff-based fills for the most part, occasionally allowing them to emerge on their own for a few bars. Since the album is primarily a showcase for Milt Jackson, with a few short solo spots for James Moody, Hubert Laws, and Cedar Walton, the strings are necessarily placed in a background role, replacing what might have been brass or reeds. In this role, they bring a provocative color to the background and, with the addition of saxophone and flute, a texture is created that makes a very interesting setting for Jackson's vibes.

Jackson, of course, swings—strongly, insistently, maintaining a seemingly simple, direct approach even when strings, flute, and vibes are interwoven in complexities. The fascinating originality of his conception is particularly evident on For All We Know when, without wasting a moment for introductions, he transforms a modal pop tune into a richly exotic tapestry of sound. J.S.W.

COUNT BASIE: Straight Ahead. The Count Basie Orchestra; Count Basie, piano; Sammy Nestico, arr. and cond. Fun Time; Magic Flee; Hay Burner; six more. Dot DLP 25902, $4.79.

Count Basie has gone a strange road, or rather roads, in recent years. Some of his albums have been flagrantly commercial—and flagrantly tedious. Others have contained the traditional Basie vitality and swing. This is one of the latter. It consists of original compositions by Sammy Nestico, who is virtually unknown to the profession or to the public. That's because Nestico, who in the old days played saxophone in the bands of Gene Krupa and Tommy Dorsey, among others, has for years been chief arranger for the U.S. Marine Band in Washington, D.C. That's one way for a musician to find security.

He writes beautifully. His grasp of the Basie band's weaknesses and strengths is sure, and he gets from them all they've got. The tunes and charts thereon are simple, but not simplistic. This is fine Basie.

G.L.

WES MONTGOMERY: Road Song. Wes Montgomery, guitar; Don Sebesky, arr. Scarborough Fair; Serene; Greenslaves; seven more. A & M SP 3012, $4.79.

WES MONTGOMERY: Down Here On the Ground. Wes Montgomery, guitar; Don Sebesky and Eumir Deodato, arr. and cond. Georgia on My Mind; The Fox; Going On to Detroit; seven more. A & M SP 3006, $4.79.

WES MONTGOMERY: Best of Wes Montgomery, Vol. 2. Wes Montgomery, guitar; Claus Ogerman, Oliver Nelson, and Don Sebesky, arr. and cond. O Morro; Bumpin'; California Dreamin'; five more. Verve 6-8757, $4.79. One feels numb after hearing that a great musician has been stopped in his tracks. Wes Montgomery died of a heart attack last June, at forty-five. He had just finished scuffling and was beginning to be comfortably successful. Following are some quotes from liner notes of the above albums, from men who knew Montgomery and loved his talent.

Ira Giller quotes Dan Morganstern's Downbeat review of Montgomery's Down Here On the Ground album: "Like all jazzmen who've made it big, Wes Montgomery has a sound—hear that, ye squalers and brayers—a lovely sound. Like all jazzmen who've made it big, he is a superb melodist—hear that, ye runnners of tuneless runs—a singer. And like all jazzmen who've made it big, he swings—hear that, ye twisters of the time."

Dom Cerulli says, "Montgomery's genius will continue to grow in the young guitarist's mind, who listened to these selections and who found stimulation enough in Wes's music to do something of their own that they couldn't have done without Wes first having done something of his own."

He took today's better pop tunes and played them with such jazz feeling and power that he caught the ear of even the Hip String Quartet, and an audience that sought the exotic tapestry of sound...

February 1969

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Of the pop listener by what he was playing, and the imagination of the jazz listener by how he was playing what he was playing."

Road Song was the last of the three albums to be recorded. Wes Montgomery, Vol. 2 is a best-of compilation of things done before Montgomery moved with producer Creed Taylor to A & M. Down Here on the Ground was Montgomery's next-to-last album. I like it best. This death of Wes Montgomery is doubly poignant in a musical age which is producing, among thousands, pitiful few with the skill or inspired frame of reference to take his place. As Ira Gitler says of the man, "I thought I'd like to have it." One of its tunes is entitled 'I'll Be Back. But he won't."

**MICHEL LE GRAND:** At Shelly's Manne-Hole. Los Gatos; The Grand Brown Man; Watch What Happens; five more. Verve 6-8760, $5.79.

Pure joy emanates from this disc. Michel LeGrand, normally occupied composing or conducting, is heard away from such hum-drum chores, playing piano at Shelly's Manne-Hole with Shelly Manne and Ray Brown. The audience obviously had fun. And the record is fun as Legrand, in the course of eight numbers, runs an amazing gamut from sheer romanticism on 'A Time for Love' to romping virtuosity on 'Another Blues.' Along the way he does some remarkable vocal things to My Funny Valentine, joins with Ray Brown to create a magnificent and very funny version of Willow Weep for Me, and plays everything with a rare sense of relish and pleasure. J.S.W.

**ARTIE SHAW:** Re-Creates His Great '38 Band. Begin the Beguine; Buck Bay Shuffle; Octofoon; nine more. Capitol 2992, $4.79.

The argument against "re-creating" records of the past is summed up in a most effective fashion in this set. One of the reasons is that the summation is so effective that these performances are just about as good as they could be today. The band is made up of some of the most facile of New York's studio musicians, many of whom came out of the big band era. Artie Shaw was both conductor and producer this clarinet parts are played by Walt Levinsky who does a skillful job of catching Shaw's personal inflections. Man for man, this studio band is probably more proficient than the 1938 Shaw band that originally played these arrangements.

But the fact remains that it is a studio band. It does not have the rapport and the looseness that comes from developing the performance of an arrangement night after night. The very proficiency of these musicians works against them in this case because no working band ever sounded quite as clean and rich and full as this well-polished studio group. Moreover, today's methods of recording throw the band out of balance—if you are trying to reproduce the sound of a band of the Thirties. The isolation of soloists that is customary today takes away from the effect of solist-rising-within-a-band that was part of the character of Shaw's band and every other band in the Thirties.

And, basically, this simply is not the 1938 Artie Shaw band, a band which was made up of individuals who produced certain individual sounds. If you want to know what that band really sounded like, you can refer to its Victor records. Aside from that, this is a good contemporary recording by a studio band but it does little to explain why the Artie Shaw band of 1938 was such a success. J.S.W.
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of jazz parties that

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discounted, this disc is it.

With just enough of the party sound in

the background to take the cold studio

chill off the session, the musicians play

with a feeling and directness that even

the best pros cannot always summon in

a studio.

Dick Clayton has rarely been recorded in

such brilliant form. Sir Charles is a constant delight. Dash, who was

reputed to relative obscurity in Hawkins'

band, is a startlingly warm and

moving performer, and Jo Jones has

some of his most elegantly theatrical

moments on drums. As for Rushing, his

voice is a chancey thing these days, at

times a bit too hoarse to do the bidding

that his musical instincts call for. But

he has everything under control on the

tune Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You—a magnificent performance

with instrumental support that just wraps him up and carries him along. The

party was held in the Fine Recording Studio in New York and the consequent

sound is topnotch although some of the editing,

such as an abrupt cut-off on MIR

Blues, is inexplicable.

J.S.W.

**JIMMY RUSHING: ALL STARS.**

*Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You.*

Buck Clayton, trumpet; Dickie Wells, trombone; Julian Dash, tenor saxophone; Sir Charles Thompson, piano; Gene Ramey, bass; Jo Jones, drums; Jimmy Rushing, vocals. *St. James Infirmary; Who's Sorry Now; Good Morning Blues;* three more. M.7 1010 J. J. Johnson, Big Band Jazz Recordings, Inc., Box 579, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N. Y. 10021)

A couple of years ago Bill Weilbacher and Don Kantor, a pair of advertising agency executives who know what kind of jazz they like, decided that there was

so little of what they liked played in

New York that they would put on private sessions of their own. They mailed out

invitations to like-minded folks, got

a $20 subscription with each acceptance,

and held their first jazz party in a photo-

tographer's studio with Jimmy Rushing

and some onetime Basie men. This was

such a success that they decided to hold

another party and record it. The result

has been a series of jazz parties that have

produced recordings under the aegis of Master Jazz Recordings, which sells only

by mail.

The focus of Weilbacher's and Kantor's
taste can be seen from the fact that

Jimmy Rushing has figured in all their

parties—the original dry-run, the first re-

corded party (which included Earl Hines

and Budd Johnson), and the present one.

This session brings Rushing together with

some old Basie mates plus Julian Dash,

once of Enskine Hawkins' band, and Sir

Charles Thompson, who has the Basie

feeling for piano without copying the

Basie style. If ever an argument were

needed for making records in this sort

of informal atmosphere, this disc is it.

With just enough of the party sound in

the background to take the cold studio

chill off the session, the musicians play

with a feeling and directness that even

the best pros cannot always summon in

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J.S.W.

FLETCHER HENDERSON: The Immortal Fletcher Henderson. Down-Hearted Blues; Gulf Coast Blues; Hop Off; eleven more. Milestone 2005, $4.79.

After many years of neglect, Fletcher Henderson has suddenly flourished in the reissue market with Columbia's four-disc set, two discs from Decca, and two from Historical Records. Despite everything that has already been reissued, this Henderson collection is of more than routine interest. It includes one of Hen-

derson's few outstanding solo records (*Chincher Blues*); some pre-Louis Armstrong pieces that in

some parts refute the idea that the Hender-

son band was not really much of a jazz band until Armstrong joined it; four selections with Armstrong's bright, pungent horn bursting out of ensembles; and an interesting view of the Henderson orchestra as a standard dance band playing

what sounds like a stock arrangement of *Star Dust* in 1931. Most of the

selections come from such relatively ob-

scurc labels as Black Swan, Purtian, Ajax, Apex, and Broadway, although several were released on Paramount.

J.S.W.
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www.americanradiohistory.com
Stereo Road-Tested. Until very recently, my evaluations of 8-track, endless-loop cartridge tapes have been based on home listening via a 117 volt player feeding my big high-quality systems. This approach seemed to me a reasonable one for testing technical qualities, since judgments could be made without regard to the limitations imposed by automobile installations. How high the home levels make signs of noise in tape checks meaningless and where the necessarily tiny speakers can give no really adequate notion of frequency range. Heard on my home set-up, the best of the cartridge tapes sent me for review have met admirably high technical standards, though the endless-loop medium still gives pride of place to open reels for serious listening to serious musical works.

The fact is, however, that the most distinctive characteristic of the cartridge tapes (their push-in/pull-out ease of handling and their automatic replay feature) were especially designed to provide entertainment for the highway traveler. How well they meet that specific purpose cannot be appreciated only by actually road-testing them—and this I have finally got around to doing. While it has been no surprise to discover the vast superiority of stereo tape sound over that provided by a monophonic car radio and to be reminded of the pleasure of being one's own program maker, I have been delightedly surprised by how much tape-in-the-car can do to alleviate the boredom of routine driving.

Moreover, in an automobile, where the medium's home-listening handicaps disappear or become glossed-over, the annoying clicks which accompany head-position changes (in longer works often right in the middle of a movement) tend to be lost, along with any tape surface noise, in the overall noise of even the quietest moving vehicle. And whatever the actual frequency limitations of the tiny speakers may be, one is scarcely aware of them in listening to what seems—in the confined space of a car—to be thrilling brilliance and depth.

Traveling Companions. The most startling discovery is that "serious" music can be heard casually, en route, with rewards no less real (no matter how different) than those afforded by concentrated listening. Much as I admire, for example, the Schwarzkopf Szell Richard Strauss Last Songs in the reel edition of July, 1967, I relished those music performances if anything even more when "overheard"—on my way to a neighborhood shopping center—via one of the new Angel/Capitol series of "classical" 8-track cartridge releases (8XS 36347, $6.98). And while another in the same series, Sir Adrian Boult's recent reading of Holst's The Planets (8XS 36420, $6.98), certainly is more constricted in its frequency and dynamic ranges in mobile playback than it is in big-system home reproduction (particularly via the alternative $15 8-track, $6.98), the losses are more than compensated if you're hearing the music as you drive along on a moonlit evening—especially when it comes to that unforgettable "fat" tune in the "Jupiter" movement.

Then too, the machine-automatically released 7.5-sips reel and 8-track cartridge editions of a "Phase-4 Concert Series Sampler" (London/Ampex LCL 66005 and LEM 66055, bargain-priced—for double-play lengths—at $7.95 and $6.95 respectively). If you've heard any of the fourteen reel-phase 4 Concert Series programs conducted by Stokowski, Munch, Dorati, Sargent, and Black (most of them reviewed earlier in this column), you will know just how sonically varied and spectacular the present excerpts are. In its reel edition this is surely the most impressive of all demo tapes to date, but the slower-speed, endless-loop edition is not far behind it even by absolute standards. By relative ones it is without question technically the finest cartridge release I've encountered so far.

Among other excellent recent cartridges is Ormandy's Tchaikovsky anthology, "Waltz of the Flowers." The "magnificently mellifluous" sonorities which I praised in my review of the disc during last November come through with surprising effectiveness here (Columbia 18 11 0078, $6.95; on a 7.5-sips reel as M799, $7.95). In a very different way, I've also relished Columbia film-track cartridge editions of Barbra Streisand's "Funny Girl" and of various mod and rock characters in the completely zany, but often riotously amusing, You Are What You Eat (18 12 003 3 and 18 12 003 6 respectively, $7.95 each). Although RCA no longer has a well-nigh exclusive monopoly on classical programs in cartridge editions, it continues to issue more of them than any other single company. Indeed RCA probably produces more cartridge tapes of every musical kind—claiming a total of eight million at the end of last October, just a month after having celebrated the third anniversary of its 1965 introduction of the 8-track cartridge format. Among the company's current releases, I've particularly enjoyed the "Highlights" cartridge from last month's Robert Shaw reel edition of Handel's Messiah (RIS 1102, $6.95), even though the lack of full musical continuity (to say nothing of the effort of focusing attention while carborne) inevitably diminishes the work's true grandeur. Nevertheless, it still gives wings to one's traveling—in a way inevitably more exhilarating than the easier "lift" provided by such fare as, say, Arthur Fiedler's Boston Pops a few weeks ago in the far-off enchanted realms of Up, Up, and Away and other pop tunes (RIS 1103, $6.95).

Finally, to demonstrate the workings of my latest double standard, there's the case of the André Previn/London Symphony performances of Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, Op. 44, and The Rock Fantasy for Orchestra, Op. 7, which I heard first in a car playback of the RCA RRS 1097, $6.95 endless-loop edition and then in home playback of the double-play 34-sips reel release (RRS 1100, $10.50, also including Previn's Second Rachmaninoff Symphony). Apart from the mild novelty of the early Fantasy (a tape first likely to be new even to Rachmaninoff specialists), the objective attractions here are limited: Previn's fervency is never completely persuasive and the bright stereophony is never as overwhelmingly rich as it should be—and is in Ormandy's Third Symphony for Columbia and Steinberg's Second for Command. Nevertheless, I forget all such considerations when I turn onto the highway and raise the cartridge playback level to enable Rachmaninoff's lush melodies to sing above the roar of high-speed motion.

Some Practical Considerations. For the benefit of potential seekers after the very tangible rewards of mobile music in cartridge tapings, a few bits of advice. If you don't have an original factory installation of a Stereo-8 player, check carefully in advance on the likely installation costs for your car.

Invest in a test tape to check the correctness of the installation and the operation of the player itself. (Mine was first hooked up with the left and right stereo channels transposed?) One test tape I know and can warmly recommend is the RCA Stereo-8 Installation and Service Test Cartridge (RTSC 101, $4.95). Most of its checks can be made by listening only; a few require a meter or oscilloscope for accurate playback-head azimuth and vertical tracking. Furthermore, the presence of a Head Cleaning Tape Cartridge (again I use RCA's, 8THC 100, $1.95), which eliminates the awkwardness of trying to clean the playback head with a Q-stick poked in through the letter-box slot.

If you have any mechanical aptitude at all, learn how to dismount your cartridge player, remove its outer case and chassis cover. You may need access to the interior should defective or loosened winding tape get wrapped around the capstan, jamming operation entirely until it can be cut and tweezered out.

In general, confine your cartridge purchases to programs of music you already know (new car tunes and model tapes, test tape) to concentrate on unfamiliar works even if you're only a passenger. This realm of musical enjoyment calls for repetitive hearing of old favorites—which will take on unexpectedly fresh attractiveness in an entirely new environment. Remember that the world of cartridge tapes is supplementary to, rather than competitive with, the usual world of music listening—and accept it for its magical powers.
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