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We Took the Cows Out and the Barn Collapsed

On Saturday, April 8, 1972, at approximately 11:30 in the morning, our eighty-year-old barn passed away. Now, that may not mean much to you, but to a staff composed largely of New York City expatriates working in a renovated farmhouse in western Massachusetts it meant a great deal. Veteran readers of High Fidelity may recall various paens to the barn in early issues, written as only citified editors could. True, in recent years the barn had served only to store old files and magazines, but we once did use it teleologically. When we bought our present Publishing House from Pete Adams twenty years ago, we acquired with it not only the barn and a standing chicken coop, but cows (three) and chickens. At first we let them stay. But then, with tragic shortsightedness due no doubt in part to our urban ignorance, we evicted them on the dubious grounds that since we could find no gainful publishing employment for the animals, we would no longer provide them with room and board.

And that, according to an old farm hand hereabouts, was the beginning of the end of the barn. Apparently the heat of the cows—and of their (non-dairy) produce—had kept the structure's walls warm and moist. Once the cows were removed, the walls began to dry out and, eventually, to buckle. In the end, five thin trees were all that seemed to be supporting the protruding right side of the Old Gal, and so last March, for safety's sake, we were forced to plan her euthanasia. The accompanying photos tell the rest of the story.

However, in the sense that nothing ever really dies, the barn too will carry on, for he that carteth away also createth. Eighteen-foot beams are almost impossible to come by these days, and we gave the remains to a builder in exchange for his tearing down the shell.

So our barn shall endure, as we must too, and specifically with next month's "ANNUAL RECORDINGS ISSUE." Included will be a PREVIEW OF THE FORTHCOMING SEASON'S RECORDINGS, as well as a triptych of features on HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR RECORDS. AMERICA'S CHANGING TASTES IN POPULAR MUSIC will review the implications of the thirty-year changeover from "Your Hit Parade" to Billboard's "Hot 100." And for those of you interested in continuing your audio education, we will teach you HOW TO UNDERSTAND OUR POWER AMP CHARTS AND GRAPHS.
There's more behind the BOSE 901 than just a reflecting wall.

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The 901 DIRECT/REFLECTING® speaker system is the result of the most intensive research program that has been conducted into the physical acoustics and psychoacoustics of loudspeaker design. The research that gave birth to the 901 in 1968 began in 1956 and continues today to explore the frontiers of sound reproduction. Copies of the Audio Engineering Society paper, 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', by Dr. A. G. Bose, are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents.

Technology
As might be expected, the product that emerged from 12 years of research is technologically quite different from conventional speakers. Some of the major differences are:
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It's a long way from a good theoretical design to the production of speakers that provide you with all the musical benefits inherent in the design. To this end BOSE has designed a unique computer that tests speakers for parameters that are directly related to the perception of sound. There is only one such computer in existence—designed by us and used for you. In January alone it rejected 9,504 speakers that will never be used again in any BOSE product. It is the speakers that survive the computer test that provide your enjoyment and our reputation.

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Julian Hirsch STEREO REVIEW.
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Irving Kolodin SATURDAY REVIEW.
"After a time trial measured in months rather than weeks, this one can definitely proclaim Bose is best, big or small, high or low."

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You alone must be the judge of this. Visit your BOSE dealer. Audition the 901 with your favorite records. We make only one request. Before leaving, ask him to place the 901's directly on top of the largest and most expensive speakers he carries and then compare the sound. You will know why we make this request when you have made the experiment.

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Forgotten Singers

J. E. Bonk's letter [May 1972] concerning Peter G. Davis' request for more recordings of the great soprano Astrid Varnay really hit home. Without a doubt, Varnay is the most unjustly neglected female singer of modern times—strange and shameful when one considers her definitive Elektra (which she was still singing better than anyone else as late as 1967) and Kundry. To say nothing of the other roles in her repertoire that demanded to be immortalized on disc.

To be sure, bad luck has dogged Varnay throughout her career—from her spectacular Metropolitan Opera debut as a twenty-three-year-old Sieglinde in 1941 (the day before the bombing of Pearl Harbor) to the present. One might on the surface consider her career part of another "Too Much, Too Soon" syndrome, but such was not quite the case. During her formative years at the Met, she was used far too frequently as a replacement artist, but her fine technique held up in all cases, while her ever-deepening artistry was an increasing delight to all those who chose to use scores as a reference to her performances.

Indeed, her performances of every role she sang at the Met (including her Santuzza and Amelia in Boccanegra) were models of musical accuracy, dramatic comprehension, and communication equalled only by Maria Callas in our time. Perhaps Callas was right in turning down her first Met contract in 1945—she too might have become another singer taken for granted. Like Callas, Astrid Varnay is one of that select group of singers, whose every performance teaches one something and they should be heard.

William Zukowski
San Francisco, Calif.

I found the article "Vocal Gems From Singers the Met Overlooked" by Dale Harris quite interesting [May 1972]. My collection is heavily vocal—I began collecting in the late Twenties when it was believed that records were dead— and I have spent many hours looking through stacks of 78s in second-hand furniture stores. Goodwill and Salvation Army stores. Finding many wonderful recordings in the process.

Opinions about singers of the past will always differ. I suppose. Mr. Harris raved about the merits of Berta Kriehn while I have always found her dull and uninteresting; he cares not at all for Felicita Hini-Mihacek, an artist I greatly admire. The first record I found by Hini-Mihacek was a gold label Brunswick of "Per pieta, ben idol mio" from Falstaff. The most beautiful sung rendition of this difficult aria in my collection, matched only by the great version by Eleanor Steber. While this aria is not included on the Club 99 LP. I find most of the items on this record superbly performed.

G. Ward Evans
Akron, Ohio

Dale Harris' review of London's " Arias from Forgotten Operas" [June 1972] brought me a real thrill in the discovery that someone has finally resurrected "Ah, se tu dormi" from Vacci- cani's Giulietta e Romeo. I learned this aria, a favorite of Malbran's, many years ago after finding it in an old volume entitled Opera Aria for Contralto. I wrote to a number of celeb- rated singers suggesting that they include it in recital programs but never got a response. In fact, I have never heard anyone sing it, although it is a lovely number and as Mr. Harris says "lies beautifully in the voice." I look for- ward to obtaining the record. Though Mr. Har- ris' reservations about the singer make me wish that it had been recorded by Grace Bumbry or Marilyn Horne or Christa Ludwig.

A. R. Blacksmith
San Diego, Calif.

Frightened Soprano

Although I agree for the most part with Dale Harris' review of the new Maria Callas recital [May 1972], there are some rather obvious inconsis- tencies that I feel he should explain to his readers. Mr. Harris explains that in 1960 (the date for the Pirata sessions), Callas "was still able to summon up sufficient resources to give expression to her dramatic vision." However, a few lines previous to this remark, he states that the remakes of Norma and Lucia were "unjustifiable vocal risks." How can this be true since both of the remakes were re- corded before the Pirata sessions?

Also, I don't seem to understand how he knows that Callas was so "frightened" when she stepped before the microphones to record the arias from Ballo and Aida. Of course, the interpretations sound frightened. Both Amelia and Aida are very frightened ladies! How does he divorce the one? Callas is interpreting her role from the same way she is feeling personally at the time? I myself have been a fan of this lady for quite a few years. I too have felt that she had a great deal to offer with an uneven vocal instrument. Mr. Harris ob- viously feels the same way, but I do think he has some explaining to do.

J. Edward Kauffman

Mr. Harris replies: Mr. Kauffman misreads my words. Callas, I said, sounds lobbled, even frightened. I have no inside knowledge about Callas' personal feelings, only the evidence of my ears. In my opinion the fear ascribed by Mr. Kauffman to the characters of Amelia and Aida is not at all what Callas projects; what she projects is fear at having to cope with their music. As for the remakes of Lucia and Norma, these remain for me unjustifiable vocal risks—that is badly inferior, at times inadequate, remakes of long, difficult roles which she had already re- corded with great artistic success in her vocal prime. Her 1964 Carmen is even further below the standards she had set for herself in the middle 50s.

Four-Channel Plot

I read T. E. Wall's letter in your April 1972 is- sue. He is partly correct in his remarks about four-channel reproduction as being a scheme to make money for both the record and audio industry. However, he has overlooked the suc- cess of color TV and two-channel stereo. These improvements made money and kept the American consumer happy. Doubtlessly quadruphonics will do the same. It is a never- ending cycle of human development. My ad- vice to Mr. Wall is "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em."

In reference to Mr. Molina's letter about your tasteless cover on the November 1971 is- sue. I should like to tell him where he may find a worse one. He need only walk to the nearest magazine stand to the pornography section.

Robin Hollar
Hickory, N. C.

Space-Age Caruso

In the past few years, the sound of historic recordings has been enhanced by using filters, tape splicing, etc. However, acoustic recording techniques introduced painful distortion in transducing sound onto groove, distortion which can't be filtered out. A lot of progress has been made recently in signal recognition theory—for example, to improve TV pictures coming back from space probes. Also, we have simulation techniques that could simulate distortions made by early recording equipment in processing audio signals. Using such mathematical procedures and a digital computer, it would seem that
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Audio signals could be "digitalized," read into the computer, noise stripped off, and distortions corrected.

Perhaps the idea of hearing Artur Nikisch and Caruso recordings in modern sound is not too far-fetched. I wonder if you or your readers have heard of any work along these lines.

Lawrence Huffman

**Voice from Above**

In R. D. Darrell's review of the Bernstein Mass ["The Tape Deck," May 1972], he says that Bernstein himself speaks the final words at its conclusion: "The Mass is ended. go in peace." Paul Hume makes the same observation in an article in the Washington Post on the recording sessions for Mass. I'm quite familiar with Leonard Bernstein's voice and there is no doubt in my mind that those last seven words are spoken on my copy of Mass at least by the baritone, Alan Titus, not Bernstein. I bought the album in New York very soon after it was released last year. Did Columbia make a change in later pressings, substituting Bernstein's voice for Titus?

Stephen Surper
Greenwich, Conn.

No, Alan Titus voices the final benediction on all pressings of the Bernstein Mass. Bernstein's voice was used at the live performances last September in Washington, which most likely accounts for the confusion.

**Poetic Justice**

I do not purchase *High Fidelity* to read nursery rhymes. Harris Goldsmith's "poem" criticizing the Sokowski-led Tchaikovsky Fourth [May 1972] is surely the absolute nadir for your excellent publication in the decade I have followed it. Mr. Goldsmith has condescended to the reader to the point where I must assume that he is not illiterate but antiliterate.

Arthur S. Krupicz
Erie, Pa.

It's high time Harris Goldsmith, reviewer, assumes an approach that is newer. No new disc stands the test: "Toscanini's is best!" His readers will shortly be fewer.

Donald A. Garafalo
Baltimore, Md.

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Editorial correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

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High Energy will perform superbly on any cassette recorder, no matter how much you paid for it. Or how little. Without special switches or adjustments of any kind. You’ll get the great sound you’ve been missing—with “Scotch” Brand High Energy Cassettes.

For non-cassette recording fans, there’s great sound, too, on “Scotch” 206 and 207 Low Noise/High Output reel tapes and “Scotch” Low Noise 8-track cartridges.

Beach towel offer! Get a colorful 34”x62” towel, only $2.00 with coupon in special twin-packs of “Scotch” Cassettes. Look for Summer with Sound display where you buy cassettes. Hurry, quantity is limited.

Behind a great sound, there’s a great cassette. “Scotch” High Energy.
People are talking about MAGNUM OPUS

Creators of "Dynamic Damping" PATENTED
A new concept in Loudspeaker Technology

Werner Klemperer, Film and T.V. Actor: "No shelf speaker I have ever heard comes even close to the Opus-7 in authenticity and delineation of individual instruments...as to the Opus 24A—altogether unbelievable. Owners of Crown, Marantz, and other fine amplifiers will be flabbergasted."

Barbara Cook, Broadway Actress and Singing Star: "The sound is gorgeous. Voices and instruments are completely natural. Orchestral crescendos are so solid they seem organic. You can feel the air around each instrument."

Magnum Opus Loudspeakers are available in 5 Models, Priced from $129. to $795.

For additional information and Dealer List write or phone—

An Organ Tour with E. Power Biggs

HIGH FIDELITY: We see, Mr. Biggs, that one of Columbia's new releases is a sampling of your performances on twenty-four organs in Europe. That's a lot of organs. How long have you been exploring, and how do you find these instruments?

E. POWER BIGGS: Most of the historic organs are pretty well known to organists, at least in books. Concert trips that I made in the early 1950s, all the way from Iceland to Spain, led naturally to the idea of recording. Of course a recording is vastly more complicated than a concert. After advance correspondence, I have to make a preliminary visit to decide what repertoire best suits the instrument. Then if all goes well, a later trip is planned with the recording director, the engineers, and the pile of recording equipment. Sometimes it can take as many as three visits to begin a record.

H.F.: How do you determine repertoire?

E.P.B.: My "concept," if you want to use a big word, is to play the music of the composers of different countries on the organs they wrote for. Because the instrument and the composer are very much one thing. Or, that is, the composer's style grew out of the instrument—after all, the instrument was there before he was. Musicians are continually arguing, you know, about tempos and such things. How fast did Bach play such and such a work? What did he do with such and such an ornament? How did he handle organ registration, the choice of stops? What did he do about cadenzas? And of course nobody knows now, not really. But when you play an instrument that Bach played, you are in contact with him. You are hearing the sounds that he heard, or very close. And this of course applies to composers like Buxtehude, Handel, and Mozart.

H.F.: What makes a good "Bach" organ?

E.P.B.: It has to be articulate, incisive, and clear in its total ensemble. It has to have the sort of sound "that you can see the music through." That necessitates the type of pipe-voicing and a sensitive playing action—direct mechanical connection between finger and pipe valve—of the organs of Bach's day.

H.F.: How did the invitation to go into East Germany reach you?

E.P.B.: The recording company there, through Columbia records, asked me to come to both Leipzig and Freiberg in Saxony. They were very generous, they gave us a week in each place to record. We had all-night recording sessions. In Leipzig they had two policemen outside...
If you’re going to steal an idea, steal from the best.

“When the Citation components were in their final design phases we had the rare opportunity to see some of the first engineering prototypes and we have never quite gotten over the dedication and enthusiasm exhibited by the highly qualified engineering team that ‘gave birth’ to those winners. Small wonder, then, that we were elated to find that the Model 930 receiver is the brain-child of that very team. It abounds in Citation features, many of which one would have thought impossible to incorporate in a receiver at this attractive price. Of course, the Citation 12 boasts more power (60 watt rms per channel), but then again the [Citation 11 preamplifier and the Citation 12 power amplifier] combination retails for a cool $600.00 or so, as opposed to just under $400.00 for this receiver. The rest of the circuit refinements are there, though, including the twin power supplies (not negative and positive voltages supplied by one power transformer, but actually two complete power supplies including two separate power transformers), super-wide frequency response and power bandwidth, fantastic square wave response and rise time, and conservative and meaningful power ratings that can serve as a model to the rest of the industry. All this plus a superior tuner section make the 930 a receiver that even the died-in-the-wool ‘separatists’ should take a good look at.”

Audio Magazine, June, 1972
WHY YOU CAN'T BUY A USED CROWN

You may have puzzled about the rare availability of Crown tape recorders on the used market. Perhaps you even have a friend who refuses to part with his aging Crown at any price. Well, the typical Crown owner is not only a careful shopper, he knows when something is too valuable to lose. After all, why should he trade when his 4-year-old Crown still turns out crisp, perfect recordings with greater fidelity than most brand new hi-fi tape decks?

One reason for this is that the Crown line is a professional line of tape recorders and players - that is, designed for audio pros who make their living by recording. Crown does not bow to the popular philosophy of "planned obsolescence", where the manufacturer automatically outdates last year's line by bringing out all new models each year. Indeed, since Crown first introduced modular solid state recording in 1963 (four years before any other manufacturer), the basic design has not been significantly altered - so advanced was its concept. State-of-the-art currency is maintained by incorporating new features into current models, only when they mean an advantage in either performance or price.

But even these are not the reasons a Crown owner would give for treasuring a venerable old model. He would say it's the sound - that matchless recording and playback fidelity that has become synonymous with the Crown name. For example, the SX724 4-track stereo deck at 7/8ips delivers a frequency response of +2dB 30-25,000 Hz, with hum and noise at -60dB, and maximum wow and flutter of 0.09%. (When comparing specifications, keep in mind that, unlike most hi-fi manufacturers, Crown guarantees its specs for minimum long-term performance, actual operation is often even better.)

If you would like your tape deck to record as good years from now, as when new, we suggest that you visit your local Crown dealer soon. (Just don't expect to find a used Crown - at any price.)

* MADE ONLY IN AMERICA *

CIRCLE 16 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
...among other things it has the world's first universal four-channel decoder.

The new EVR-4x4 Four-Channel AM/FM Stereo Receiver

Look at all you get: 4 complete amplifier channels, multiplex stereo FM with ceramic IF filter, integrated circuit AM, main and remote speaker outputs, 4-channel headphone jacks, front/back and left/right balance controls, tuning meter, stereo indicator light, FM muting defeat switch, full provision for 4-channel tape or future “discrete” disc inputs... it's all there. And for only $249.95 suggested retail.

But there's an important bonus. A built-in STEREO-4* universal decoder that automatically decodes any matrix FM, records, or tapes just as the record producer intended you to hear them ±2%. No switches to change. Simply play any encoded 4-channel material and the E-V STEREO-4 decoder does the rest. Perfectly.

This is the universal decoder the industry has been waiting for. It's the circuit we invented that ends the confusion in matrix sound. And it's also superb for enhancing your present library of 2-channel stereo records by revealing hidden environmental sounds.

Write us for complete technical specifications if you wish. But better still, hear the EVR-4X4 at your nearest Electro-Voice showroom. The sound you hear will make your day.

*E-V Trade Mark. E-V 4-channel products are produced under U. S. Patent No. 3,832,886.
hang-up record. We chose pieces that were well suited to four-channel sound, and I spent a couple of weeks experimenting with registration. The church has four divisions of organ pipes in the front and one in the rear gallery, and we recorded on two-inch tape with sixteen microphones.

**H.F.:** How do you feel about quadrachannel sound as compared to stereo?

**E.P.B.:** Well, mono gave you the sound from one opening, through a telescope, so to speak. Stereo spread that sound in front of you. What quad does, in the case of St. George's, is to give you the length of the church behind you. It puts the whole box of the church over you. This recording can be played in stereo of course, and then the organ in the rear gallery simply appears in the middle of the front.

The music on the record—works by Gigout, Dupré, Widor, Strauss—is all played absolutely au naturel. It is strictly musical, no tricks. They weren’t necessary. We rescored in certain cases. The Strauss, called Processional Entry for Festival Occasions, was originally scored for twenty-four wind instruments. Then Max Reger added the organ part, and we rescored for the possibilities of St. George’s. But it remains essentially as Strauss wrote it, plus Reger. It’s a wonderful piece, and the conductor, Maurice Peress, has a simply magnificent conception of it—a very Wagnerian conception. Terrific sonority.

**H.F.:** What is your reaction to Bach recitals given with lights and in all sorts of modern guises—‘with the Moog, and so forth?’

**E.P.B.:** Well, Bach “assembled” on the Moog is vastly ingenious and entertaining. As for electronic imitation “organs”—I don’t play them because for me their sounds fall too short of the music. Real music demands the real instrument, and that implies not only an organ of pipes but an organ built on historical lines, a match for the wonderful organ repertoire.

Albert Schweitzer was one of the first to point out that authentic instruments are best for Bach. He made the heretical statement that the old organs were best for old music. Recordings too have made this point and organ building today is directed toward creating a true, historically correct sound. We are coming back to the true identity of the organ and very largely establishing it through the documentation of recordings.

[For a feature review of Mr. Biggs’s latest recordings, see page 60]
When we invented the stereophone, we never dreamed our invention would be mentioned in the same breath with Thomas Edison's Phonograph and Alexander Graham Bell's Telephone.

The Sound of Koss has been music to millions of ears since we invented the Stereophone. But the honor of being exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution was music to our ears... and a little mind boggling. When your Stereophones are placed side by side with the great inventions of Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell, it's kind of hard not to come away rededicated.

Memorable firsts
The dedication of a selection of early and contemporary Koss Stereophones into the Smithsonian's electrical science collection brought back a lot of memories. The first Stereophone, the Koss SP-3. The first (and now patented) Self-Energizing Electrostatic Stereophones. The first driver designed exclusively for Stereophones.

The world's finest Stereophones
Koss Stereophones have come a long way since our first Stereophone.

you'll hear things that you didn't even know were in your tapes or records. In fact, listening to your music thru Koss Stereophones is like getting a whole new music library.

Hearing is believing
The Sound of Koss is an institution with audiophiles. But hearsay will never do it justice. You've got to hear it to believe it. So take a record or tape to your Hi-Fi Dealer or Department Store, and hear why the Sound of Koss is worth hearing... from $15.95 to $150. Write for our 16-page color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm, Dept. HF-172. It's the last word in Stereophones. Or visit us at the Smithsonian.
Had it not been for Frank Sinatra, I'd never have heard of Alec Wilder. Few others would have either.

In 1945 Sinatra conducted an album of instrumental music by Wilder. An odd amalgam of classical and jazz-inflected music, the album, on 12-inch, 78-rpm discs, sold more copies on Sinatra's name than Wilder's.

As a teenage Sinatra fan, I was attracted by the sheer novelty of Sinatra conducting. (Wilder says he did indeed conduct, and the music has never received a better reading.) But then I fell in love with Wilder's subtle and infectious music for and of itself.

Wilder, I learned in later years, wrote the choral arrangements with which Sinatra recorded during the record ban of the 1940s. He also wrote the music for and of itself. I was familiar with his octets as well as his songs. He had gone on, writing his lovely, eccentric music for symphony orchestras, chamber groups, and indeed whatever instrumental combinations caught his fancy. His music was unclassifiable. What kind of composer do you call Alec Wilder? Popular? Classical? Jazz? To refuse to be classified can, in America—unlike other countries—lead to professional suicide. And so the record industry had gone on ignoring this extraordinarily interesting and original composer while proclaiming any number of guitar-toting clodpolls as poets, artists, and geniuses. The neglect of Alec Wilder is one of the major disgraces of a record industry which has already amassed an enormous list.

One of Alec Wilder's greatest achievements, happily, is not being ignored. It is a book, published recently by Oxford University Press, titled American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900-1950. I have never seen such a book. It is not a collection of anecdotes about how Rodgers met Hart at Columbia University, how Gershwin would linger outside Jerome Kern's house hoping to hear the master play, and that sort of thing. It is an analysis of major American composers and their "popular" music by a peer. The book needed to be written, and fortunately when at last it was, the work was not done by some pedant, or worse still some overzealous fan, but by the erudite, brilliant, and unpretentious Mr. Wilder. Alec Wilder has one of the coolest and elegant intellects I have ever encountered, and it is in evidence all through his book.

Wilder's friend Willis Conover says in a quote on the dust jacket that this is "the only book about music I've ever stayed up all night to finish." I tried that, but gave up. The musical examples and harmonic analyses are so fascinating that I plan to spend about six months studying the book, as I would a college course. Indeed, the book should be used as a text in music schools, and no doubt it will be.

Wilder laments in his introduction that he could not quote more musical examples. Publishers of songs were tachy about permissions, and "one publisher," he says, "absolutely refused me permission to quote from songs to which he owns the copyrights until he could review what I had said about the songs. I found the implicit censorship appalling."

Herein lies the reason American popular music, from its golden age (which is what Wilder deals with; he thinks it went all to hell in the 1960s, and so do I), is not given proper scholarly recognition. It is extremely difficult to get permission to use quotes in order to analyze the music properly. Thus the literary as well as musical achievement of pop music has gone largely unsung. There is no such principle as les droits de l'auteur in American copyright law.

Wilder is an authentic eccentric, by which I mean somebody who doesn't affect it or work at it, but just is. He's one of those people who always looks tweedy, even in worsted fabrics. Erect of posture, about six feet two, topped by a sweep of straight gray hair, and strikingly handsome, he's one of those people who, if you saw him enter a restaurant, would make you think, "Who is that?" I imagine that women have been powerfully drawn to him over the years, and certainly he has superb taste in ladies. Yet he's never married. "I don't trust them," he said to me once, but then laughed. It's all a sham. Alec likes to play the curmudgeon, the misanthrope. He's just not very good at it. He loves women, and little children, and nature, and things like that. Corny, y'know?

He has no home. He maintains a mailing address at the storied Algonquin Hotel in New York, and sometimes he's actually there. Sometimes he's at the Sheraton in Rochester, his home town. (Any symphony who want to perform some of his shamefully overlooked music can write him at either place.) But half the time, nobody knows where he is.

He calls me about every six weeks from somewhere-out-there, being the greatest telephone addict south of Glenn Gould. Usually it's to tell me, "There's a new book you simply must must must read!" There are two men whose recommendations in books I accept without question. Alec Wilder is one of them.

Now I hope you will accept a recommendation from me. Read Alec's book. The price is $15, but it's worth every cent of it. It is a milestone work of scholarship, a massively important book—the most important book, in my opinion, ever written about American popular music.

It has one shortcoming. While it gives every important composer in the field—at least his just evaluation, it says not one word about the music of Alec Wilder. How ironic that Alec should be overlooked even in his own book.

**the lees side**

**A Milestone for Alec Wilder**

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Sony's new chromium dioxide cassette tape is hungrier for high frequencies.

Sony chromium dioxide CRO-60 tape will record up to 50% more volume before you encounter distortion on playback. CRO-60 is hungrier than other tapes for high frequencies.

This means more recorded sound than standard cassette tapes before distortion sets in.

**What you hear.**

Far less distortion, a smoother frequency response, and a greater dynamic range than standard tape. Every aspect of the sound, especially the higher ranges, comes through with sparkling fidelity.

Sony CRO-60 gets it all together from bottom bass lows to high howlin' highs. And everything in between.

**A Sony tape for every purpose.**

The new Sony CRO-60 cassette tape becomes a member of a highly advanced line of tapes for every recording requirement.

In addition to standard open reel, cassette, and 8-track cartridge tapes, Sony also offers the finest in high performance tape: SLH-180 Low-Noise High Output tape on 7" and 10½" reels, plus Ultra-High Fidelity Cassettes.

These high-performance tape configurations take advantage of the added performance of today's highly sophisticated recorders by providing wider dynamic range, greatly improved signal-to-noise ratio, extended frequency response, and reduced tape hiss.

**How's your appetite?**

Now if your appetite has been whetted and you're hungry for more information or a demonstration of CRO-60 or any other Sony tapes, get on down to your nearest Sony/Superscope dealer (he's listed in the yellow pages) and get an earful.
What cassette decks, if any, do you think are as good as open-reel decks in the $200-to-$400 price range? Do you advise buying a cassette unit with built-in Dolby circuitry or an outboard unit?—Gordon Schunick, Randallstown, Md.

Among the Dolby cassette units on which we've made tapes that sound as good to us as Dolbyized open-reel copies of the same originals are the Advent 201, the Wollensak 4760, and the Teac 350. Of course you can't buy an open-reel deck with built-in Dolby circuitry for under $400, so to that extent the cassette decks produce better (that is, quieter) sound than the open-reel decks you're asking about. You could buy an outboard Dolby unit and use it interchangeably with a non-Dolby cassette deck and an open-reel deck. If you don't want that kind of flexibility the Dolby cassette decks generally are preferable to the outboard option in terms of both price and simplicity. But keep in mind that to duplicate our success with the cassette you sometimes must take an extra measure of care during recording to keep levels neither too high nor too low.

Is the Crown IC-150/D-150 combination superior to the H-K Citation 11/12 combination in terms of performance alone?—John Yau, Urbana, Ill.

Yes. At almost every point in lab testing the Crown International pair outscored the Harman-Kardon pair by a measurable margin. Measurements of distortion and S/N ratios in the Crown preamp and amplifier were spectacular, though we're sure that many listeners would find it impossible to hear a significant difference in A/B comparisons against their Harman-Kardon counterparts. 

Among the stereo tape decks I've been considering for my system, the Concord Mk. III and Ampex AX-50 seem to be available at much bigger discounts than the others. Why is this? Could it be that both are dogs that the manufacturers want to unload?—Carl Ellendorf, Long Branch, N.J.

The Concord Mk. III is being discontinued, as are all the open-reel recorders of that group. Our latest word from Concord was that no final decision had been made about the introduction of a model to replace it, but when a particular unit is no longer being advertised by the manufacturer the demand for it drops quickly and dealers are anxious to move it off their shelves. Similar reasoning applies to the Ampex, since the company has formally gone out of the consumer recorder business. It will make some of the AX-series equipment available in its educational products line, however. Neither model can be called a dog. The Concord (HF test reports, July 1970) proved to be an interesting, though not really distinguished unit. The AX-300 (HF test reports, March 1972), the only one of that series we tested, proved to be the most exciting consumer recorder ever offered by Ampex. The AX-50, with far fewer features, should still have been a worthy competitor in its class, and we regret its passing.

I have been considering buying a Perpetuum-Ebner PE-2040 turntable, but I've been told that repair service on the units is slow in this country. Now that PE is making turntables for Fisher (the comparable model seems to be the Fisher 502) would it be possible for me to get the 2040 serviced at a Fisher repair shop?—Doug Brown, Deerfield, Mass.

Possibly. But distribution of PE turntables in this country recently was taken over by a new company (Impro Industries of Mt. Vernon, N.Y.), which tells us that they're planning to make a fresh attack on the problems of distribution and servicing for the line. Key people in the company have experience with United Audio (Importers of Dual), so they know whereof they speak.

Recently came to my attention that Sony buys some cassette mechanisms from Akai. Concord and Panasonic units are almost carbon copies. Allied receivers are made by Pioneer. And so on. How about it?—David A. Anderson, St. Paul, Minn.

Your principle is correct, if not necessarily your specific information. And you could continue into other fields: Polaroid and Kodak, Ford and GM, Johnson and Goldwater. But Sony in Japan has financial ties with Aiwa (not Akai), and we suspect it's Aiwa cassette mechanisms you're thinking of. As for Allied and Concord, both are among the many American importers that have with some regularity had their products built to order in Japanese factories. Often they can save money by picking up features and styling from those products already on the assembly lines in the suppliers' factories, while combining elements in a way that—the importer believes—will best suit the needs and tastes of his American customers.

I've subscribed to High Fidelity for a long time but I've never seen an article on speaker construction. Surely more sound can be purchased for the money if one is capable of a little carpentry, is it or is it not a fact that, say, $200 invested in quality parts for two home-built speaker systems should produce a less compromised sound than a pair of store-bought speakers for the same price?—Thomas Binmel, Sanborn, Minn.

It ain't necessarily so. If you had the option of either building or buying the identical system, the home-built version would cost less. But plans and raw parts are available for mighty few of the more successful speaker systems on the market, so that approach is academic. And since enclosure and drivers must be properly matched if the sound is not to be compromised, ad lib substitutions won't do. So when you set out to build a speaker system you have three basic options: work from published plans (available in book form or through some manufacturers of raw drivers), which generally represent the tried-and-true formulas rather than the present state of the art, attempt a cut-and-try copy of an existing system that you admire, or build a system devised by a magazine writer who, though he may be a clever fellow, doesn't have the technical resources of a manufacturer and therefore has far less opportunity to perfect his designs. Remember too that if the fellow who wrote the article had come up with a really good design it would make more sense for him to take it to a manufacturer, rather than a publisher.

I've been using a Craig 3124 stereo-8 cartridge deck in my car with a Dynaquad four-channel hookups feeding into four good speakers. The effect is fabulous, but I'm thinking of adding Dobly to it. The Advocate 101 uses a 12-volt DC power supply, so I think I can adapt it to work from the car battery. What do you think of this idea?—James R. Lawrence, Watertown, Conn.

The usual argument against noise reduction in automotive equipment is that the ambient noise levels in a moving vehicle already are high enough to mask tape hiss. So what is one to do while parking? Assuming that the power supply conversion of the 101 can be made successfully, we see only one objection to your proposed answer. Since no Dolby recorded cartridges are available commercially, you would have to record your own through a Dolby unit or you will have to buy a cassette deck for the car.

I've heard that chromium-dioxide tapes may be abrasive and can damage the heads of the tape recorder, and I've also heard that the best-known brands (BASF and Advocate) have had mechanical problems with their cassettes. Can you recommend a reliable brand of chromium-dioxide cassettes?—A. Boyem, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Yes, BASF and Advocate, for starters. Both have been producing chromium-dioxide cassettes for some time, and we have been using the current designs without problem. We've used other brands (Maxell, Memorex, Norelco, Sony, and TDK are among the more recent entrants) without complaint, though we have less experience with them. What claims to be informed engineering opinion is still all over the object of head wear due to chromium dioxide, however. The magnetic particles are harder than those in ferric-oxide tapes, and most studies seem to indicate that head wear will be somewhat higher no matter which chromium-dioxide brand you choose.
After the monthly breakthroughs and revolutions in speaker design, how come the Rectilinear III still sounds better?

Figure it out for yourself.

More than five years ago, without much fanfare, we came out with a very carefully engineered but basically quite straightforward floor-standing speaker system. It consisted of six cone speakers and a crossover network in a tuned enclosure; its dimensions were 35" by 18" by 12" deep; its oiled walnut cabinet was handsome but quite simple.

That was the original Rectilinear III, which we are still selling, to this day, for $279.

Within a year, virtually every hi-fi editor and equipment reviewer went on record to the effect that the Rectilinear III was unsurpassed by any other speaker system, regardless of type, size or price. (Reprints still available.)

Then came about forty-seven different breakthroughs and revolutions in the course of the years, while we kept the Rectilinear III unchanged. We thought it sounded a lot more natural than the breakthrough stuff, but of course we were prejudiced.

Finally, last year, we started to make a lowboy version of the Rectilinear III. It was purely a cosmetic change, since the two versions are electrically and acoustically identical. But the new lowboy is wider, lower and more sumptuous, with a very impressive fretwork grille. It measures 28" by 22" by 12¼" deep (same internal volume) and is priced $20 higher at $299.

The new version gave Stereo Review the opportunity to test the Rectilinear III again after a lapse of almost five years. And, lo and behold, the test report said that “the system did an essentially perfect job of duplicating our ‘live music’ and that both the original and the lowboy version ‘are among the best-sounding and most ‘natural’ speakers we have heard.’” (Reprints on request.)

So, what we would like you to figure out is this:

What was the real breakthrough and who made it?

For more information, including detailed literature see your audio dealer or write to Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N. Y. 10454.

Rectilinear III
Report from the Four-Channel Front: SQ vs. Quadradisc

The latest news of the Quadraphonic War indicates that both sides are trying to find allies. Men and matériel have both come into the fray, lining up with one or the other (or both) of the Big Two, RCA and Columbia. These traditional antagonists have gone to war ever since the memorable Cylinder vs. Disc conflict at the turn of the century, which resulted in the now-famous Negotiated Truce of 1902, when what is now the RCA Record Division was known as Victor. Although there were serious skirmishes during the interim, the next major conflict did not arise until the post-World War II Armageddon, now referred to as the Battle of the Speeds. At the time, RCA sent its 7-inch 45 rpm disc into battle with Columbia’s 12-inch 33-rpm disc.

Today, of course, the weaponry consists of RCA’s “discrete” Quadradisc and Columbia’s “matrixed” SQ disc, terms which themselves seem ready to enter the combat. The first reports from Quadradisc headquarters appeared in last month’s issue as reviews of RCA’s first four-channel disc releases. As of this writing, some hardware and recording companies have seemingly committed themselves to a particular side, although a significant number of Third World companies are aiding both powers. Here is the announced lineup of licensees as it stands at press time:

**Quadradisc**
- Hitachi
- JVC/Japan Victor
- Japan Polydor
- Matsushita/Panasonic
- Nippon Columbia/Dennon
- Onkyo
- RCA
- Sharp
- Toshiba

**SQ**
- Aiwa
- Columbia/Masterwork/Epic
- Connaught Equipment
- EMI/Capitol/Angel
- Emerson Radio
- Instru-teck
- Lafayette Radio
- Major Electronics
- Metrotec
- Morse Electro Products
- Pacific Electronics
- Pilot Radio
- Radio Shack
- Realtone
- Sherwood
- Sony Corp.
- Soundesign
- Superscope/Marantz/Standard Radio
- Tele-Tone
- Vanguard Records

Both
- Harman-Kardon
- Pioneer
- Sanyo
- Trio/Kenwood

Although the picture changes from moment to moment and a third power, Sansui, seems to be waiting on the sidelines ready to pick up the pieces with its own matrix system, it appears from our vantage point that the main fighting still lies ahead.

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Maglevox Adds New Twist to TV

If you’re fed up with television reruns—or first runs for that matter—and are wondering what to do with your expensive TV set, Magnavox thinks it has the answer: Odyssey. It’s an electronic game-simulation center that allows you to play a dozen different games (seven more are available as options) on your TV screen. The system can be used with any set having at least an 18-inch screen. The Odyssey game kit includes Mylar transparency overlays (a separate one for each game) that fit over the TV screen, a master control unit, two player control units, twelve game cards, and an antenna-connection adapter for the TV set.

When you’re ready to play you tune your set to Channels 3 or 4 and switch the adapter to the game position. The game shown in the photo is table tennis. The players are the larger squares on either side of the vertical bar, representing the net; the square near the net is the ball. As the ball moves across the screen (controlled by the master unit) each player moves his square to block it (using controls on his own unit). If he does so, it bounces back toward his opponent; if not, the ball goes out of bounds off the screen. The players can even apply English to their shots by proper use of the controls.

Gamesmen who find that both Channels 3 and 4 carry local broadcasts may suffer some interference in using Odyssey, which can only be picked up on these two channels. Though the antenna-game switch is intended to block incoming TV signals when Odyssey is in use, internal wiring in the TV set still can pick up airborne transmissions from strong stations. The Magnavox engineering department suggests that any such interference can be minimized by tuning to the channel with the weaker of the two broadcast signals.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
The end of the fidelity gap between cassette and open reel.

Our RS-275US brings the low-noise, wide-response performance of open reel to a cassette deck. Frequency response: 30-15,000 Hz. Signal-to-noise ratio: better than 45 dB. Those are numbers you've probably never seen before in cassette.

The biggest reason for our lower noise and wider response is also the smallest. Panasonic patented a Hot Pressed Ferrite head with one of the world's narrowest, most precise gaps. You get a 25% broader frequency response with ten times the life of conventional heads.

A separate fast-forward and rewind motor means we don't have to spin wheels with our drive motor. The motor that drives the tape drives it directly. No belts to give you the slip. No gears to start fluttering and wowing. The speed is constant. So is the lack of noise. Our patented drive motor is DC and brushless. No AC hum. No brushes to spark up static.

We're quiet in other ways, too. There's a special noise suppression circuit with its own switch. And a tape equalization switch for the newest low-noise super tapes.

Nobody else has all these low-noise, wide-response features in one great cassette deck.

And that's just for starters. You'll find solenoid push-button operation for electrical, not mechanical switching. A "memory rewind" button that pre-sets the tape to stop right where you want it to. Two big VU meters. Separate output volume level controls before the signal goes into your amplifier. Optional remote control. And a walnut base as part of the deal.

When you're ready to get serious about a stereo cassette deck, see your franchised Panasonic Hi-Fi dealer for the RS-275US. The one that gives you reel sound.
Two new Citations—both tuners

Harman-Kardon has added two tuners—one with and one without Dolby noise-reduction circuitry—to its Citation line. The multiplex circuit of each uses a phase locked-loop configuration for maximum stereo separation and minimum distortion in tuning. Also included in both are a quieting meter designed to aid in tuning for optimum signal-to-noise ratio instead of signal strength. A 400-Hz oscillator is built into both units as an aid in Dolby alignment. The Citation Fourteen (shown here), which includes the Dolby circuitry, retails at $525; its non-Dolby mate, the Citation Fifteen, is priced at $395.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The nuclear age in record care

The use of atomic energy to clean records may sound like a classic case of overkill, but the Staticmaster Record Brush is described by Nuclear Products Co. as doing just that. The Staticmaster is described as containing a sealed polonium element that emits a shower of alpha particles to neutralize the static charge on the record surface, while the soft hairbrush itself removes the static-free dust. The Staticmaster, with a polonium cartridge guaranteed for one year, costs $12.95; replacement cartridges are available at $7.95.

CIRCLE 157 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Teac extends Dolby line

A new model, the AN-60, has joined the Teac Corp. of America line of Dolby noise-reduction units. The new unit can be used with stereo open-reel or cassette tape decks. Dolby-level calibration tapes are supplied in both open-reel and cassette form. At $89.50, the AN-60 is unusually inexpensive for a separate Dolby unit.

CIRCLE 156 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sherwood offers budget receiver

Priced at $159.95, the S-7050 stereo FM/AM receiver from Sherwood Electronic Laboratories is designed for budget component systems. The S-7050 is rated for 36 watts total output (IHF), and 3.5-microvolt FM sensitivity. It has provision for two stereo pairs of speakers, tape recording and playback, aux input for eight-track or cassette playback units, and headphones. A walnut-grained wood case is included in the price.

CIRCLE 155 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sony totable cassette recorder/ radio

The Sony CF-350 AC/DC Cassette-Corder AM/FM radio combination from Superscope, Inc. offers a variety of entertainment possibilities in a completely portable format. It has a built-in condenser microphone and can record programs from its own radio. Features include a record-level/battery-strength indicator, automatic shutoff, FM AFC with defeat switch, Sonymatic automatic level control, auxiliary inputs, earphone, and built-in ferrite bar AM antenna. Designed to operate on AC, or car battery through an optional cigarette-lighter adapter, the CF-350 costs $139.95 complete with accessories.

CIRCLE 158 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Our new
PL-12AC stereo turntable.
Incomparable at $99.95

Quality and versatility have their price. Now they cost less. For only $99.95, including walnut base and dust cover, you can own the new Pioneer PL-12AC 2-speed stereo turntable.

At this low price no other turntable includes all these quality features: 4-pole beltdriven, hysteresis synchronous motor... meticulously balanced tonearm... feather light tracking force... oiled damper cueing... 2' dynamically balanced die-cast platter... anti-skating control... rigid dust cover... walnut base... simplified operation... 33 1/3-45 rpm speeds, and much more.

See your franchised Pioneer dealer for an exciting demonstration.

U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp.,
178 Commerce Rd., Carlsbad,
New Jersey 07072.

where you want something better
Our very remarkable crowd pleaser.

The ADC 303AX.
Without a doubt, the most popular speaker we've ever made.
Time and again, enthusiastic owners have written to tell us how very pleased they were with the 303AX. Fantast... outstanding... beautiful... and remarkable were among the more commonplace accolades we received.

As for the experts, they expressed their pleasure in more measured phrases such as superb transient response, excellent high frequency dispersion, exceptionally smooth frequency response and unusually free of coloration.

Obviously, a speaker like the ADC 303AX doesn't just happen. It is the result of continually designing and redesigning. Measuring and remeasuring. Improving and then improving on the improvements. All with only one goal in mind...

To create a speaker system that produces a completely convincing illusion of reality.
And we believe that the key to this most desirable illusion is a speaker that has no characteristic sound of its own.
We've even coined an expression to describe this unique quality... we call it, "high transparency".

It's what makes listening to music with the ADC 303AX like listening back through the speaker to a live performance.
And it is this very same quality that has made our very remarkable crowd pleaser the choice of leading audio testing organizations.

Finally, a pleasing word about price. Thanks to steadily increasing demand and improved manufacturing techniques, we've been able to reduce the already low price of the very remarkable ADC 303AX to an irresistible $90*.
That could make it the most crowd pleasing buy in high fidelity today.

*Other ADC high transparency speaker systems available from $45 to $150.

Comment: This is the first product we've examined in detail from among the premium units manufactured by Lux and now available here through the distributor to whom we owe American availability of several British (hence the company name) product lines—notably those of Garrard and Wharfedale. BIC is said to have played a significant role in tailoring present Garrard products to the needs of the American market, and apparently the company plans to continue this activist approach with the Lux models that it imports; initial samples of the 71/3R were withdrawn so that certain changes could be made at BIC's request, and the unit we tested represents the revised version.

To the left of the dial panel are four selector buttons: AM, FM, phono 1, phono 2. The series is continued on the panel below with aux 1 and aux 2. At the left end of the dial is the signal-strength meter; at the right end are the tuning knob and the controls for FM pretuning. When AM is selected only the AM tuning scale (white) and the signal-strength meter light up. For FM, the pretuning panel and the FM scale light up (in green), as well as the meter. When any station (pretuned or manual, FM or AM) is properly tuned, the word "center" lights up in red immediately below the signal-strength meter. Stereo reception lights a similar "stereo" indicator farther along in the same panel. When phono or aux buttons are pressed, the dial goes dark but the appropriate indicator glows red at the bottom of the dial panel. Each preselector includes a small FM tuning dial and a two-element control; its outer ring acts as a tuning knob and its inner button switches in the pretuned station. On the bottom control the inner button selects manual tuning, while the ring can be turned to either "distant" (for full sensitivity) or "local" (allowing only maximum-quality signals to pass).

Below the aux selector buttons are stereo input and output phone jacks for use with an outboard tape recorder, and to their right are the tape-monitor switch and the mono/stereo mode switch. Then come the tone controls. Each consists of a pair of knobs, one selecting "turnover" frequency (three positions plus defeat) and the other is a continuous boost/cut control. The turnover calibration is in terms of the nominal frequencies at which 3 dB of boost or cut is achieved with the continuous control in a maximum position: 150, 300, or 600 Hz in the bass, and 1.5, 3, and 6 kHz in the treble. Next come on/off switches for high filter, low filter, and loudness compensation. At the right end of the panel are the volume control (with separate, friction-clutched sections for each channel so that it doubles as a balance control), on/off switches for main and remote speaker pairs, the main power switch, and a stereo headphone jack (which is live at all times).

The back panel is fairly conventional: screwdriver antenna connections (300-ohm FM lead, 75-ohm FM lead, AM), spring-loaded clips for the leads to two pairs of speakers, phono jacks for the low-level connections (tape out, tape in, phono 1, phono 2, aux 1, aux 2). Note that both phono inputs are intended for magnetic cartridges, but phono 2 is more sensitive and is appropriate for use with cartridges whose output is exceptionally low. (See accompanying data.) Below these jacks is a ground connection, and immediately below the antenna connections are three convenience AC outlets, one of which is switched automatically by the receiver.

Of these features, the tone controls probably contribute most to the luxurious "feel" of the unit. The turnover action is illustrated by the tone-control curves in the accompanying graph. In both bass and treble, the in-between setting of the turnover knobs (for "300 Hz" and "3 kHz" respectively) produces the tone-control action that most closely approaches that to be expected of conventional controls. Raising the bass turnover or lowering the treble turnover produces boost or cut (depending on the position of the tone-control knob itself).

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; 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.
over a broad frequency range; lowering the bass turnover or raising that for the treble control produces action more like conventional filters, since it is largely restricted to the extreme frequencies. Treble and bass filters can of course be used in addition to these unusually flexible tone controls to further increase the range of options. If we have any criticism of the system, in fact, it is that the treble filter built into the 71/3R behaves almost identically to the maximum treble cut setting for the 3-kHz turnover position—a redundancy in our view. The flexibility of the controls might have been still further improved by a steeper slope (that is, a sharper cutoff) in the filter circuit.

One common use of such a high filter barely applies to the 71/3R however: for noisy FM programs. This is because the built-in muting circuit of the receiver cannot be defeated and hence the unit will reproduce only those broadcasts that deliver signals strong enough to override the muting, which triggers somewhere between 1.5 and 2.0 microvolts. BIC itself avoids the word "muting" in this context because its circuit is more sophisticated than most and is designed, the company says, to be sensitive to distortion and tuning as well as to signal strength. Users with efficient antennas or in high signal-strength areas will notice little immediate difference, since the circuit's triggering point is at signal strengths normally associated with the threshold of barely adequate listening conditions; those who have developed a tolerance for noisy FM reception either because they live in fringe areas or because they like "DX" (chase down elusive distant stations with their FM or AM gear) may be disappointed in that the 71/3R will not permit them the "luxury" of substandard reception. The muting circuit behaves similarly in AM reception.

Above muting threshold values the tuner section's FM quieting curve descends steeply to 46.5 dB (maximum quieting for many inexpensive units) at only 4 microvolts. From there the descent is more gradual, reaching 49 dB or better from 7.5 microvolts on out to the limit of testing—an excellent mark. In other respects, the lab data on the FM section also are excellent, though without a defeat in the muting circuit CBS Labs was unable to test the unit for alternate-channel selectivity. In the Additional Data table, note that stereo figures for THD in FM reception are unusually close to those for mono in several instances. Listening tests confirm these findings; the sound is clear and noise-free—on a par with that from first-rate separate FM tuners we have tested.

The amplifier section also came through the CBS Lab tests with excellent results. All distortion measurements—for both THD and IM—from the 1-watt output level to rated power (50 watts per channel) were below 0.15% except when measured into 16-ohm loads, where IM distortion reached that level just shy of 40 watts. (Amplifiers normally deliver less power—often considerably less—at 16 ohms than at 8 ohms, but few speakers today carry the higher impedance rating.) Even in measuring very low power levels (500 milliwatts) the THD measurements were below 0.75%, the rise in spurious output being due to noise factors rather than true harmonic distortion.

In sum, BIC and Lux have given us a unit that is powerful and luxurious—both in sound and in operation. Silky might be the word.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Wollensak’s Dolby Cassette Deck


Comment: The 4760 is Wollensak’s entry in the high-quality Dolby sweepstakes, and as such it merits serious regard as an instrument on which top-quality tape recordings can be made. The solidly built unit is larger than most cassette decks and has rather unusual controls. Instead of the familiar “piano keys,” Wollensak supplies an array of buttons, levers, and knobs that aid operation both by their differentiated shapes and by their ingenious interlocking design.

At the far left of the top plate is a dual VU meter (two pointers and scales, arranged head to head for easy simultaneous monitoring of both channels). To the right of the cassette well is the main on/off switch, which automatically releases the pause and the play control when it is turned off. Near it is the eject button. At the far left of the same panel are a mono/stereo input switch, a Dolby on/off switch, and a tape switch. In early samples this switch was labeled “high” and “std,” suggesting its use for high-performance or “standard” ferric-oxide tapes. 3M has changed the marking to make plain that the high position is for chromium dioxide, while the standard position is for ferric oxide—specifically 3M’s premium High Energy, with which the unit was tested in August 1972.
the lab. The CrO₂ position, like that on some other
decks, is designed to alter playback equalization as well
as recording characteristics. Other controls on the top
plate—all ranged across the front of the deck—are left
and right input level controls, master recording gain
control, fast-wind lever, recording interlock button, a
latching pause control, and the main play and stop
buttons.

In a well at the left side of the wooden case are the
output level control, phone-jack pairs for input and out-
put line connections, an 18-volt DC output to power
Wollensak accessory mike preamps (there are no mike
inputs as such on the 4760), and a button to trigger the
test tone used in calibrating recording levels to Dolby
standards. The 18-volt output is covered by a plastic
cap when not in use. The actual recording calibration
controls—like the playback calibration controls—are
screwdriver adjustments accessible through holes at
the bottom of the case. The playback adjustments are
intended only for use in servicing the unit; the recording
calibration controls (of which there are four: two chan-
nels for each of the two positions on the regular/CrO₂
switch) need be touched only if you switch tapes, and
then only if the new tape produces a different output
level for a given recording input level.

It should be noted that Scotch High Energy is but one
tape in the premium ferric oxide group; others can be
used on the 4760 with similar results. Lower-priced for-
mulations, which are intended for use with lower bias,
can be used too but at a noticeable expense in high-fre-
quency response. This same approach is taken by com-
peting manufacturers, who set the ferric-oxide position
of their bias switches for one or another of the premium
formulations so that the best possible results can be ob-
tained whether chromium dioxide or ferric oxide is
being used. If bias for ferric-oxide tapes were optimized
for the so-called standard formulations, all high-quality
recordings would have to be made with chromium diox-
ide.

A comparison of lab data shows that the Wollensak is
in the same performance class as other top Dolby cas-
ette recorders, and our use tests certainly confirm this
conclusion. With the Dolby circuit on, and watching our
signal levels on the unit’s meters, we were able to make
the equal of those made on a good open-reel deck.

Wollensak 4760 Cassette Deck Additional Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed accuracy</th>
<th>105 VAC: 0.60% fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120 VAC: 0.10% fast</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>127 VAC: 0.11% fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wow and flutter (unweighted)</td>
<td>playback: 0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>record/playback: 0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewind time, C-60 cassette</td>
<td>42 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast forward time, same cassette</td>
<td>44 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU)</td>
<td>playback: L ch: 54.5 dB R ch: 54.0 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>record/playback: L ch: 52.0 dB R ch: 52.0 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)</td>
<td>50 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crosstalk (at 400 Hz)</td>
<td>record left, playback right: 46 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>record right, playback left: 46 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity (for 0-VU recording level)</td>
<td>line input: L ch: 37 mV R ch: 37 mV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dolby ref. level: L ch: exact R ch: +2.5 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter action</td>
<td>(ref. DIN 0 VU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME distortion (record/play, -10 VU)</td>
<td>L ch: exact R ch: +0.5 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum output (preamp or line, 0-VU)</td>
<td>L ch: 0.66 V R ch: 0.66 V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dual's Mighty Middle Model

The Equipment: Dual Model 1218, a three-speed automatic record changer (usable also as a semiautomatic or manual turntable assembly). Dimensions: 13 by 11 inches (main chassis; requires 2½ inches clearance below and approximately 5 inches clearance above chassis); wood base, 13¼ by 3½ inches. Price: $155 including manual spindle, 45 adapter, and strobe disc; WB-12 base, $10.95; DC-4 dust cover, $12.95; DCB-5 base with dust cover, $39.95. Manufacturer: Dual of West Germany; U.S. distributor: United Audio Products, Inc., 120 S. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553.

Comment: The 1218 is priced about midway between the premium Model 1219 (HF test report, Jan. 1970), and the "budget" Model 1215 (Jan. 1972), and it shares the features of both, although its performance puts it closer to the 1219.

The main chassis is the same size as that in the 1215 and the main operating controls grouped along the front are identical in all but some styling details. The arm and its controls, however, are basically those of the 1219. The only major difference is in the vertical-angle adjustment system. For playing records automatically, the 1219 raises the entire assembly to the median height of the record stack. The 1218 leaves the arm in the manual position, but adjusts the angle of the cartridge mount. One item is unique in the 1218: The platter, itself, at 4 pounds, 5 ounces, is heavier than that of the 1215 and is more stylish in appearance.

Beginning at the front left, the controls include the vernier speed adjustment (whose range CBS Labs checked out as +4, -3% at 33 or 45 rpm, ±2% at 78), the three-position speed selector, the start/stop lever, and the three-position (7-, 10-, and 12-inch) record-size selector. To the right of the arm rest is the cueing lever. At the arm pivot is the twin-gauge (one for spherical stylus, one for ellipticals) antiskating control which, according to CBS lab measurements, applied antiskating forces that measured very close to theoretically exact values. At the arm pivot is an accurate stylus-force gauge, which allowed no measurable departure from the indicated values to beyond 4 grams, and was only 0.1 gram high when set to 5 grams. A small knob in the cartridge housing selects either the M (manual) or S (stack) vertical-angle alignments. In the S position the lab found it produced a shift of some 2 degrees in the cartridge mount, aligning the cartridge for optimum position in playing the fourth record in a stack. The 1218 is designed to hold up to six records. Near the arm rest is a small hole in the chassis through which the arm set-down-position screw may be reached for adjustment; near the antiskating dial in a cueing-height adjustment screw; on the back of the arm pivot assembly is a small setscrew to adjust the height of the arm during the changing cycle. In our sample all of these adjustments were found to have been accurately preset on arrival.

Setup is relatively simple. The most complex part is the installation of the cartridge on the mounting platform that holds it in place within the shell. Once the correct screws and spacers have been selected (Dual supplies quite a variety) the cartridge is aligned for height and overhang position by using a plastic gauge (also supplied) and the screws tightened. Then the platform is locked into the shell; the finger-hold on the shell doubles as a latch to hold the platform in place. The counterweight slips into place at the back of the arm and is held there by a setscrew near the arm pivot. Turning the counterweight sets it for precise balance; then tracking force and antiskating are simply dialed on the respective gauges and you're ready to go.

The automatic-change spindle is similar to that on other Duals. It supports the stack while gently lowering the bottom record by what Dual calls "elevator action." With the manual spindle (or the large-hole adapter for 45rpm) in place, the automatic controls still work. Pressing the start lever moves the arm over the record and play begins automatically. It also ends automatically—with the arm returning to its rest—in any mode of play. When the arm is picked up and moved toward the record for manual cueing the motor starts automatically. The cueing lever may be used to lower the arm or to interrupt play and resume later at the same point. The cueing system is damped in ascent as well as descent, preventing the arm from bouncing at the top of the up stroke unless the lever is handled with extreme roughness. As a result, the system's ability to return to the same groove is excellent in normal handling.

The 1218's excellence comes through in many more important ways, however. In testing speed accuracy, with the vernier set for exact performance at 33 rpm with line current at 120 volts, no error could be measured at any voltage for either 33 or 78 rpm. At 45 rpm, with all three test voltages (105, 120, and 127 volts), the speed was absolutely consistent at 0.1% fast—a negligible error (and one that can be corrected by a slight touchup on the vernier of course). Rumble, measured by the CBS-ARLL standard, is 58 dB—an excellent figure one would expect of a premium-model turntable. Average flutter was measured at 0.05% unweighted, 0.07% with the new ANSI weighting—also excellent. Arm friction in both lateral and vertical planes proved to be immeasurably low, while the stylus force necessary for changer tripping was a mere 0.1 gram.

The tone arm weights are decoupled from the main body of the arm by a compliant rubber member; this feature, combined with the double bearings of the gimbal arm pivot, made the lab's measurement of arm resonance more complex than usual, but it also apparently helps reduce resonant effects. Suffice it to say that after measuring the arm (with a Shure V-15 Type II cartridge) in four different planes (vertically, laterally, and perpendicularly to each groove wall) the most extreme peak the lab could find was a 9-dB rise at 6 Hz in the lateral plane.

Whether used as a changer or as a manual the 1218 behaved flawlessly for us. Considering this performance plus the superior measurements made in the lab, there seems no doubt that the Dual 1218 wll attract many buyers. Though it costs $30 less, the 1218 proves to be in the same league as the 1219.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
Open Reel Is Still Special

You don't have to be a dyed-in-the-wool open-reel fan to appreciate that, as a recording medium, it will do things no other format can. I'm not knocking cassettes (of which I consume a good many these days) or even eight-track cartridges. Both are high fidelity today, and both are convenient ways of playing music in the home—though the less said about the practical problems of recording onto cartridges the better. But open reel is still the Rolls-Royce of recording as far as I'm concerned because it will take so many special applications in its stride.

We got some inkling of how many special functions are demanded of open reel when we ran our tape-composition contest in 1969. The response was fantastic—not only because of the number of readers who submitted entries, but because of the complexity and ingenuity of the techniques many entrants applied. Well, we're not all tape composers—or perhaps constructionists might be a better word, since many of the "pieces" were, like a ten-year-old's tree house, constructed of (sonic) jetsam rather than composed in the classical sense—but the basic techniques of tape composition are the same as those for many other special purposes.

One anecdote may illustrate how important those purposes are to today's open-reel users. During a visit to a major manufacturer of consumer and professional tape products about the time that the contest entries were beginning to roll in, I was shown a design for a deck that would make possible not only quadraphonic recording and playback (then a brand-new concept as far as consumer products were concerned) but synchronous multitrack overdubbing as well. The product manager explained that rock groups in particular seemed to want a recorder that, within the confines of regular quarter-track, quarter-inch tape, would come as close as possible to the professional multitrack equipment that they saw in the recording studios and used to create the multilayered effects that were (and are) so much a part of rock. A high-quality deck that would also be appropriate for home quadraphonics, he reasoned, might be sufficiently attractive to a wide enough spectrum of potential users to make its way in the marketplace, despite a necessarily high price—perhaps around $1,000. What did I think?

The answer had to be sheer speculation, of course. It was well known that electronic equipment—even extremely expensive instrument amplifiers and speakers and similar public-address gear—was selling at a tremendous rate. A sure-fire conversation maker in the industry was: Where are these kids getting all the money? The concept of the product was exciting: aside from its multitrack capability the design included a version of the closed-loop drive system, which until that time had been reserved for mastering and instrumentation equipment. But how many units could be sold? I don't remember what my guess was, and I have no idea whether it influenced the product manager's thinking. Whatever the reason, the recorder never appeared on the market.

Decks of similar description have appeared more recently however. In talking to Sony/Superscope about one of them, the over-$1,500 TC-854-4S, I was informed that the company now sells more units in a month than it had originally expected to sell per year when the model was introduced. That's pretty impressive, and it seems to confirm that there are plenty of potential buyers whose interest in tape recording goes far beyond anything today's cassette models can provide.

A Den of Uniquity

Before discussing the factors that make open-reel recording unique, let me take up one way in which it is not: over-all sound quality. Until recently no other home recording medium could match open reel. Recent improvements, particularly in cassettes (see our multifaceted exploration of the subject in the March 1972 issue), have made it possible to capture virtually identical sound on the best of the "convenience" tapes. That isn't to say that you will always get identical sound; results depend to some extent on the nature of the program material...
Making Like a Pro

The *ne plus ultra* of this kind of recording is of course the recorder capable of multitrack overdubbing—the sort I referred to earlier. Its special features (aside from its quadraphonic capability) are embodied in switching that can convert the recording head to use as a playback head and will make the conversion in each of the four channels independently of the other three. The conversion itself makes both sound-on-sound and sound-with-sound operation possible with perfect synchronism, and with stereo (or better) results in either case: the four-track heads extend these abilities to an almost endless series of options whose end product may be anything from Les-Paul-and-Mary-Ford mono to discrete quadraphonics.

If you haven't had a chance to play with one of these luxurious units you may be hard put to visualize just what's involved, so let's try on an imaginary situation for size. We want to record a jazzed-up version of a Bach three-part invention, which consists basically of three interwoven melodic lines. We begin with the bass line, using piano. Fender bass, and drums—laying in the foundation, so to speak. Let's record them in stereo (drums on the right, bass on the left, piano in the middle) and arbitrarily place them on Tracks 1 and 2. Now let's assign the middle line of the music to a voice (maybe the pianist's) and the top line to the bass man, now playing acoustic guitar. We can set it up so that the voice is on the middle right, the guitar on the middle left—again recording in stereo. But since we're going to need extra tracks to add a background chorus as the last step, we mix this second recording in with the first.

To do this, we set Tracks 1 and 2 for playback, give the vocalist and the guitarist stereo headphones, and let them sing and play along with the previous recording. The playback from Tracks 1 and 2 feeds back into a separate playback head, which is now called the monitoring head. Since this is a dedicated head, we can set the monitoring level so that we'll never overload the amplifier, and the monitoring frequency response is extended to the higher end. The combination of playback and monitoring is now fed back to the recording head, which produces what we've come to call sound-with-sound (also sometimes called multiplay, particularly by Europeans) is a process by which a previously recorded sound is picked up from the tape via the playback head, mixed with a new source signal, and the mixture recorded onto the second track of the stereo pair. On a stereo recorder this end product, therefore, is a mixed mono track. In sound-with-sound recording, on the other hand, you simply listen to the first recording while you're making the second on the other track of the stereo pair. To hear the combined result, you play back both simultaneously in stereo. If the recorder has a combined record/play head rather than separate heads the synchronization will be perfect, with separate heads it won't, though some manufacturers seem to consider the time lag insignificant and list their monitor-head decks for the sound-with-sound feature.

Manufacturers are somewhat inconsistent in their use of this term or its sidekick: sound-with-sound. Sound-on-sound (also sometimes called multiplay, particularly by Europeans) is a process by which a previously recorded sound is picked up from the tape via the playback head, mixed with a new source signal, and the mixture recorded onto the second track of the stereo pair. On a stereo recorder this end product, therefore, is a mixed mono track. In sound-with-sound recording, on the other hand, you simply listen to the first recording while you're making the second on the other track of the stereo pair. To hear the combined result, you play back both simultaneously in stereo. If the recorder has a combined record/play head rather than separate heads the synchronization will be perfect, with separate heads it won't, though some manufacturers seem to consider the time lag insignificant and list their monitor-head decks for the sound-with-sound feature.

and on careful choice of levels. Open-reel recording still has more headroom (that is, it will cope with overload problems with more ease) and a flatter frequency response into the extreme frequencies (where little useful program information exists in any event). So any discussion of the sonic limitations of one format versus another is bound to raise a number of fairly moot points today, and to drag on almost endlessly if the proponents of competing systems wax energetic in their argument. Suffice it to say that open-reel recorders have lost their unique sonic position, if not their exclusive claim to sonic excellence.

For truly unique features we must look elsewhere—at the head configuration, for one thing. The cassette and cartridge fields are only just beginning a somewhat tentative exploration of the advantages to be gained from separate playback and recording head gaps: separate heads have been all but mandatory on the better open-reel recorders since the beginning. They make it possible to tailor head gaps to a single use, rather than compromise between the narrow gap that is optimum for high-frequency playback response and the somewhat wider gap that is desirable to prevent saturation in the record head. (Special head designs—crossfield heads and the recent “focused-gap” heads—seek to optimize performance in a way that will bypass or solve some of the technical problems involved.) But the big advantages of a separate playback head lie in the special functions that they make possible.

“Monitoring” is basic to these functions, and in fact the separate playback head often is called a monitor head for this reason. It allows you to listen to the playback from the tape even while it is being recorded. An experienced recordist, who knows just how deceptive meter readings can be on certain types of program material, will double-check his levels by listening via the monitor head. Some sounds can pin his meters before audible distortion will result, so signal levels (and therefore the signal-to-noise ratio) can be increased by turning up the recording level; other sounds (bells, for example) contain extreme transients that are too brief for the meter to register, and will produce severe distortion levels by listening via the monitor head. Some types of program material, will double-check his how deceptive meter readings can be on certain

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Physical tape editing—a process well-nigh impossible in other tape formats—is a specialty of the semipro open-reel decks. Tape is carefully cued to edit point and the position of playback head gap marked on tape backing (two photographs on this page). Diagonal cut is made just ahead of marked edit point. A cut straight across the tape tends to produce a noisy splice.) Tape ends are carefully aligned in splicer and splicing tape applied to the juncture (lower left and upper right photos, next page). Narrow splicing tape is used here; precut splicing patches may be used similarly. Wide splicing tape must be trimmed once firm connection is made. Finished splice should exhibit perfect meeting of tape ends, and splicing tape should not hang over edges of recording tape. If it does it can stick to adjacent tape layers in the reel and will foul the deck's heads with adhesive.

and 2 is mixed with the new signals (mixing left with left and right with right of course) and the mixtures recorded on Tracks 3 and 4. The original recordings on Tracks 1 and 2 can now be erased and reused. But where do we get our "chorus" from with only three musicians? By recording them twice, on the two free tracks.

To keep the chorus perfectly synchronized with the previous recording, Tracks 3 and 4 must be monitored (again via headphones) but from the recording head instead of the playback head this time, so that the head gaps for the monitored signal are directly in line with those making the new recording. This mode of operation usually is called Sel-Sync—Ampex's trade name for the process, though each manufacturer has his own term. Teac calls it Simul-sync; Sony/Superscope uses the term Syncro Trak. First we have our three voices sing (or croon or hum or whatever) onto Track 1. Then we rewind and repeat the process on Track 2. The second recording won't be identical to the first, so the effect will be that of a six-man chorus.

There will be fluffs and false starts and other imperfections as we go along of course. But if we repeat each step in this operation until we get it right, the end product should be what we want. At no point do we destroy a previous "layer" in the recording unless it's safely stored on another track in final form, so we lose nothing but time in making retakes.

In playback we can assign any track to any speaker in a quadraphonic system. The logical arrangement might be Tracks 1 and 2 (the chorus) in the back speakers, Tracks 3 and 4 (the stereo recording of all but the chorus) in the front speakers. We can also make a stereo mixdown, which ideally would require a mixer but could be fudged by combining signals through Y connectors.

Complicated? With a little imagination you can think up ways of using the equipment that are even more complicated. That's part of the excitement of this sort of recording.

And Don't Forget Editing

A representative of one major open-reel manufacturer has told me that market studies indicate his customers aren't interested in physically editing their tapes. I don't doubt his information, but I regret it. Tape editing can accomplish purposes that are otherwise impossible, and it can be a great deal of fun once you get the hang of it. In the days when tape recording at home was relatively new (to us) I used to con a forbearing friend into recording two or three anecdotes. Cross-editing of the stories usually could be counted on to provide some hilarious results—at least from our point of view. I remember one time...well, that's not for print.

If you do plan to edit tapes, you should choose your recorder carefully. You will need a model that permits the tape to be stopped without cutting off the sound from the playback head either electrically or by forcing the tape away from the head with tape lifters. This is because the key operation in a successful edit is the marking of the edit point, "rocking" the tape back and forth past the playback head until a precise syllable or transient is located. The sounds that issue from your loudspeakers during this cueing operation can be ungodly; if you have neighbors with tender sensibilities, I'd suggest the use of earphones.

For some types of editing, a really good pause control is sufficient, however. I've restored 78-rpm albums to near-seamless continuity that way, for example, and the technique can be applied equally
well to LPs. The ability to cue the tape also is a big advantage in this type of editing, though you can get by with the pause control. If you are using a model with separate playback and recording heads, you will need to back up the tape until the cue point is opposite the recording—instead of the playback—head. (At high transport speeds this may not be necessary in many cases because the time lag between heads is short; I copy most 78s at 3½ ips.)

The next step is to establish the cue for releasing the pause control at the beginning of the next record side. The surface noise in almost any disc contains irregularities that will help. Let's say there are two sharp ticks, then a revolution and a half of quiet before the music begins. Listen for the ticks, count one revolution, and release the pause. A really first-rate pause control will have the machine up to speed by the time the music comes in, but this technique does take a little practice.

Except for the desirable audible cueing feature, the technique can be applied equally well in cassette equipment, of course. But if you're copying longer works—operas in particular—cassettes give you far less leeway in positioning the recording on the tape. Wagner lovers will appreciate this point in particular, since the longest available cassette-side timing is 60 minutes and many an act in Wagner's operas runs longer. Open-reel tapes offer just about any imaginable timing option.

The Urge Behind It All

I could go on: what Dolby can do for open reel; the fun (and practical advantages for the serious musician) to be derived from a variable speed control; the superiority of big, well-marked VU meters; the silky feel of solenoid controls and the special applications (including remote control and automatic, timer-triggered off-the-air recording when you're not home) they make possible; the flexibility and ease of operation that come with a full range of separate input and output level (and mixing) controls, and so on. But lurking in the background of all these considerations is one that, I suspect, makes the whole somewhat greater than the sum of its parts for many users.

I'm talking about the heft and the glamour that the open-reel equipment has by contrast to the convenience formats. For some users it might be called conspicuous consumption; for others it's a question of playing at being a studio engineer; for still others the appeal lies in a great piece of hardware, admired for its own sake. But shallow though these reasons sound (and from the standpoint of someone devoted to cassette recording they're no reasons at all), they are the stuff that real enjoyment is made of. And dreams. Even if you covet a $3,000 studio job a $300 open-reel deck can be an open invitation to adventure. That's what makes it really special.
by Robert Angus

A Survey of Better Open-Reel

Remember the old-fashioned open-reel tape recorder—the big, bulky thing you had to thread by hand? Remember how cassette buffs proclaimed last year that the minirecorders had taken over the high fidelity role of the open-reel recorder and how Ampex's market research department predicted that open-reel recorder sales would decline by about ten percent a year until the format died a natural death?

It's true that during the past year or two a number of familiar names have vanished altogether or abandoned the open-reel recorder for the cassette or cartridge player. Roberts has discontinued operations in this country. Craig, Bell & Howell and Norelco are just a few of those no longer making open-reel equipment—and former full-line manufacturers like Magnecord and Ampex are down to a single model apiece for most consumer purposes.

The open-reel recorder is alive and well and living in audio showrooms across the land, however. In fact, more new units are appearing this year than for many years past. New names (Akai, Dokorder, Hitachi, JVC, Kenwood, Sansui, et al.) are stepping in to replace those that have retreated from the marketplace.

In case you haven't looked lately, you'll find many changes in open-reel recorders. For one thing, there are virtually no decks or complete recorders priced under $200. (The half dozen or so that exist represent almost without exception the last gasp of a budget open-reel era that is past and are not included in the accompanying chart.) Instead, there are many recorders selling for $400, $600—even $1,000 and more. Almost half of those on the market offer some version of automatic reverse, while a growing number include both four-channel recording and playback. And there's more.

Of course, when you're paying upwards of $400 for a tape recorder, you expect more than the average $200 cassette deck is capable of delivering, as the preceding article on the joys of using an open-reel deck makes clear.

Decks, in fact, comprise the vast majority of
Tape Recorders

open-reel offerings. Of some eighty-seven models listed here only about ten per cent include amplifiers and loudspeakers. In addition another fifteen per cent of the models are available either as decks or as complete recorders. When you consider that only two years ago it was possible to buy a quarter-track stereo recorder with monitor amplifiers (albeit very small ones) and detachable speakers (hardly of high fidelity quality) for $179.95, you can see just how the times are changing.

The deck is popular because it can be installed as part of a component system that may also contain a cassette deck. The portable open-reel recorder has given way to the more compact, more convenient, lighter cassette models. Besides, when used with a good microphone most of the better cassette portables can match or beat the fidelity of the portable open-reel models of years gone by—at least in terms of recording.

Improving both the fidelity and the durability of the new equipment is such developments as hot-pressed ferrite and glass recording and playback heads. These heads are much harder than the older laminated types, which means both that they last longer and that they can be produced to much more critical tolerances. An extremely narrow gap in the record head means a higher fidelity, brighter-sounding recording. It's now possible to manufacture a head with a gap width of only one micron for example. Originally developed for video recorders, these heads now are being used on some of the better open-reel recorders and cassette decks.

The open-reel customer has cassette technology to thank for the growing number of open-reel decks with bias-adjustment switches to permit him to alternate between standard iron-oxide tapes and low-noise, high-density formulations—or between either of these and chromium-dioxide tape. While tape manufacturers never could agree on an exact bias current that would optimize performance with their (or anybody else's) tape, bias requirements generally fell into the same ball park. The introduction by 3M of Scotch 201 tape, and later TDK's SD and Du Pont's Crolyn, changed all that. Today a recordist who likes to experiment with a variety of tapes finds himself making frequent bias adjustments; for him there are special aids to bias adjustment built into decks by such manufacturers as Ferrograph, Kenwood, and TapeSonic.

A glance at our chart will show an impressive number of decks incorporating automatic reverse, ranging in price from about $250 to $2,000. Before you buy, however, it pays to read the fine print to see just what reverses automatically. In some less-expensive models, for example, the recorder will continue playing after reversing itself; but if it's in the record mode, it switches into play for the return trip. In the case of quadraphonic models, automatic reverse usually applies only to two-channel playback or record. (After all, since all four-channel tracks are recorded in the same direction, there's no need to hear them backwards.)

Speaking of quadraphonics, remarkably few four-channel open-reel models have been introduced. Of the twenty now on the market, about half are at least a year old. There are, in fact, almost as many combination recorders (open reel in combination with eight track, cassette, or both on a single chassis) as there are new quadraphonic open-reel models. Why? "Because the repertoire of four-channel prerecorded tapes has not developed nearly as fast as we hoped it would," says Arne Berg of Teac, one of the first to introduce a quadraphonic deck. Berg points out that unless you have access to a live musical ensemble, you're not likely to get much use from the recording capability on a quadraphonic deck, either. There have been some experimental FM broadcasts of discrete-quadraphonic programs, but the necessary receiving equipment is not generally available and the experimenting stations are few and far between. Berg acknowledged that a number of FM stations around the country are transmitting matrixed quadraphonics (Sansui QS, Electro-Voice Stereo-4, or CBS SQ), "but it's possible to record these on your two-channel recorder, then decode the two-channel tape when you play it. There's no point in recording a matrixed signal on four-channel equipment." Milt Phillipson of Akai agrees. But both executives are quick to point to the superior sound of open-reel quadraphonics with respect to the current rivals. "The hiss of an open-reel tape is a fraction of that from even the best cartridge playback deck," Phillipson says, and both note the obvious advantages in channel separation of discrete tape over matrixed records.

Nonetheless, Akai offers a combination open-reel/cartridge unit that permits the user to record or play back four channels from either source, or to record from one onto the other. It's just one of a number of combination units offered by Akai and Concord in a field Phillipson expects to grow rap-
## Open-Reel Recorders

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Mono, stereo, quadr.</th>
<th>No. of tracks</th>
<th>No. of speeds</th>
<th>Top speed (ips)</th>
<th>Max. reel size (inches)</th>
<th>No. of heads</th>
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S/S - Overdub features (see text)  
SW - Switch  
R/C - Remote control unit  
W/Ch - Watts per channel  
ALC - Automatic level control  
Pb - Playback  
Auto - Automatic  
Rec - Recording  
N/A - Not available at press time
<table>
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<td>Bias sw; S/S; auto shutoff; echo; mixing</td>
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Logic - Automatic prevention of improper operation sequencing
Comb - Combination unit (data refer only to open-reel section)
### Open-Reel Recorders Over $200

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<th>No. of speeds</th>
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S/S - Overdub features (see text)
SW - Switch
R/C - Remote control unit
W/Ch - Watts per channel
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N/A - Not available at press time
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Auto - Automatic
Rec - Recording
<table>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Includes 6-w/ch amp, speakers; auto shutoff; S/S; avail as deck</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tape sw</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tape sw; auto shutoff; avail as deck or system; optional S/S</td>
<td>220-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Noise reduction; auto shutoff; tape sw</td>
<td>240-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>S/S; auto shutoff; mixing; echo; tape sw</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mixing; auto shutoff; tape sw</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Includes 20-w/ch amp, speakers; echo; S/S</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Solenoid operation; mixing; echo; S/S; tape sw</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Optional R/C; tape sw; echo; S/S; quadar model (654-4) avail</td>
<td>450-475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pb speed control; rechargeable DC power supply</td>
<td>750-995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Logic; opt R/C; mixing; S/S; echo; search; tape sw; opt speed cont (in 854-4S)</td>
<td>795-1,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Many options &amp; features including 70½-in reel, AC/DC operation</td>
<td>1,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mixing; cueing; incl monitor amp, spkr; 5-in max reel with cover closed</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crossfield head; auto shutoff; echo; S/S; cueing</td>
<td>330-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crossfield head; includes amp, speakers, cueing; S/S; echo</td>
<td>460-480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crossfield head; mixing; cueing; ALC; S/S; echo</td>
<td>500-530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Crossfield head; S/S; echo; cueing; mixing; logic</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Solenoid operation; auto shutoff; mixing; S/S</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Available with several electronics and head options</td>
<td>695-730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; optional R/C; mixing</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bias sw; auto shutoff; mixing</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bias sw; auto shutoff; mixing</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bias sw; mixing; S/S</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bias sw; auto shutoff; S/S</td>
<td>550-850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; bias sw; level sw; optional R/C; optional timer adapter</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; optional R/C; mixing; bias sw</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Solenoid operation; several options including R/C; bias sw</td>
<td>800-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; bias sw; optional R/C</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Includes quarter-track pb head</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Equalization sw; mixing</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; no electronics; playback only</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mixing; echo; S/S; auto shutoff; also avail without wood base as 433</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Includes 6-w/ch amp, speakers; mixing; ALC; S/S</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Includes nicad battery, other accessories; also mono (Model 4000)</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Slide sync; mixing; incl amp, spkrs; S/S; echo; avail as deck (9000)</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Auto shutoff; S/S; ALC; also avail with amp, spkrs (Model 5000R. $340)</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mixing; S/S; echo</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Includes amp, speakers; mixing; S/S; echo</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Includes amp, speakers; S/S; echo; mixing</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>S/S; echo; mixing; records stereo only</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
idly. "A few years ago you could talk about the open-reel user, the cartridge owner, and the cassette hobbyist as three different individuals," Phillipson says. "Now we find that most people own more than one or, if they own only one type of tape equipment, are planning to add another soon." The philosophy of the combination unit is that it puts everything in a single, compact package. It also makes possible the integration of electronic and even mechanical elements of two or more systems.

A growing number of recorders are solenoid operated. We've indicated some of them in the chart—but you may discover others when you go shopping. Solenoid-operated units require only a gentle tap to begin movement; you don't have to press a stiff piano key or turn a knob. And being totally electrical they're readily adaptable to remote-control operation—a convenience you can't get in cassette or cartridge decks yet. Besides, most solenoid-operated units automatically stop the motors and disengage the drive system when the tape breaks or runs out, preventing flattened idlers and untimely wear on drive parts.

While most home recordists are content with a 7-inch reel capacity on their open-reel decks (which permits up to ninety minutes of recording in one direction at 71/2 ips with triple-play tape), a growing number are expressing interest in machines that can handle 81/4-inch or 101/2-inch reels. The larger reel means more uninterrupted recording or playback time—a virtual necessity if the recorder of your choice offers the 15-ips speed. A 101/2-inch reel recorded at 15 ips, for example, equals the playing time of a 7-inch reel of the same tape type recorded at 71/2 ips.

There are four premium-priced recorders—the Stellavox, the Uher 4400, and (with their covers closed) the Nagra and Tandberg 11—that offer only a 5-inch reel capacity. These are special-purpose recorders designed primarily for professional or semi-professional recording. The Stellavox has a top speed of 30 ips. To increase playing time, the unit can be fitted with a 101/2-inch reel adapter.

In some of the better recorders, a switch lets you A/B the signal going into the recorder with that actually recorded on the tape. While some inexpensive machines do include "monitor" outputs, these may be nothing more than a feed-through of the input signal. The real test is whether the recorder has a separate playback head, positioned where it can pick up the newly recorded signal. If you're still in doubt, ask the dealer for a demonstration before buying. The monitor playback should be a fraction of a second behind the source signal when you switch rapidly from one to the other; if you notice no time lag in the music, you're merely listening to the source signal.

In addition to the monitor head, there are several other specialized heads available on the super-decks. Uher, for example, offers a slide-sync (Diapilot) head on its Model 10,000 recorder. It and one or two other manufacturers offer interchangeable heads, to convert from quarter-track to half-track or full-track operation. Other manufacturers who offer a choice of tape formats do so by installing two separate heads side by side—one for half-track record or playback, the other for quarter-track. These considerations, plus those involved in automatic-reversing and quadraphonic decks, make nonsense of the traditional phrase, "a three-head unit," as the diagrams in the preceding article make plain. The table of available models lists the number of heads in each unit but also details the functions they perform.

Every quadraphonic recorder I've seen can be used for stereo as well, and almost every unit capable of stereo recording can be switched to record mono on one track only. Keep this in mind in looking over the Q/S/M designations in the table. A unit specified as Q can be used for stereo; one marked Q/S is available in two versions, quadraphonic (which presumably can be used for stereo and mono as well), and stereo (which is incapable of quadraphonic operation).

These and other options will influence the price of the model you buy of course. The prices shown are based primarily on the model versions that we expect will most interest our readers. In the case of home equipment, therefore, the table shows a distinct bias in favor of quarter-track stereo equipment with a top speed of 71/2 ips and a maximum reel size of 7 inches—the de facto "standard" at present.

There are a number of functions that will allow you to build up successive "layers" of sound in making a finished recording: sound-on-sound, sound-with-sound, and synchronous overdubbing. Each requires a different head configuration and electronic interconnection scheme, but the table uses the single symbol S/S to indicate them all. Actually, the terminology and the operation of these features differ a good deal from manufacturer to manufacturer. If your recording bent lies in this area, it will pay you to study the appropriate section of the instruction manual for any unit you're considering buying.

Other abbreviations are explained at the end of the chart. But there can be no symbol for one factor that will influence your enjoyment of any recorder you choose: its "feel." In order to find a unit that really suits your style as a recordist—in terms of both feel and the specifics of operating behavior—there is no adequate substitute for a "test drive." And once you begin looking at the models in local shops, you're sure to find features that, for want of space, couldn't be detailed here. An open-reel tape recorder may cost much less than a car, but it deserves to be bought with as much care.
by Herbert Keppler

How to Create an Oral History of Your Family

The portable cassette recorder is an ideal sonic version of the Instamatic.

Almost from the very beginning, manufacturers of home recording equipment—first disc, then wire, and now tape—have suggested the cloying joys of memorializing such events as a child's first words, a birthday party, a sing-along at home. They were and remain sounds that only a mother-in-law or tone-deaf friend could endure: but most long-term tape recorder owners, overcome by the first flush of enthusiasm with their equipment, have collected such Americana in little cardboard boxes of one size or another, now mouldering in some far-off storage corner. But let sleeping dogs lie.

There is, however, a very vital area where the modern home tape recorder, particularly the cassette variety, serves a most worthwhile purpose: as an oral history notebook—a sound camera if you will. Because of the small size of the average portable cassette recorder it is an ideal tool for listening in on your own personal world and putting into the permanent record those words and sounds of the present, soon to be past, that you will want to listen to again and again—sounds that will become treasures to pass down to future generations, like fine wines.

Home recording used to be quite an event. It literally stopped all life dead. You lugged in the recorder, crawled under the table or sideboard looking for an AC outlet, misthreaded the takeup reel a few times, got the mike too close to the built-in speaker (creating some ear-splitting whines), set the volume level wrong, and by the time you were ready for whatever you were going to record, it was sick to death of you and sounded it.

With the old systems of recording voice and sounds at home, you had a posed picture. The sounds were made for the benefit of the recorder; they were still and self-conscious. Today the cassette recorder can operate with the unobtrusiveness and automation of a modern 35-mm camera. It can record a slice of life with amazing fidelity. I now keep my cassette unit loaded and ready to go at thirty seconds' notice just as I keep my camera. If it's a visual event, the camera gets used; if it's more audible than visible, the cassette recorder gets the nod. Sometimes both are used together so that nothing is missed.

Picking Your Subject

A for instance? My son is taking cello lessons. It was practice day for him—along with three other bud-
ding cellists. Those serious eleven- and twelve-year-old faces and gleaming instruments made ideal camera studies. Then there were the pieces being played—first badly, then better—with comments from the teacher, responses of the students, amusing quips and hints and complaints. Could I do two things at once? Yes, with a little help from my friends. I started the cassette recorder, placed it in the hands of a friend who had never worked a recorder before, threw on the automatic volume control switch, pointed the mike for him, and tended to the pictures myself. The combination of photos and tape is all I could want.

Let's look at a few other good uses. At the risk of being unseasonal, I get a catch in my throat (even in midsummer) when I play the cassette I made four years ago of my wife reading " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas" to my two children. They interrupted, asked questions about Donner and Blitzen and Santa's red nose, without even knowing they were being recorded. I simply put the cassette recorder on the dresser behind a few knickknacks and let it run.

My friend Luigi Costantino makes wine (legally) in his basement for home use as his father did and his father's father did before him way back into some time when Romulus and Remus made wine in their basement. How does he do it? He explained as we sampled, adding a brief history of the Costantino family. He was telling the, but my cassette recorder was listening too. A dupe tape will be a precious document for his son and daughter. And if they make lousy wine it will be because they didn't listen to the old man on cassette.

During a vacation in Tobago, our native friends talked of the magnificent Caribbean life as we sat under the stars. The lilt of their melodious West Indian accents was accompanied by a glorious chorus of thousands of tiny frogs. We didn't miss a decibel thanks to the cassette recorder. I carried it so often that no one was aware when I had it running and when I didn't.

When a friend is giving a lecture—or attending one I can't get to—I load my cassette recorder with a 120-minute tape, set all the controls, and give instructions on how to set it in motion. Then later I can listen to the whole lecture at my convenience.

Maybe you wouldn't normally be interested in a two-hour production of Alice in Wonderland given by children, but if your daughter is playing a major role it's bound to alter your feelings. From the fifteenth row, off center, I recorded the whole performance and got better and clearer sound than I actually heard.

I am currently hounding my mother-in-law. Why? Because my wife's family history is totally unrecorded. Nobody knows who is related to whom or how, or when or where anyone was born. In any family there is vital history that has eluded written records and can never be recaptured once those who know the story are no longer with us. My mother-in-law is terrified of microphones, but what she doesn't see won't hurt her and the next time she visits I plan to bring up the subject of family history. What better remembrance than the actual sound of a voice?

Picking Your Recorder

Let's take a closer look at the recorders most appropriate for taping oral history. I would pass over the nonportable stereo decks and complete home units. They are just too darn clumsy and conspicuous, and who needs his mother-in-law in stereo? Mono does very nicely for most purposes.

There are times when stereo might come in handy. I admit. I've heard tapes made in relatively crowded rooms where stereo is needed to keep the voices distinct. If three or more people speak at once, the results can be unintelligible in mono even though you might be able to pick out every word in stereo. Stereo could have been nice, too, for my daughter's Alice in Wonderland. But I would have needed bulkier equipment (generally speaking) and a center seat. If you do decide to go for stereo, I'd recommend the double-element stereo microphones, rather than the usual pair of individual mikes, which are much more bother. In fact you'll find that stereo complicates the process all down the line, and I for one would just as soon do without it.

The many portable monophonic tape recorders powered by D or C cells with AC adapters are just about ideal in size and versatility. The units with piano key operation are more convenient than the
ones with lever controls, but the latter usually are more compact and therefore easier to hide. Examine the microphone supplied. There should be an on/off switch at the microphone itself. Why? Because pushing the piano key and recorder button or throwing the lever every time you want to start or stop recording is a noisy and obvious distraction that can ruin the naturalness of your recording efforts. What you must do is set your machine for the recording mode and then stop and start tape motion from the mike control. These small mike levers are noiseless and no one really knows when you are running the unit and when you are not. You can therefore avoid a lot of useless gab and tune in only when something of interest turns up.

Warning! When using the stop/start mike control, the tape doesn’t start up instantaneously; it may take as much as a few seconds to get up to speed. Try to anticipate audio action as you would have to anticipate visual rhythms if you wanted to get a photo at action peak with a camera. Practice may not make perfect—but it helps. It helps. You can buy battery-powered recorders that have (or can be equipped with) an automatic sound-triggered on/off device. Such a feature eliminates the long pauses that always occur in normal conversation, but they’re guaranteed to miss at least a syllable or two when someone breaks the silence.

Some mikes have a split remote control. The mike itself is composed of two parts: one the mike proper; the other the on/off switch. These mikes come apart so that you can place the mike near the subject while keeping the control in your hand. This is certainly a great convenience.

I admit preference for the relatively new super-compact cassette recorders with built-in mikes. Typically, their microphones are visible only as a small, circular, perforated opening at one edge. Most people I record simply cannot believe it really is a mike: and even after they know it, the absence of that immemorial separate cylindrical object makes it easier to get natural-sounding voices, making candid and articulate statements. The built-in mikes have fidelity approaching that of separate mikes. I’ve even used them for recording piano with surprisingly good results. They’re usually unidirectional, which means that almost no sound from the machine itself (or from the user holding it) is transmitted to the tape. I point it as I would a camera and it seems to take in about the same area as a moderately wide-angle lens would.

One of the greatest aids for recording oral history is also one of the greatest deterrents to recording music—the automatic volume control. In the bad old days, the problem of first setting the recording level properly and then maintaining it as the subjects moved, or raised and lowered their voices was formidable. Certainly the recorder’s owner, watching his tiny VU meter and twirling the volume controls up and down while cursing quietly (so it wouldn’t record), didn’t help the atmosphere of his recording sessions. Listening to some of my old cassette recordings made under such circumstances is rather painful. Voices rise in volume, blur, recede. Even a recording made in fairly small confines takes on the audible aspects of a recording in a tavern.

You don’t have to put up with all of that if you have a cassette recorder with AVC—automatic volume control. You just switch on, and the recorder does a remarkable job of ironing out high and low volume levels.

Now this is dandy for voice—something like a camera with automatic exposure control—but there are pitfalls. First, if you intend to use the cassette unit for recording music, AVC won’t do at all. It nicely iron out pianissimos and fortissimos into one gooey mass of sound. Second, if you intend to make dub tapes for your friends, you can’t use an AVC-only cassette recorder for recording the copies. The cassette recorder into which the sound is being fed must have a standard volume control, although AVC makes no difference in the machine used to play the original. Third, a poorly designed AVC can introduce audible distortion.

The ideal answer, of course, is a tape recorder that has AVC and AVC defeat, complete with a meter to monitor volume manually. Most of the new standard-sized monophonic portables do have such switches; the tiny compact cassette recorders intended primarily for dictation often have AVC only. If you plan to make your own copies you’d better have available a second machine without AVC—but we’ll get into dubbing in a moment.

Picking—and Using—Your Tape

I have tried all sorts of cassette tape and have finally decided that cheapies are dangerous. (That shouldn’t be news to anyone familiar with tape recording.) Aside from the blanket caution, there are some specifics you should be aware of.

If you have a cassette recorder with an audible warning feature when the tape is running out during recording, make sure that you buy tape with the proper foil strip to activate this device. I find it a most useful feature. With open-reel recorders, a quick glance at what the reels are doing tells you just how near the end of the tape you are. With a cassette recorder, it’s very hard to check the tape if your tape recorder doesn’t have a digital counter, you must peer into that little plastic window. I can’t count the times I have assumed I was recording only to find to my horror that the tape had run out minutes before. A watch is of no avail if you are stopping and starting the tape constantly. The audible end signal is a great help. The digital counter
is even better—if you remember to set it, which I often don’t. Naturally the really compact cassette recorders can’t have digital counters, darn it.

How long a tape should you use? I’m a conservative guy. I like to stick to the C-60s: 30 minutes per cassette side. While I have used C-120 cassettes successfully, my friends seem to have all sorts of fascinating problems with them and wind up with cassette tape pouring all over the place. In my experience, the monophonic battery cassette recorders can handle good-quality 120-minute tapes if you stop and start the tape carefully: but you must watch your technique if you put this thin tape on a tape deck with a more powerful drive system. Any slack, a quick start-up, and—snap! Treat long-play cassette tape with respect—and when you get a chance copy it onto C-60s or C-90s for insurance.

I would like to say a brief word about editing and splicing cassette tape. I’m a fairly handy fellow. So naturally when one of my C-120s parted for the first time I felt I could make the repair myself. I decided to take the cassette apart to get at the two tape ends. If you have never done this, believe me it is an experience. Do it on an old cassette just to see what is involved. It isn’t complex, but it requires patience, digital dexterity, and sheer determination. And this is only a simple preliminary to actually splicing the tiny stuff. I hauled out my trusty Gibson Girl standard tape splicer. It wouldn’t do. You will need a special narrower splicer made just

Chances are you’ll want to edit or make a copy of your oral history. To do this you’ll need two cassette recorders connected by a patch cord (as shown below) running from “line out” of the first recorder to “aux in” of the second. The kind of cord you’ll need depends on whether your recorders have multiple-pin (as above left) or single-pin connections. The easiest microphones to use in oral history projects are the split microphones (below left) that allow you to position the mike while retaining the on/off switch in your hand.
for cassette tape. But even then doing the job is akin to writing the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin. I eventually sent the broken tape out to a pro recording studio (naturally the broken tape was a precious one). They did a very good job, losing remarkably little sound at the break, but it was very expensive. It doesn't pay to break tape at all.

How do you edit sound on a cassette if splicing is such a problem? By copying from one tape to another, as I'll explain in a moment. Actually, splicing isn't the answer anyhow, unless you use only one edge of the tape and don't ever turn it over to record the other side. If you do use both sides, splicing is out because you can't cut into one side without chopping something out of the other.

Why do you need editing? Because in recording oral history events or even musical concerts, there are inevitable boring moments, coughs, unprepared pauses, or audience rustles and tune-ups between pieces. Some of this sort of thing gives life to the recording: much of it is just disturbing... 

Your precious tape that you are to edit or duplicating. If you look at the input and output receptacles of most cassette recorders you will see markings like "aux in," "mic," "earphone," and "line out." These are the keys to both editing and duplicating. Most Japanese-made tape recorders use cables with miniature or subminiature phone connectors. Some recorders come with patch cords that have appropriate plugs at both ends, but be not upset if you have no patch cord. They are purchasable at most hi-fi or radio stores. Other cassette recorders have standard phono jacks. Most European-made cassette recorders have German DIN-standard multiple-pin connectors, which may carry both input and output signals through a single jack. If you can't figure out what kind of patch cords or adapters you'll need, take your recorder into a store that sells such accessories. Explain just which unit will be the player and which will be the recorder, and let the dealer outfit your system. But try it before you leave the store.

Your precious tape that you are to edit or duplicate is now in one cassette recorder, and the tape onto which you wish to transfer the sound is in the other. Connect the patch cord from the "monitor" or "line out" receptacle of the player unit to the "aux in" or "line in" (sometimes, particularly in European equipment, marked "radio") receptacle of the recording unit. Now before doing any real editing or dubbing, experiment a bit with the two

For many people, the need for editing comes when you have no patch cord. They are purchasable at "aux in." "mic." "earphone." and "line out." These technical toes at the first session. It's all very simple. 

One except the speaker knows that I wasn't on my time. I edited the two parts together. and today no some other snippets of sound on another, and wish you may have a little snippet of sound on one tape. the recording: much of it is just disturbing. Often between pieces. Some of this sort of thing gives life to 
antenn paused, or audience rustles and tune-ups be-

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record the other side. If you do use both sides. splic-
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other. as I'll explain in a moment. Actually, splic-
such a problem? By copying from one tape to 
expensive. It doesn't pay to break tape at all. 
markably little sound at the break. but it was very 
precious one). They did a very good job, losing re-
recording studio (naturally the broken tape was a 
akin to writing the Lord's Prayer on the head of a 

If you feel that I'm leaving you now hopelessly 
etangled in various patch cords, be of good cheer. Once recorded, oral history (with some music thrown in) will never die, and eventually you will get it all together on cassettes the way you want it. And once you've done it, you'll find it very worthwhile.
When I set out to make a recording of some of my favorite pieces for the clavichord, I had no idea of the trouble I would run into. The clavichord is a comparatively seldom played keyboard instrument, with little hammers that strike either a single or double string for each note. For twenty years I’ve been lucky enough to own a single-string instrument from England’s greatest maker, Thomas Goff. Its sound is so delicate that the slightest excess pressure on the key can put it out of tune, and the touch is absolutely direct. As you press down the key, the hammer both hits and raises the string, and the more you press the more you increase the tension of the string, sharpening the note as you go.

To have some idea of what the touch is like, try stretching an elastic band with one hand and then pushing it down with a finger of the other hand. If your fingering is sensitive enough you can make it vibrate up and down very slightly, thus producing a tremolo (called in German, Bebung) which is different from the vibrato of the violin or the guitar, owing to the fact that it comes from a change in the tension and not in the length of the string.

But the clavichord’s most striking qualities are its beauty of tone and its quietness. It is almost inaudible against normal conversation, and to be listened to properly requires total concentration from player and listener alike. Its tremendous range of dynamics is enough to make the VU meter of a tape recorder look as though it has gone mad. But this range is between a loud and, say, a note plucked quietly on the guitar and an infinite pianissimo. In fact I find that I can play so quietly that I can’t hear the notes myself—but the microphone picks them up. Of course at that level it is quite impossible to see any movement of the fingers, and technique is more a matter of thought than muscular control.

Faced with this very particular range of dynamic level, the first essential for recording is absolute silence. So tiny are the signals the microphones pick up from a clavichord that they must be preamplified by some 110 dB before they will meet the tape recorder’s requirements; and at that degree of amplification one suddenly becomes aware just how noisy the usually ignored background sounds of a studio can be. When I first entertained the idea of recording in the RCA Italiana studios I had a good listen around in the empty studios, only to find that down at that level of quietness all manner of sounds were audible that would normally never give trouble—distant rock beats, hum from lighting, rumble from air-conditioning.

Even though I was using equipment whose inherent noise levels were extremely low, I was anx-

Denis Vaughan studied with Thomas Beecham. As a conductor he has recorded the complete symphonies of Schubert. His recording of clavichord pieces described in this article is scheduled to be released by RCA by the end of the year.
ious to keep the sound of the clavichord as far above the noise as possible by putting the instrument in a chamber that would reinforce its tone even before the sound reached the microphones—in other words simulating a bathroom acoustic. In such a live space, however, the acoustics augment any hums that may be around. I found this out to my chagrin as soon as we tried to record in my home near Piazza del Popolo in Rome.

Anyone familiar with Rome knows that things tend to quiet down a little—even in the summer—by about 2 a.m. So with the indetatigible help of RCA engineer Gaetano Vituzzi, I set out on a series of nocturnal sessions, guaranteed to reden the clearest of eyes. After we had set up the clavichord in an inner corridor which revealed, in initial tests, no trace of background noises, the first thing was to set the quality. This took three nights of running back and forth—between the instrument and the speakers—through five rooms. Clarity and presence were easy to obtain, but once they were there, the golden sweetness of the clavichord was replaced by a more metallic and tiring sound, which was twice as aggressive as anything I was playing.

This delicate balance between the lively presence from direct microphoning and the airy, wafting tone of the more distant pickup can mean life or death in the success of a recording, but never have I known it to take so long to set as it did with the clavichord. Setting the mikes farther away brought in all manner of extraneous noises, mainly from the room, where my slightest movements were picked up to such an extent that striking the key for a forte note, for instance, sounded as if a timpani were present. Well these thin brass strings of the clavichord, which change tension each time he moves a pedal. and the player is applying an agitated vibrato, each pulsation of which is tagging the string on its anchor pin enough to jog it out of position.

When you turn your musical life upside down about 4 a.m. Neighbors' bedroom conversations, usually inaudible to the naked ear, could be heard clearly, while the flushing of distant cisterns and washbasins made it impossible to concentrate. The clavichord unfortunately is not one of those obliging instruments that will give its best performance on the first take. The final blow came on the third night of music-making since my neighbors, despite their fervent promises, had failed to turn off their humming air-conditioners when they left for the weekend. Poor Anna Magdalenra and Johann Sebastian Bach. They must have longed for the hours when all their children were safely asleep and they could venture into this fairytale world of sound in peace and quiet.

Given this unfair competition, we decided to suspend operations until a suitable spot could be found outside the city. The ideal location turned out to be Scandriglia, a small Umbrian hill town where everything is made on the spot, be it olive oil, flour, cheese or wine; the main road is miles away; the air is cooler; and by all reliable accounts most of the inhabitants turn in early.

The villa we rented was blessed with a small, completely tiled bathroom. The would-be studio was no larger than a cupboard, and the clavichord had to be carried in edgewise. The only external sounds we had to cope with were the chirping of crickets, the whirring of cicadas, and the faint distant roar of motorcycles. Piling up mattresses outside the bathroom doors kept most of this mild bedlam away from the microphones, but then we were faced with a new set of difficulties. The lack of air made me perspire profusely: then the squeak from my sweaty fingertips twisting on the keys became quite audible. Dusting talcum powder on the keys before each take cured the squeaking.

The heat created yet another problem. The brass strings of the single-string clavichord are so fine that hot weather greatly affects the tuning. We are all used to seeing a harp player bobbing backwards and forwards touching up the tuning of his strings, which change tension each time he moves a pedal. Well these thin brass strings of the clavichord change tension even more widely, particularly if the player is applying an agitated vibrato, each pulsation of which is tagging the string on its anchor pin enough to jog it out of position.

With the best-known excerpts from the Anna Magdalena Notebook, where the bulk of the pieces are definitely in one key. I found it easy to tune in that key; but when I began to play some of the J. S. Bach preludes the tuning became critical. The A minor Prelude, Book II. of the forty-eight preludes and fugues is the very devil to tune. As it is almost totally chromatic and explores every note in every key, and here the title Well-Tempered Clavichord is synonymous with "Bad-tempered clavichord player!"
Denis Vaughan and his unobtrusive clavichord—how do you tape an instrument that can’t even outchirp a bird?

Of the three dimensions in the world of sound which the clavichord explores in new ways—namely timbre, dynamic range between pianissimo and silence, and refinements of pitch—the keen record listener will probably be most fascinated by the last one. Grove’s Dictionary states it simply: “There are many who would consider the clavichord of all instruments the most beautiful.” Beyond the particular sweetness and richness in the upper harmonics of its tone, the clavichord can put its infinite variability of pitch to more emotional use than any other stringed instrument. The violin (in contrast to the fixed pitch of a piano note) has the capacity to sharpen or flatten a note so that not only is it perfectly in tune (where all pianos are only approximately in tune), but a player can also intensify a leading tone by sharpening it, forcing it more dramatically to resolve onto the note above it.

The clavichord can obtain this flexibility of pitch with all the notes of a chord played simultaneously. Up to eight or ten notes can be sharpened and flattened so that you deliberately increase the dissonance of a discord, thus doubling the sense of relief when it resolves onto its following concord. When properly performed, this technique helps to grip the attention of the listener and makes of many pieces a dramatic sequence of events, of growing tension and then release, whereas normal tuning would have made it sound like a rather bland exercise in harmony. In fact the clavichord makes the greatest emotional demands on the player of any single instrument I know, and I can well understand why Carl Philip Emanuel Bach (two of whose pieces I have included in this first disc) is reputed to have sweated more profusely in playing the tiny instrument than other larger ones.

Although this is not the first clavichord recording that has been made, it is the first to attempt to put some of the most popular repertoire into the right perspective. Anna Magdalena’s Notebook was not written entirely by her great husband, but does contain the handwriting of several members of her family. Some of the most popular pieces, currently circulating as “Piano pieces by Bach,” are not by Johann Sebastian at all, and were in fact written for the clavichord (or at least played on it) by various composers of Bach’s time. Only very occasionally did Anna note her husband’s pieces in her notebook and often they were merely arrangements.

As for Bach’s forty-eight preludes and fugues, there is no strict rule as to which instrument they should be played on, but the bulk of the preludes are most suitable for the clavichord, particularly those that have long singing melodies, or violent contrasts between large chords and single voices. Only the constantly moving sixteenth-note preludes are more adaptable to the less sensitive harpsichord.

But when the recording is released, purchasers will have to consider how to play it in the most advantageous way. All that amplification was used only to eliminate technical background noise, not to make the instrument sound louder. As I said previously, the clavichord is incredibly quiet, but one of the key points of its emotional power is that it demands total concentration. I have had guests who laughed outright upon hearing the clavichord and then after a quarter of an hour listened in rapt silence, bewitched by its magic spell.

We have all become so used to amplification and magnification that we think nothing of the grotesqueness of a pair of lips smiling six yards wide on a screen, or of the comic aspect of love’s sweet nothings being whispered at deafening volume. We have also had ten years of rock played at high decibel levels. This gross insensibility to scale is not only slowly degrading us, but we have now become almost embarrassed by really quiet sounds.

To show the right level for the clavichord I tried putting announcements on the tape, but the words shot so quickly into distortion and broke the musical feeling so violently that I abandoned them in favor of trusting to the good taste of listeners to turn off all noises in and around their listening rooms and to set their volume controls so low that they cannot hear the instrument if they speak in a medium soft voice.

Once you have acquired a taste for the clavichord, you will find that it can be a real antidote to the indiscriminate aggression of the sounds and noises we hear in our daily lives, and listening to it can be a refreshing experience for our battered souls. The clavichord also allows Bach and his family to speak to us in their true voices, as this is the sound for which their best music was written.
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Bach wrote far fewer trios than Telemann or Vivaldi (or many other composers for that matter), but the ones he did write are models of excellence. His designs were created within the established musical forms of the age, yet his innovative genius brought to the trio a perfection, a completion not seen before his time, and probably not surpassed since.

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Rudolf Bing's Metropolitan Farewell Gala on DGG
by Dale Harris

There is a singular appropriateness to the form taken by the Bing Farewell Gala. A Grand Vocal Concert may seem an odd way of celebrating twenty-two years of stage presentations, especially on the part of a general manager who assumed his duties with the avowed intention of presenting opera as musical drama, yet the fact is that the Bing years were increasingly devoted to the cult of stardom. From the mounting of the mediocre Adriana Lecouvreur at the insistence of Tebaldi to the casting of Corelli in the stylistically unsuitable title role of Werther, the emphasis fell more and more on vocal glamour.

So it did at the Farewell. Nothing but subservience to the concept of stardom can explain the programming, since the evening consisted of mere bits and pieces of music—a disconcerting jumble of mostly arias and duets, many not even from works performed at the Met during Bing's regime, like Die Toten Stadt, I Lombardi, Le Cid, Cenerentola, and the unlikely, though charming, Oscar Straus operetta Les Trois Valses. Bing's high regard for stars can surely be the only reason for allowing Birgit Nilsson to end the program with the final scene of Salome. If opera is anything more than an excuse for vocal prowess, the choice of so dramatically grisly a selection was at best incongruous for a festive occasion.

There is also a certain unfitness about bringing these proceedings to an end with a single artist rather than with the whole company. Some huge musical ensemble (the Aida Act II finale, for example) would at least have left an impression of artistic fellowship, the sort of collaborative effort on which a great opera house inevitably depends. Instead, the curtain came down on a solitary superstar. The ascendancy of star values was only underlined by the unmusical abruptness with which the Salome excerpt was terminated once Nilsson had finished her last note. The composer, in other words, was of less consequence than his middlemen.

But Nilsson, as this recorded souvenir demonstrates, is a vocal prodigy. Not all of Bing's stars were, alas. During Bing's time it wasn't always easy to see much awareness at the Met of the difference between glamor and talent. An interesting feature of the gala was the sheer amount of mediocrity on display, and the fact that mediocrity and talent appeared to be interchangeable. Certainly the management by its programming and the audience by its applause seemed to accord them equal status. Sir Rudolf had long staked commercial and artistic success on vocal stars. Toward the end, the former kind of success began to disappear, while the latter—as the standard of performance at the gala revealed—was always dubious. It seems fair to say that for a long time now stardom at the Met has depended as much on promotion as on talent.

But doubts on the score of artistic merit should not be allowed to obscure the enterprise of Deutsche Grammophon in recording the evening and in making these highlights (designated as Volume I on the jacket) available so swiftly. This, moreover, is DGG's first local venture in both recording and manufacture and bodes well for such future plans as Gentele's opening Carmen with Horne and McCracken under Bernstein. In some instances DGG's engineers improve on nature. Nilsson's Amazonian and largely successful attempt to make herself heard over the megalomaniacal orchestral barrage unleashed by Karl Böhm has been turned into something more listenable and no less exciting. Moreover, Nilsson in the living room, at whatever hour you find her appropriate, is more enjoyable than Nilsson at 1:15 a.m. after an already long evening of insistent vocalism. She is undoubtedly the highlight of this disc.

The rest is less satisfactory. The music of Trovatore is really too cruelly testing for Martina Arroyo. Arroyo gets around all the notes, including the cabaletta where she manages trills of a sort, but her vocal emission isn't smooth enough, her scale not equalized enough, her tone not beautiful enough, for Verdian cantilena. In any case, most of this scene lies too low for her. The Caballe/Domingo duet is a foretaste of next season's casting and shows these favorites in their current form. Caballe is comfortable now only at low dynamic levels and is otherwise rather blowsy in tone. Domingo, with a voice noticeably darker than a year ago, is taxed by sustained
loud passages. Both artists have to work hard to survive the rigors of the climax. Why Leontyne Price elected to sing "Dove sono" is hard to guess. This is not the sort of music she has an affinity for, nor is the Countess a role she has ever performed. The upper half of Price's voice sounds beautiful, but she never quite relaxes enough to allow the music to flow with appropriate inevitability.

Richard Tucker and Robert Merrill, both survivors from the Johnson era, still have a lot of vocal stamina to call on. It is probably too late to inform Tucker, now nearing sixty, that Verdi already had the emotion into the music and that all the tenor has to do is sing. In any case, Tucker's tearfulness is an annoying distortion of the composer's intentions.

No wonder Verdi was wary of tenors, for he is ill-served too by Franco Corelli. Corelli does try hard. He begins by paying respectful attention to the music. He achieves an impressive morendo on "immenso" just before the entrance of Desdemona. But soon after, a sense of self-importance takes over, and from that point on poor Verdi doesn't stand a chance. Corelli's singing seems dictated principally by vanity. He pulls against the conductor like a willful child defying parental guidance. He swallows what he considers unimportant notes and syllables. Above all, he hangs on and on to the final note as if it were a piece of forbidden candy, and while his fans explode with rapture the ravishing orchestral conclusion to the love duet can be heard expiring quietly in the background. Though Zylis-Gara doesn't have all the vocal purity for Desdemona's music she does some lovely things (like the beautifully poised soft G on "Amen risponda") and unlike her partner she is always musical.

But worst of all is the special party piece, "Chacun à Bing's goû". It is hardly Resnik's fault that John Gunman's rewriting of Fledermaus is so witless, self-congratulatory, and demeaning, but in fact Resnik does sound as if she is at the end of her vocal tether. Indeed, the break in registers is so disconcerting that the effect is perilously close to female impersonation. This number, with its dubious taste (the references to Bing's quirrels with Callas, Merrill, and MacNeil, for example) and its rehearsing of thrice-familiar stories (like the three Tristans in one performance), is not something I imagine many listeners will want to play very often, particularly straight after Mozart. But it is a fair souvenier of what the Met has sunk to in the recent past (I am thinking of productions like Pericheole, Gypsy Baron, Martha, and Barberie) and as such it has its place in operatic history.

Did Liszt play his operatic transcriptions like Jorge Bolet?

Jorge Bolet's new recording of Liszt's transcriptions—ranging from the familiar Chopin songs to the rarely heard Lucia paraphrase—is astonishing. In his grasp of the musical idiom and style, as well as his prodigious technique, Bolet demonstrates staggering virtuosity, and the result can only be judged as one of the most important, beautiful, and enjoyable piano records of the entire LP era...

Franz Liszt was probably history's supreme piano transcriptionist. His transcriptions take advantage of every resource and "trick" the piano offers—endless opportunity for cantilena, three- and four-hand effects, "orchestral" display, and much more. Of course the musical quality of these virtuoso vehicles varies greatly. Liszt's earliest works in the genre—those dating from the 1830s like the Lucia—are among his weakest, with their superfluous ornamental flourishes and often ridiculous new material. Later efforts such as the Rigolletto paraphrase (1859) more successfully present in solo piano terms the original composer's voice-and-orchestra conception, although they still somehow seem stepchildren in comparison. But Liszt's late transcriptions are works of art in their own right. In his translation of Schumann's Frühlingsnacht, Liszt has succeeded in subduing his own personality and has remained completely true to Schumann's musical intent. Nothing of the original song has been lost—and nothing has been added. No greater homage could be paid by one composer to another, for Liszt's work is as lovely in its own fashion and as much of a masterpiece as the original song.

Just how should Liszt's transcriptions be performed? We know a great deal about the proper performance practices in baroque music, but very little about the correct interpretation of Romantic music—a strange situation, for there is a mass of historical evidence to help unravel this knotty musical problem. A number of these transcriptions were recorded by pianists whose backgrounds and training stemmed from an authoritative tradition, many books, articles, and other printed material exist that describe in detail the various aspects of Romantic performance style. This sort of piano playing has often been loosely described as "Golden Age," and it is certain that in many respects it embodies the keyboard approach of Chopin, Liszt, and Schumann themselves. It is also the way Jorge Bolet plays these works.

In Bolet's performances the piano is king, performances conceived and executed in terms of what the piano and no other instrument can do. Above all, Bolet cultivates beauty of sound—tone and sonority—as much as lucid architecture. What a tone he has! Deep, rich, and golden at all volume levels, it carries and penetrates without ever being harsh; and once launched, each note takes on a life of its own, seeming to exist without relation to the machinery that created it. Then Bolet has power—real power and not just loudness. In this his only...


Extraordinary Romantic by Gregor Benko

Gregor Benko is vice president of the International Piano Library.
Pianism—The Full-Blooded Music of Liszt and Weber

Jorge Bolet—one of the greatest piano techniques. Weber—an original genius.

by Paul Henry Lang

Vox's complete documentation of Weber's piano works

This extraordinary set honors a great and largely unknown composer: as it does Vox's intelligence and largesse (six discs!) on the part of record manufacturers is rare these days. To say that Weber is largely unknown is not rhetoric: of the composer of operas, Masses, symphonies, concertos, chamber music, songs, choruses, piano music, and a large volume of valuable musical criticism, only Freischütz, a couple of overtures, the F minor Konzertsstück, and Invitation to the Dance are generally familiar. But then Weber was a somewhat enigmatic composer. He has been described as a satellite of Beethoven and Schubert, or as a forerunner of Wagner. no doubt because he does not fit into any category least of all into the then dominant "Viennese" school. The answer is very simple: His was an entirely original genius.

Both as a man and as a musician Weber is the antithesis of his great contemporary and fellow pathbreaker for Romanticism, Schubert. Weber came from a large, many-branched family of rather dubious reputation (poor Mozart had his troubles with the Webers, whose daughter he married, not quite voluntarily). Many of the clan were talented: most of them, notably Carl Maria's father, were also first-class charlatans. An example of the elder Weber's flair for advancement is his invention of the letters of nobility, and the German respect for titles has kept them Von Weber to this day, though the "Baron" is no longer used. Well, it does not really matter: Carl Maria certainly earned a musical baronetcy. He suffered a great deal from his father's unsavory operations, but he was one of the few honorable Webers, even though his memoirs are not reliable. (Nor is the biography written by his son, Max Maria; a modern biography is very much needed.)

Weber's talents, unlike Schubert's, were many-sided. At nineteen he was an experienced conductor and theater manager; his performances were exemplary, and the repertoire astonishingly varied. He was also a top-notch piano virtuoso who could hold his own against anyone.
then active, and he was a most competent and cultivated music critic, far more strictly professional than either Schumann or Berlioz. The contrast between Schubert and Weber is no less marked in their music. Weber's imagination was first of all theatrical, and his greatest works are in this field. Significantly, his best instrumental compositions are those where a distinctly dramatic-coloristic quality is present. Schubert's profound lyricism does show up in Weber's opera arias and in some of the slow movements of the concertos and sonatas, but in the instrumental works it is as a rule replaced by brilliance. He was far more the full-blooded romantic than Schubert, obsessed all his life by a curious combination of the veneration for the romanticism of the "German forest" and nostalgia for medieval chivalry, sorcery, and the world of the fairy tale. Now how does all this dovetail with the fairly large body of piano music recorded here?

We must reiterate that Weber was a virtuoso pianist in love with his instrument and with its special possibilities. At first he strikes one as a musician from the Hummel-Field-Dussek group of pianist-composers; the early pieces display a salonlike social elegance but also a remarkable sense for good pianistic writing. Take, for instance, the early four-hand pieces; they are crystalline, no part is ever covered yet there is plenty of rapid, cross-crossing movement. Gradually, Weber's passion for color and dramatic effect asserts itself and we see that this kind of pianism is not Hummel's either: it simply bypasses the era and points directly to Chopin and Liszt. His rhythm is basically an elemental pulsation, always well articulated, but it can be quite capricious without denying this basic quality. In this connection note the "minuets"; practically all of them, even in the earliest sets of pieces, are real scherzos, often bold and sweeping. The melismatic melodic flow can be perfunctory, but even then it is usually pleasant. In many instances, however, it is full of invention, astonishingly Chopinesque in its unbroken continuity. Formal problems Weber usually solves in an uncomplicated romantic way, ex eventu, as the situation permits it, but he can compose sonata structures with elaborate thematic development, if in the "loose" sonata manner of Schubert. The thread may be broken here and there, but the music has a marvelous unity of effect. At times, as in the E minor sonata, he leads us almost into the Wagnerian world. Though the writing is invariably highly idiomatic for the keyboard, one often "hears" the horns, the timpani, the clarinet, and so forth: Liszt orchestrated the Polacca brillante. There is a great deal of variety in this music for both pianists and listeners, who will discover an unworked lode of excellent musical entertainment.

The two pianists in this recording (Rosario Marciano assists in the four-hand pieces) are very good. Hans Kann, the principal performer, exhibits the typical Viennese style: elegant, low-key playing that is always clear, if perhaps with a bit of hand lotion to make things smooth. He has taste and musicality, obviously loves what he is doing, and his fingers are nimble. So Vox's big venture is a real accomplishment. It is hoped that with the rising appreciation of the music of the earlier nineteenth century, heretofore rated quite low, this bold venture will prove to be a success all around. A compliment is due to Leonard Seeber for his excellent notes.


An Organ Festival with E. Power Biggs

Baroque discoveries, a quadruphonic spectacular, a Handel potpourri, and a European tour

COLUMBIA CELEBRATED "E. Power Biggs Month" recently with an impressive and varied batch of recordings. And, I am pleased to report, each in its own way is quite well done and a welcome addition to the distinguished organist's large discography. But let's go through the new releases one by one.

The most important in a repertorial sense is the disc of six concertos after Italian masters by Johann Gottfried Walther, played on the Gottfried Silbermann organ in Freiberg (East Germany). Walther and Bach were colleagues and close friends during the years they lived in Weimar, and both (like many German composers at the time) had become quite intrigued with the many Italian concertos by Vivaldi and his contemporaries that were then in fashion. Perhaps as a kind of exercise in assimilating the essentials of this new style, both Bach and Walther, at about the same time, made keyboard transcriptions of many Italian string concertos. Bach's transcriptions for the organ and for the harpsichord are pretty well known, but Walther's turn up only very rarely on recital programs. To praise the music is, of course, to praise the Italian composer of the original, since neither Bach nor Walther drastically altered the original composition in making the transcription—Walther even less than Bach. And several of the concertos on this disc are quite lively and entertaining little pieces. Walther's concertos here are based on originals by Vivaldi, Torelli, Albinoni, Taglietti, and Gentili. It's a special pleasure to have these works recorded by an organist like Biggs who makes them sound so sparkling and vivacious.

Even more important than the new repertoire perhaps is the instrument itself—the first available domestic recording of Gottfried Silbermann's first major organ and the one that has been the least altered over the years. For organ buffs this is already a famous instrument, since virtually every treatise on historic European organs discusses it, and now we can hear precisely the kind of organ Bach himself favored. Bach and Gottfried Silbermann also were friends and the composer played con-
ceremonies on several of Silbermann's instruments; he had high praise for the builder's work (though they were constantly at loggerheads over the matter of mean-tone tuning versus equal temperament). In marked contrast to the crisp, stark, and gutsy sound of North German builders—particularly Schnitger—Silbermann leaned more to the thunderous, mellower, more colorful sounds associated with French instruments of the period. Cornets and solo reed stops are more common in this style. The instrument in the cathedral of Freiberg is a hefty three-manual organ of about forty-five stops. Biggs plays it fluently and the recording is remarkably rich and clean and realistic.

Of all the records in this release, the one most likely to make the Billboard charts, however, is the "Music for Organ, Brass and Percussion," and it well deserves the high praise for the builder's work (though they were constantly at loggerheads over the matter of mean-tone tuning versus equal temperament). In stark contrast to the crisp, stark, and gutsy sound of North German builders—particularly Schnitger—Silbermann leaned more to the thunderous, mellower, more colorful sounds associated with French instruments of the period. Cornets and solo reed stops are more common in this style. The instrument in the cathedral of Freiberg is a hefty three-manual organ of about forty-five stops. Biggs plays it fluently and the recording is remarkably rich and clean and realistic.

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Alkan: 12 Etudes dans les tons mineurs. Op 39: Nos. 8, 9, and 10 (Concerto for Solo Piano). John Ogdon, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3192; $5.98.


Pinchas Zukerman is a remarkably talented young man, as any random sampling of his recent recordings will clearly demonstrate, and the critics have been lavish in their praise of his Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Vieuxtemps, and other concert performances. However, a baroque specialist he is not—and why should he be when he is having such success with repertory in which he is obviously more comfortable?

As we would expect, there is very fine fiddle playing to be heard on this record: a sure technique, good intonation, sensitivity, and intelligence are apparent in each work. The English Chamber Orchestra too can be counted upon to deliver ensemble playing of a very high order. What is missing is any hint of awareness on the part of conductor Zukerman or violinist Zukerman that the fashions in baroque music performance have changed radically since the days when his teachers were students. The lexicon of rhetorical/device devices which he uses so effectively in romantic literature is simply out of place here.

Zukerman, a prodigy of New York's Juilliard School, does superbly well what his conservatory training has taught him to do. But music written before Mozart or after Barthe is (in other words, music other than the "standard concert repertoire") is pretty fantastical. He copes brilliantly with the technical hurdles, and projects a sturdy, clear-cut, powerful reading. Perhaps a Richter or an Arrau could lavish a bit more color and finesse on the writing, and a Horowitz could bring still more voltagge and high-strung flair. Still, it is doubtful that one of those supervirtuosos will take on such an offbeat assignment, and thus it is fair to assume that Ogdon has not merely said the only word on the subject of Alkan's concerto, but the last one also. Fine sound, with more ring than on several other Ogdon discs for RCA.

H.G.


Toward the end of his stay in Weimar (1708-1717), Bach began to compile a large-scale work that would provide chorale preludes for all the major events of the Lutheran liturgical year. He began by entering the titles of 161 hymns at the top of each page of a blank manuscript book arranged in the order of their use during the course of the year from Advent to Pentecost. Only forty-six chorale preludes actually got composed, but the last one also. Bach taught his pupils, when playing chorales, "not to play the songs merely offhand but according to the effect of the words." In this collection we have forty-sixinch etched, perfectly proportioned, precisely clear examples of just what he meant. The chorale preludes are quite short, usually just the same number of measures as the chorale itself, which is most frequently found in the upper voice. This melody is accompanied in most cases by freely invented motivic fragments, introduced in the first measure and repeated throughout the work, which illustrate the central idea of the text of the hymn. Dorch Adams Fast ist ganz verderbt, for instance, represents the fall of man through the descending diminished sevenths in the bass. In three of the Christmas chorales Bach uses the traditional device of ascending and descending scale figures to depict the motion of angels between heaven and earth. I could go on and on describing the wonders of these forty-six miniature gems, but of course they must be heard—oh better still, played—to be fully savored. Walcha's intentions with these chorale preludes, as indeed with all of Bach's works, is to give us the notes exactly as they appear in the Bach Gesellschaft, nothing more and nothing less, with appropriate registrations and tempos. If you're familiar with his

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CIRCLE 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD
The seal of a master looms large here—in fact, it rests rather heavily on these performances. There is a great deal to admire in Serkin’s interpretations: personal vision, magnificent attention to linear detail, resplendent pianistic polish (note the uniformity of those trills in the fugal development of Op. 101’s finale or the impressive evenness of the treacherous double fugue which come a bit later in the same work). There is also evidence here of Serkin’s ever developing bent toward introspection, his growing concern with tonal color.

For all that, this record gave me mixed feelings. There is a certain lethargy and metrical rigidity that I find hard to equate with my own inner metronome and feelings about these transcendent sonatas. The ground plan is obviously a monumental one, but I find disquieting evidence here that Serkin is beginning to align himself with the school of interpreters who feel that to savor their greatness fully, masterpieces (especially German masterpieces) must be made to sound as static as the Parthelenon. Serkin will, like that edifice, survive my carping, but for whatever it is worth I submit the reminder that, contra local belief, der Meister Beethoven is an international rather than a German musical figure.

The sound per se is very fine, especially that of Op. 89. The recording would sound not always associated with Serkin even in the concert hall. Columbia’s processing, though, is baleful—Op. 110 in particular is beset with pops, ticks, clicks, and sputters that complicate (often successfully) with the music at hand.

H.G.

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Luciano Berio conducts his Laborintus II for RCA—a work of genuine fascination.

**Berio:** Laborintus II. Christiane Legrand and Janette Baucomont, sopranos; Claudine Meunier, contralto; Eduardo Sanguinetti, speaker. Ensemble Musique Vivante, Luciano Berio, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3267: $5.98.

The technique of sequence has dominated Berio’s music almost from the beginning: the add-on, the accretion, the geologic stratification, the onion-skin layering. Recently, this technique of composing by iteration (it is a way of thinking as well as a technique) produced a series of works that began with Sequenza VI for viola, evolved into Chmens II for viola and chamber ensemble and further crystalized into Chmens III for viola and large orchestra. And one hears reports of still further use of the same material, for orchestra alone. This could represent either the ultimate in economy or the beginnings of creative exhaustion.

**Laborintus II** represents an earlier sequence, having been derived from the poem Laborintus by Eduardo Sanguinetti. The Italian poet, acting as joining agent between the two works, speaks his own lines on this recording, as well as bits of Dante (La Vita Nuova, Convivio, and Divine Comedy), Pound, Eliot, and the Bible. In live performances, the voice part has been taken by a soprano (Cathy Berberian), and the substitution of Sanguinetti’s elegantly lisp’d, rather dolorous tones puts a darker cast on the whole matter.

Berio invariably chooses poets of the highest intellectual appeal and then proceeds to treat their words as linguistic counters, as chunks and strands of sound to be used in all combinations alongside, on top of, beneath, and surrounding instrumental events. The result is Laborintus II (as in Circles, Passaggio, Omaggio a Joyce), and the like is a remarkable fusion of simple lyrical sounds and difficult poetic ideas, a heightening of the poetry even while obscuring its words. Laborintus II is a little over half an hour long, laid out in five main sections. It employs seventeen instruments, three women’s voices (a trio of Swingle Singers in this instance), and the speaker.

Continued on page 68
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ished in 1963, the work stands between Berio's Epifanie and Sinfonia and parallels those larger scale pieces in nearly every way. At first hearing, Laborintus II seems perilously near to plain hodgepodge, a haphazard collage. The composer uses words and phrases as abstract material, instrumentally, testing them against other vocal, instrumental, and tape sounds for their evocative power over an encyclopedic range of possibilities. But there is more here than the play of sounds across the ear; the words themselves are meant to enter and jostle the brain, even when dimly heard or partly lost.

Thus, in the opening section, against a backdrop of laughter, sustained howling conversations, whines, cries, and Swinging song, the poet declaims about Dante's youth. The second section, full of exciting flurries, is ultimately frustrating because Sanguineti's English is so heavily accented that it sounds disconcertingly like his Italian, and very little sense can be made of it. (As is the case with multilingual Berio works, RCA gives no texts, and little helpful detail of any sort about the music itself.) A pseudo-jazz interlude follows—to Berio, the Inferno is a rather cool, boppish place—and a tape-cum-instrumental episode subsides into wind-and-waves simphony in a whispered finale of enervated gentleness. The words at the fade-out are Dante's reflections on music, a point that Berio may or may not mean us to take as his comment on the state of the art.

As may be deduced from the foregoing, Laborintus II is a complex work of genuine fascination, though rather diffuse in effect when heard on this disk. Berio, however, intended this score to be presented theatrically, and much of its power would necessarily be lost in any recording.

D.J.H.

**Borodin: Symphony No. 1, in E flat. Rachmaninoff: The Rock (Symphonic Fantasy), Op. 7. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond Melodiya: Angel SR 40182, $5.98 (two discs).**

*Selected comparison (Rachmaninoff: Previn RCA 2990)*

At last long, the first stereo recording of Borodin's First (1862-66) gives today's listeners a chance to decide for themselves between the two contradictory historical verdicts on this work: the ecstatic one of its first European audiences, which established Borodin's international fame; the disdainful one of the whole non-Russian musical world in more recent years. Personally, I find both judgments unreasonably extreme. Borodin's own later works, to say nothing of those by Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov et al., far better introduce the (then) new world of exotically colorful Russian music. But on the other hand, and despite its rambling nature and relative lack of the distinctively profiled melodies and rhythm materials of Borodin's masterpieces, this music does have many, if milder, charms—perhaps more than that if we ever could have a performance by Stokowski.

Unfortunately, Rozhdestvensky is no Stokowski. His reading is enthusiastic but rough and lacking in dramatic conviction. And the tonal qualities here are lacking in opulence, when not frankly coarse—a fault for which the engineer may be more responsible than the or

**A Clarification**

In my review of RCA's first Quadradiscs last month I wrote that all RCA disc releases will be Quadradiscs from now on. This was not exact. I meant to say that all new discs are being recorded for and will be released as Quadradiscs. Material already recorded may be released in stereo (or if a historic re-release, in mono), depending on individual decisions by the company.

**Leonard Marcus**

**Cavalli: La Calisto.**


*Glyndebourne Festival Chorus, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Argo 2NZ 11 2, $11.96 (two discs).**

La Calisto is the second of Francesco Cavalli's mid-seventeenth-century operas to be elegantly revived for us by Raymond Leppard. The first, of course, was L'Ormindo, which had its twentieth-century debut at Glyndebourne in 1967 and since has provided a breathless and painless glimpse of early opera to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. In many ways the Venetian operas of Cavalli's time were the musical comedies of their era. Aimed to please a wide-to-do but varied audience, they featured plots of considerable

*Recording La Calisto—Hugues Cuenod and Janet Baker discuss a change of sex.*

**R.D.D.**

**Carlo: Sonic Seasonings.** Electronic sound. Columbia KG 3124, $6.98 (two discs).

Walter Carlo, who is credited in the jacket notes for "Switched-on Bach" and the score to A Clockwork Orange (although a cat named Beethoven had something to do with that one), here makes a partly successful contribution to a great tradition. The depiction of the seasons in music, poetry, and painting goes very far back in Western culture. Carlo offers a record side for each season, employing instrumental, vocal, and electronic sounds, and the sounds of nature all stuck together in a series of musical collages. Among other things there are bird songs and brook-tinklings for spring; the buzzing of insects for summer; slow, brown sounds from the brass for autumn; icy dissonances and the wind machine for winter; and rain, rain, rain all the time, starting at least as early as Lincoln's Birthday and not letting up until well after Thanksgiving. Carlo must think we all live in the country, since such characteristic urban sounds of the seasons as those of air conditioners, automobile crashes, and bridge-toll takers saying "Thank you" are not to be found in his work.

These four pieces are not merely assemblages of sound effects; they are not integrated, self-sufficient compositions either. They fall somewhere in between. We are informed by the jacket that they are really intended as background music: but background to what? A.F.

**High Fidelity Magazine**
complexity often based on sexual double entendres and assorted disguises designed to appeal to the carnival-loving Venetians.

Calisto is a lovely nymph who, like her mythological sisters Leda, Euterpe, and Se- melle, has attracted the attentions of the inde- firable Jove. As in most of his amorous ad- ventures, the god is obliged to assume some disguise to further his cause and since the nymph is a devotee of the cult of Diana, he chooses to take on the appearance of the chase goddess herself. In this role he has made considerable progress with the naive nymph until the ever-jealous Juno sets out in pursuit of her end Calisto is miraculously transformed into a little bear and transported into the heavens to shine forever as Ursae Minor. As a subplot the real Diana betrays her professed chastity by falling in love with a beautiful shepherd, Endymion, and is alternately encouraged and mocked by a group of satyrs and woodland spirits. A few companions for the leading characters and a prologue of allegorical ladies complete the cast. The intertwining plots provide some amusing situations and lots of opportunities for pretty songs, if nothing of monumental dramatic significance.

Actually it is very hard to judge the finer points of dramatic consistency as Cavalli may have conceived them, just as it is impossible to give a valid historical critique of the music, so untrustworthy is Leppard’s arrangement of the original materials. Stills there is the argument that seventeenth-century opera produc- ers were themselves willing to cut, alter, and rearrange music and plot in the interest of pleasing their audiences. And La Calisto is perhaps more a charming bauble than a musi- coddramatic masterpiece, so Leppard may be justified in presenting its delights in such be- guiling if unseamed wrappings. For those who want more information about the original form of the opera (there is absolutely none provided with the record). I would refer them to recent articles in Music and Musicians (July 1970) and Musical Times (May 1970). For others, I say relax and enjoy.

Cavalli would have been a popular compos- er of any era because he had a gift for writing hummable tunes. One can easily imagine the elegant audience riding home through the canals or strolling through the streets of Venice with strains of La Calisto in their ears and on their lips. Calisto’s lovely opening aria “Pianta ambrosia,” a lament hemoaning the drought-stricken forest with obvious reference to her own similarly deprived state, is a fine example of Cavalli’s memorable melodic writing as is Endymyon’s attractive apostrophe to the moon, “Lucidissima face,” which opens the second act. Jove and Diana are more aggres- sive suitors and their music with their flashes of virtuosic brilliance and emotionally charged ariosos reveal their kinship to Juno and the declaratory goddesses of the prologue. Satirino, a minor character, is blessed with several splendid moments, a catchy arietta “Vinf bella” and an exquisite aria describing his/her talents and origins in terms far removed from the tasteful grace of the music. The ensembles and chorus numbers are delicious if unfortu- nately historically suspect.

The transformation, or more correctly, disguase of Jove into Diana is accomplished musically by setting Jove as a bass and the false Diana as a mezzo. I have no doubt that the role was originally sung by a bass with a good falsetto, this being a large part of the fun. In

the Argo performance. Ugo Trama’s voice is a bit coarse for Cavalli’s elegance, and I must admit that on first hearing I assumed he had been chosen for the truly extraordinary fal- setto which gave the false Diana such penetr- atingly accurate yet curiously exless notes. It was only after running across an old notice of the Glyndebourne production that I realized it was not Trama but Jane Baker who assumes two parts, that of the false as well as the real Diana. This particular transformation, which makes no sense in terms of the plot, is not mentioned anywhere on the recording or in the notes unless one can deduce it from the music itself. In this end Calisto’s picture is bigger than anyone else’s.

The stylish, sensitive, and totally feminine portrayal of the nymph Calisto by soprano Ilena Corrubus is outstanding. Historians tell us much of Calisto’s music has been omitted from this version, but there is still plenty to re- veal what a splendid musical singer she is. James Bowman sounds a bit hoarse at first, but his fine counterenore makes a graceful En- dymyon. Janet Hughes deserves special men- tion for her witty Satirino: she has a lovely voice and I found myself looking forward to her episodes. Hughes Cuenod is amusing in one of those old nurse parts he seems to have a corner on, and on the more serious side Teresa Kuhak is a stenontor Juno. The smaller parts are uniformly well sung. The sound is all very radiant and lush. I have said very little about the Melachrino strings because I assume listeners familiar with Leppard’s arrangements will know all about that by now. The engineers have squeezed a lot of music onto four sides and the over-all technical quality is very high.

S.T.S.

Chavez: Sonata for Piano. No. 6—See Gin- astera: Sonata for Piano.


Dvořák’s whose Symphonic Variations are un- derinfluenced by Brahms’s great ex- examples in this form (the Handel, Pagannini, and Haydn variations), has based the work on a relatively simple and apparently undis- tinguished folk melody. At first he varies the theme essentially in its entirety, sticking to his opening key: but later he breaks the melody up into brief components for a set of fantasy- like variations in a variety of keys that usually preserve something of the over-all structure of the original theme. There are in all twenty- seven, usually brief, variations, and the work closes with a lovely structured fugue. Through- out, Dvořák employs the mastery of orches- tration that he was later to display in his last

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Stokowski first recorded the Franck Symphony with his Philadelphia in 1927 (RCA Victor Orthophonic album M 22) and their second 1935 version (RCA Victor M 300) undoubtedly influenced an entire generation to think of the work as a sentimental, quasi-religious, ultra-sensitive effort. With the appearance of the first Monteux and Beecham editions in 1941, Stoky's exaggerated views quickly fell into disrepute. Today's discophile has all sorts of Franck Symphony interpretations to choose from and a new one from Stokowski can therefore be warmly welcomed as wholesome fun. Unlike the ridiculous and pathetically inept Tchaikovsk Fourth which I recently dismissed, the new Phase 4 Franck is an authentic Stokowski reading. It is, in many ways, rather similar to the 1935 Philadelphia account. The Hilversum Radio Phiharmonic is an expert ensemble, not the equal of the vintage Philadelphia to be sure, but generally admirably sonorous sounding, and remarkably attentive to their guest conductor's fancy pitching. Considering the dissimilarities of tempo and accent, the special demands for portamento and nuanced "expressing" I am astonished that these players could adapt so quickly and so well. Stokowski, strangely, begins the opening Lento andante from "L'Eventail de Jeanne." Hilversum Radio Phiharmonic Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21060 $5.98. 

I am astonished that these players could adapt so quickly and so well. Stokowski, strangely, begins the opening Lento andante from "L'Eventail de Jeanne." Hilversum Radio Phiharmonic Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21060 $5.98.

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The little Fanfare was Ravel's contribution to will find it surprisingly sensible and musical. statement of Franck's intentions. I think you disc as a party record rather than a legitimate grew up with M 300). but if you can accept this record.

For all that. I feel rather warmly toward this Do not help the cumulative aspects of the writ- ing. For the written and.

The Musical Heritage liner contains a state- ment that is worth quoting: "Jean Martinon, who has studied this Symphony very thor- oughly under Franck's disciple Vincent D'Indy, stresses the necessity of a more con- centrated and less episodic conception, the current performance being in contradiction, according to him, with Franck's real wishes." Martinon fully lives up to his stated beliefs. He delivers a superbly sinewy, protean account of the three-played score. While avoiding the bathos of the standard (and Stokowsky's superstandard) interpretation. he also manages to steer comfortably clear of the perfunctory matter-of-factness that marred, say, the Paray interpretation. Martinon obtains more than the unadulterated, respectful playing from the French National R.T.F. Orchestra than Bee- cham did on his still available Seraphim edition, and his cultivated treatment of detail confirms my belief that Martinon is one of our most sadly underrated podium masters. In sum. I would put this reasonably priced. very

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Ginastera's impressive piano sonata is one of those big, full-bodied finger-breakers which, like so many recent piano works, owes a great debt to Prokofiev and, to a lesser extent, Bartók. But it is also marked by many original- ities, particularly in its obsessive rhythmic lan- guage and distinctively colored harmonic style, which go several steps beyond Prokofiev and Bartók. Even more welcome on this disc, how- ever, are the twelve American Preludes, which I believe receive their premiere recording here. Ginastera's piano style proves to be most effective in the fire-and-brimstone, toccata-like passages such as in the first and fourth move- ments of the sonata or in the dazzling Prelude No. 6 (Homenaje a Roberto Garcia Morillo). His quieter moments—the sonata's third movement, or in several of the preludes—often seem lacking in substance and conviction, and they occasionally border on the puerile (unlike similar sections in his orchestral works, which often have a haunting impressionistic quality to them).

Adrian Ruz offers splendid, extremely spir- ited performances of both the sonata and the preludes, which have been very nicely engineered here as well. His only true compe- tition comes from the Guralnick rendition of the sonata on Mace (the Somer version seems particularly weak in comparison); whether you purchase this recording or the Guralnick depends pretty much on whether you want the Ginastera American Preludes or Guralnick playing the Barber sonata (which has very strong rivals in Horowitz and Cliburn).

What, you may ask, about the Chavez so- nata? Carlos Chavez's recent Piano Sonata No. 6 is probably the slickest piece of music I have ever heard from a contemporary com- poser. Unlike a work such as Prokofiev's Classical Symphony, which is totally identifiable with its composer. the Chavez sonata is writ- ten in an insipid Haydnesque idiom that simply has no contact with this century—or even with the last! In spite of the alleged for- mal originalities presented on the jacket notes, I would defy even the most dazed-in-the-wood Chavez scholar to identify, with- out previous knowledge, his hero through this sonata. Such scintillating originality is best left to the likes of Rosemary Brown, who...
Quick. Name the most powerful receiver under $300...
would at least seem to have a more valid claim than Chavez on the spirits of dead composers.

R.S.B.

**Handel:** *Semele.* Brenda Griffith and Jennifer Vyvyan, sopranos; Anna Pollak and Helen Watts, altos; John Whitworth, countertenor; William Herbert and Robert Ellis, tenors; George Prangnell and George James, basses; St. Anthony Singers; New Symphony Orchestra of London; Thurston Dart, harpsichord; Anthony Lewis, cond. Oiseau-Lyre OLS 111/3, $17.94 (re-channeled stereo, three discs; from Oiseau-Lyre 50098/100, 1956).

Way back in 1956 when this recording first appeared, Oiseau-Lyre did a pathbreaking job; Handel’s dramatic works were almost totally unknown in this country, and this glowing apotheosis of the joys and pangs of love came as a revelation to most of us. The stereophonically executed old mono remains a distinguished achievement, for Anthony Lewis largely overcomes the old “oratorio manner,” the pseudo-churchly style, and lets the protagonists live. The singing is excellent, much of it superlative; the continuo by the late Thurston Dart exemplary; and the general direction commendable. The sound is remarkably good even considering today’s standards, only in some of the choral numbers does it recede a bit, and in the final choruses there is a strong pre-echo.

But such an important and unfamiliar work deserves, indeed requires, notes. Oiseau-Lyre merely gives us the libretto. *Semele* is listed among the oratorios, but in reality it is a full-fledged English music drama, one of the glories of the operatic literature. Handel could not fool his audience, though; they expected trumpeting hallelujahs and British heroes in biblical disguise—*Semele* was a total failure. Nor was its fate much better in posterity. The Victorians were horrified that the beatified composer of *Messiah* had set to music an “adulterous” love affair, creating a marvelously uninhibited and seductive woman. They toned down the more ardent portions of Congreve’s text, made cuts by the fistful, and then under the editorship of that gray pedant, Ebenezer Prout, published a wretched “concert edition.” This Novello score was then the only one known to performers—if *Semele* was performed at all. Oiseau-Lyre presents the integral work, and if you don’t have it by all means acquire the re-release.

I recommend that you lift the tone arm after the chorus commenting on the outcome of the drama. Contemporary mores demanded a happy ending and Handel obliged with a thinly disguised hallelujah chorus complete with trumpets. It is incongruous and destroys the magnificently dramatic and moving final scene.

**Haydn:** *Symphonies, Volume 4.* Philadelphia Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15182/5, $11.92 (four discs).

No. 26, in D minor. English Chamber Orchestra, David Willcocks, cond. Philips 6500 084, $5.98.

With the arrival of Volume 4 of his complete Haydn edition, Dorati is at the threshold of the six “Paris” symphonies. Lepoard, on the other hand, continues to offer selected works from the early and middle years of Haydn’s symphonic writing. This is the third such collection of his to appear in recent months.

The Dorati sets require the purchase of a group of symphonies (nine in this case), which may be more than you want. On the other hand they carry a reduced price and clearly offer the most music for your money. I think they also offer the most stylistically accurate performances. In this particular case, both conductors give us their views of No. 77, and I prefer Dorati’s orchestral sound to that of the English ensemble and Dorati’s crisp, clean accents and cool, singing phrases to Leppard’s more emotional performance.

Taken by itself the Leppard sounds quite pleasant Indeed, but if you start listening with a really critical ear the strings are playing with too much vibrato, everything is softened and rounded off at the edge, and expression is laid on too thick. (This is even more pronounced in the two earlier symphonies, which appear to be distinctly romanticized.) It just isn’t right for art-music (where this type of sentiment is alien to the style). Some may, indeed, find the warmer quality of the English orchestra more to their liking, in which case, let your taste be your guide. But Dorati is my man for No. 77, and since it is the greatest work in either collection, that rather decides things.
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that indeed Haydn nearly went to London in commentary, reminds us that the symphonies sons that will hardly be lost today. H. C.
immediate popularity in their own time—for rea-
tron, and the symphonies Nos. 74-75 won im-
symphonies Haydn wrote for his noble pa-
No. 73 is the grandest of the hound -and -horns in melodic ornamentation and trills, and occa-
usual passage work), but a blood affinity and
Nielsen—the composer at the keyboard: a
The current man of the hour is Messiaen imso-
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Mozart few were written. Yet for Mozart
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the quintet (the clarinet quintet also be-
third quartet. His plans changed and it was another
of the scores the minuet (more nearly a scherzo) is the second movement. The G minor, equally monumental and rich, is
nevertheless altogether different, for it is a
great outpouring of the soul's despair. The
minuets. show a predilection for the dynamic
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extra viola (or cello) tacked on: it is a different
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while he does not indulge in sliding like a
Vienna: the major violin, carries the main burden and he negotiates the
difficult passages with ease; but his tone can
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while he does not indulge in sliding like a
The C minor quintet loses from transcrip-
The Tatrai Quartet, Anna Mauthner, viola.
quarterly. The other players are steady and on
sion in the field of chamber music. In fact,
Mozart turned to the composition of string
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evolved passage work), but a blood affinity and
Mozart turned to the composition of string
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eighteenth century, and its proportions are
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Interestingly, and quite against the tradition,
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PAGANINI caprices should be in every serious collection of piano music. H.G.

There are no startling insights here, but these are caprices you will be glad to have around day in and day out—in contrast, let me say, to the original set by Paul Zukofsky, which is rather like an alligator in the bathtub. You might want to look in on it now and then, but to some the view may be repellent.

And now for a bit of sad nostalgia. Perlman dedicates this disc to his friend, the late Michael Rabin, and states that Rabin's influence was a source of inspiration in preparing the caprices. And alas, I think Rabin outclasses Perlman in many instances. His consecutive octaves are a shade cleaner (Nos. 3 and 7), his phrasing is sometimes more shapely (the Presto of No. 3), his tender moments more genuinely warm (the opening of No. 20), his style more elegant (No. 5). In short, the Rabin set, long deleted, remains, I think, the finest version that I know. But the Rabin is not to be had, and if I were buying the caprices today I would buy the Perlman.

The entire set is squeezed onto a single disc with no noticeable loss of sound quality. But the studies are grouped in fours, which hands only between these sections, and if you are groping for a particular caprice you have your work cut out for you. I dislike the arrangement very much, though with thirty-seven minutes of music to a side the necessity for it is obvious.

No backward glances are necessary when it comes to the Paganini/Sarasate recording. Perlman's beautiful tone, which ranges from pure silver up top to a wonderful robust lusciousness on the low strings, has full play in both works. The soul-shattering variety of tricky bowings demanded in the Paganini are handled with the utmost aplomb, and the impassioned melody line in the second movement gets its full share of warmth. The Sarasate Carmen Fantasy is one of the all-time great entertainment pieces in the repertory—besides adapting quite beautifully to the violin—and Perlman embraces it with both subtlety and brio and with great rhythmic flexibility. Each work benefits immensely from the contribution of Foster and the Royal Philharmonic, who provide jubilant and very knowing accompaniment.

S.F.

PERSICHETTI: Symphony No. 9, Op. 113 (Janiculum)—See Schuman: Symphony No. 9 (Le Fosse Ardeatine).

RAHMANNINOFF: The Rock (Symphonic Fantasy), Op. 7—See Borodin: Symphony No. 1, in E flat.

RAVEL: Fanfare from 'L'Eventail de Jeanne'—See Franck: Symphony in D minor (Stokowski version).


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Selected comparison: Schippers

Istvan Kertesz conducts Rossini’s Stabat Mater as if he feels it needs to be defended against the charge of meretriciousness. Unlike Heinrich Heine, who in the year of the work’s first performance vindicated it on the very grounds of the full-blooded spirituality for which it had been censured in some quarters, Kertesz seems to be ashamed of its emotional directiveness. In his hands the music sounds timid and remote. He has diminished its vigor and attenuated the joyous swagger of its religious certainty.

The kind of sensibility that derives from the German cultural tradition has tended to find nineteenth-century Italian music unsympathetic, especially devotional music. The direct engagement with human feelings which the Stabat Mater expresses (as does the Verdi Requiem) must inevitably appear sacrilegious to those who automatically identify counterpoint with piety and solemnity with insincerity. Yet it was a piece that Rossini used as evidence of his religious faith just before receiving the last rites. Moreover, selections from it were sung at his funeral service. For anyone who, like Rossini, feels that worship does not preclude delight, Kertesz’s restrained view of this score will prove chilling. Failing to understand the composer’s rapturous treatment of distress, Kertesz has removed the music’s veer and seriously limited its emotional scope. Rhythms are four-square, figurations get smoothed over, the orchestral sound is without requisite attack. The results suggest Northern reticence more than Southern openheartedness. But in the end the most dispiriting feature of Kertesz’s reading is its dynamic blandness, his refusal to allow the music a proper kind of assertiveness. As a result there is an air of reverential gentility about this performance that inhibits sympathy. Kertesz has avoided emotionalism only to fall prey to sanctimoniousness.

The recording is of a piece with Kertesz’s musical views, since it is restricted both in volume and range. All the voices have been miniaturized, their individual qualities leveled out. The Pavarotti one hears on this disc bears only slight relation to the singer one hears in the opera house. The lyric amplitude of his tone has been reduced and therefore falsified. Hans Sotin’s beautiful sotto voce singing in the adagio sections of “Eia mater” is insufficiently distinguished from his forte singing, so that the scope of his voice too is quite misrepresented. This attempt to scale down the voices and to minimize their idiosyncrasies does not ensure the smooth blend in concerted passages that was obviously intended. The two women in particular seem mismatched when singing together, especially in thirds.

Even though it’s hard to gain a true idea of the voices here, Pavarotti seems to be singing well, if not with all the suavity his remarkable gifts imply. By present-day standards his “Cujus animam” is very fine, yet the performance is sometimes tentative and the sustained high D flat lacks ease. Pilar Lorengar sounds her usual resplendent self at the top of the staff. Otherwise, her vibrato weakens the musical line, and in the “Inflammata” makes the trills hard to distinguish from the surrounding music. Yvonne Minton sings with taste, but with too much discretion. As in the case of Lorengar her vibrato is excessive to my ears. Hans Sotin, though like Pavarotti hampered by conductor and recording, has a splendid voice, the tone being rich, warm, and solid. Moreover, he phrases well, if with much expressivity. He does not try to sing the trills in “Pro pecatis,” however, and since such ornaments are an intrinsic part of Rossini’s music the effect is graceless. Nevertheless, Sotin’s is an important and beautiful voice and he provides the major pleasure of a disappointing performance. The London Symphony plays very well and the chorus, within the artistic limitations of this venture, sings beautifully. By comparison with Columbia’s Stabat Mater, London’s is a model of suavity. Schippers’ lively conducting has much to recommend it, but his vocal quartet is possibly clumsy and amateurish. Kertesz has attained a level of technical distinction unhindered by the exigencies of musical truth.


This is an ocean symphony by a composer whose deep water experience was limited (at the time of composition) to the Baltic Sea. It is, in short, evocative rather than pictorial. Rubinstein was a fabulous virtuoso pianist educated in Berlin and Vienna. In the eyes of the Russian nationalists, he was an outsider. German-trained and therefore suspect (Tchaikovsky suffered some of the same fate). But for a time, in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, Rubinstein the composer was one of the most conspicuous representatives of Russian music to the world at large. The present symphony was heard in both New York and Boston in 1873, the composer conducting, and may be regarded as a repertory piece of brief life. The Chicago Symphony played the Ocean Symphony in its first season, 1891-92, and had offered nine works of Rubinstein to its subscribers before it played a note of Mussorgsky.

A work that has none or any amount of reading in the history of American symphonic performance has run across the Ocean Symphony. It is good to have it on records and learn firsthand what it sounds like. One can distinguish between three versions of this score: the original in four movements, the first revision with six movements, and the final revision with seven movements. The recording at hand does not correspond exactly to any of these. It is in five movements. The original slow movement is omitted and the seventh movement, the "storm scene" is not heard. I am not going to quibble. This is probably all the Ocean Symphony that anybody but a dedicated Romantic revival enthusiast is ever likely to want.

The music fairly calls for the Philadelphia Orchestra and "the Ormandy Sound," things which the Westphalian Symphony and Hans Sotin (he is an American born in Chicago) cannot supply. This is a good European provincial ensemble, reasonably well led, but recorded in a way that turns caution to sonic mediocrity.

Most listeners of today would probably take this music for minor Tchaikovsky, sort of a watered-down Mannheim Symphony. The themes have a Tchaikovskian flavor, although the actual line of influence may have been the other way round. The German training shows in the craftsmanship with which the music is put together. One can perfectly well see why the work enjoyed some success, but one can also see why it gave way to stronger and more imaginative scores.


Schuman: Symphony No. 9 (Le Fosse Ardeatine), Persichetti: Symphony No. 9, Op. 113 (Janiculum). Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Red Seal, LSC 3212, $5.98.

Anyone whose only musical impressions of Rome are limited to the ballet and spaces of the famous Respighi pieces is due for a jolting return to reality upon listening to these two recent American symphonies, both of which were inspired by different parts of the "eternal city." William Schuman’s Ninth Symphony reflects the grim mood called in the composer upon visiting the Ardeatine Caves, where the Nazis performed a reprisal massacre on over 300 Italian citizens in 1944. Aus- tere from start to finish, the symphony offers a typically Schumanesque blend of forlorn, rather harsh melodies with long passages in which melody disappears and is replaced by successions of skittering instrumental and rhythmic configurations. So extended are some of these, in fact, that one has the impression that Schuman conceived of the work as a ballet; for in spite of the haunting, occasionally Brittenesque moods Schuman creates, one feels, in parts of this symphony, the lack of a vital link that would give more coherence to the over-all work.
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The same holds true—even more so, in fact—for Persichetti's Janiculum, written at the Villa Aurelia situated on the top of that high Roman hill named for the two-faced god, Janus. While more fluid and sonorous than the Schuman Ninth, the Persichetti work seems to offer even less justification for its subsequent events, and everything thus operates on a more superficial level—in spite of Persichetti's philosophical pretensions, which are made to sound rather silly in the liner notes.

Both symphonies are splendidly recorded (the reverberation level and the miking were done with a perfect sense of balance), and Eugene Ormandy and his forces turn in meaty, spirited performances, although the string playing is not always what it should be. I might add that I have yet to put my hands on one of RCA's "Dynaflex" records that does not have a huge warp in it, and the present disc is no exception. At best, this sort of thing causes extra surface noise. One can also note a nasty electronic buzz toward the end of the Schuman. At any rate, both scores offered here manifest no small amount of skilled writing, particularly in their strong rhythmic language and their brilliant yet totally different approaches to instrumentation. Both also offer a moody, unstereotyped view of Rome that is well translated at moments in the music. But neither impresses me as a totally effective whole; there is just too much going on that one feels does not need to happen.

R.S.B.


Selected comparison (concerto): Lipatti, Karajan. Odys. 32 160141.

Dinu Lipatti's studio recordings of the Schumann and Grieg concertos are still available back to back on Columbia's budget Odyssey label. If you still don't have that classic, you should remedy the situation post haste. The present Ansermet-led performances are the first issue of a live concert in Victoria Hall, Geneva on February 22, 1950. It's a bit broader and more lovingly expansive than the Karajan-directed edition, but its ruminative qualities are always held in firm reserve. If the pianist's widow is to be believed, Lipatti was in shock, physically and mentally, he also had recorded it once before—his first movement. It's a miniscule imperfection which is virtually as polished as on the Odyssey disc. There is, as a matter of fact, a tiny memory flub in the C major section of the first movement. It's a miniscule imperfection which can happen to anyone and I would not for a moment wish to imply that Lipatti is in anything other than superlative form. Anser- met gives sympathetic assistance. The late Swiss maestro was a fine Schumann interpreter and an old hand at this concerto (inci- dentially, he also had recorded it once before— with Fanny Davies, one of Clara Schumann's last surviving pupils). He is less driving than Karajan, and perhaps that factor is what makes the live performance so different from the studio one. I wouldn't want to be without either.

Mme. Lipatti's contention that the concerto "was recorded on tape by radio Sottens" notwithstanding, the performance at hand is clearly derived from 78-rpm acetates. London's stereo reprocessing is of the sort that puts all the highs in one channel and the lows in the other. Fortunately, a flick of the switch easily restores a solid, slightly tubby mono sound in which the close-up piano dominates the slightly woolly orchestra. Sonically, the disc is about on a par with the Columbia, which is to say, perfectly serviceable. One might have wished for a better coupling. A superlative Bach D minor Concerto with Lipatti and Van Beinum exists and might have been used. There are, reputedly, Lipatti performances of Bartok's Third and Chopin's F minor. Perhaps even that legendary BBC broadcast of the Waldstein somehow managed to escape destruction. All of which makes London's choice even more deplorable. The bowdlerization of Carnaval "by Glazunov and others" is a gaudy monstrosity and despite Ansermet's excellent presentation and fine sound, I doubt that I shall be hearing it again.

There is what must be just about everyone who loves fine piano playing) are indebted to London for expanding the pianist's lamentably small legacy.

H.G.
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Shostakovich's violin sonata must stand, in my opinion, not only as one of the finest works in the Russian composer's extensive output but as a milestone of twentieth-century chamber music. Like the two works surrounding it—the Twelfth Quartet, Op. 133 (which Melodiya/ Angel has inexplicably not yet released in this country) and particularly that grim masterpiece, the Fourteenth Symphony—Shostakovich's violin sonata seems to have grown out of the composer's increasingly poor state of health and his brushes with death. Yet that feeling is in no sense gratuitous morbidity: it is simply Shostakovich's customary ability to adapt his musical language to the particular nature of his subjective visions. The opening theme in the piano, for instance, while not exactly a tone row, is built around all twelve notes of the chromatic scale (the Twelfth Quartet goes even farther in this direction): it's as if Shostakovich finally felt emotionally and aesthetically (rather than intellectually) justified at this point in his life to move closer to the atonality he has often flirted with in his melodic lines. And the entire work creates a remarkable dependence-independence relationship between the violin and the piano, resulting in a constant tension particularly within the rhythmic and melodic elements of the music. One might also single out the weird Nachtmusik passages appearing first in the opening movement and then cyclically returning to close the last.

The Oistrakh/Richter interpretation on this disc comes from a live (and, I had thought, mono-only) recording of the sonata's disc comes from a live (and, I had thought, mono-only) recording of the sonata's mono performance, and it is a hair-raiser on every account. How trivial a few noises from the audience and a few technical imperfections in the playing seem when compared to the total vitality of the collaboration: The Oistrakh/Richter interpretation. The result, to give but two examples, is an incredible momentum in the brilliant scherzo (second movement) and a stunningly climactic rendering of the two cadenzas that peak the last movement. The recorded sound is both bright and full-bodied.

It will be interesting to hear the eight a cappella ballades of Shostakovich's cycle Deviation (Op. 136) and the composer's music for Kozinn's film version of King Lear (Op. 137); the two works separating the Fourteenth Symphony from the Thirteenth neutron, for the latter work seems to be yet another variation on death that has, fortunately, belied the premonition that I (and several other people) had that Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony was to be his last work. The Thirteenth Quartet is, in fact, one of the strangest, most other-worldly pieces Shostakovich has ever written. From the desolate viola solo that closes the work to the morbid, expressionistic atmosphere of the middle section with its jazzylike rhythms, almost everything in this quartet strikes one as gloomy, disordered, almost neurotic. Yet like the violin sonata, the Thirteenth Quartet is an exceedingly well-wrought work, reminding one of Bartók in its cyclical, archlike form. One finds, perhaps, a few too many references to Shostakovich's past quartets, solutions that do not quite seem to fit the new quartet at times. But the composer maintains a constantly profound level of communication and expressivity, and his intentions are carried out with extraordinary skill (special mention should be made of violinist Vadim Boronsky, to whom the work is dedicated) and conviction by the Beethoven Quartet, whose beautifully balanced efforts have been particularly well re-created by the stereo effect here.

R.S.B.


This is the Record of the Month so far as this reviewer's assignment is concerned, and one of the very great records of the year, thanks entirely to Skrowaczewski and Stacy. The concerto for English horn seems to be the first composition by the distinguished conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra to reach American shores, and it is masterly.

It seems to have been inspired by the extraordinary playing of Stacy, the English horn player of the Minnesota Orchestra. He is none of your "Oh-lay-see-oh-lay-see-oo" corny ingenuities; he has a tremendous tone and he doesn't hesitate to use it, furthermore he knows how to get the instrument to produce double noises, which sound sort of squawky but interesting, and some unprecedented harmonies as well. In order to dramatize the English horn as much as possible, Skrowaczewski uses no other reeds in the orchestra, but he loves the big ensemble and what he does with brass and percussion against strings and English horn must be heard to be believed. This is really a concerto for orchestra with special emphasis on the English horn and one of the few works of that kind that can stand up alongside the famous Concerto for Orchestra by Béla Bartók, which it does not resemble in the least.

The pieces by William Mayer are pleasant and effective, especially the Andante for Strings.

A.F.


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For all the authority that Stravinsky's own recordings possess, and will retain, there is every reason to welcome alternative approaches. Although the results may not always constitute unqualified successes, they are usually instructive—and by no means in consistently negative ways. This quartet of discs gives us more variety of Stravinsky performances than we have had of late.

The 1911, or deluxe, version of Petrushka has in recent years been less favored by conductors than the more economical 1947 scoring, and so Boulez' crystalline performance, with the New York orchestra at something near top form is most welcome. The brilliance and clarity of the playing—very much a result of the conductor's careful attention to matters of intonation and ensemble—make translucent more portions of the work than any other recording I know. One might point especially to the complex passage leading up to the magician's entrance in the first scene, or the various "big accordion" textures in the fourth as exemplary. Nor is there any loss of rhythmic intensity in the achievement of such sonic grace, for it throws Stravinsky's textural disjunctions into the greatest possible relief. While Boulez maintains an iron grip on the metrical relationships and dislocations.

The only serious competition, as far as the 1911 version is concerned, was Monteux's Boston disc (RCA LM 2376), rather briskly recorded and occasionally less steady of tempo, since Monteux conducted the first performance of Petrushka in 1911, his conducting then retains historical interest (as does the composer's own driving statement of the revision), but the Boulez is now top choice. (Incidentally, Paul Jacobs has now become the only pianist to have taken part in recordings of both Petrushka, he could not be better either.)

Klemperer's approach to Palestrina and the Symphonies in Three Movements is equally straightforward in the obvious ways, and well played by the Philharmonia. Although the tempos are slower at times than the composer's (in his later recordings, at any rate), they are generally within the range of the metronome markings and not in themselves problematic. What is problematic to my ear is the lack of point and lift in the accenting and articulation (feminine endings have a way of echoing themselves out of existence)—and this is where the Stravinsky recordings are still supreme, despite their untidy moments.

Oedipus Rex, of course, one of the most significant Stravinsky scores, and the availability of a composer-conducted version has been a striking feature in the catalogue, happily remedied by this reissue—a good job, if not quite the equal of the mono version made in Cologne in 1952. Less happy is the curtailment of the composer's program note, and the text of Act II has been garbled in the course of setting the libretto to leaflet. The remastered sound is still not ideally defined: and there is some blasting on high brass notes—but there is also Shirley Verrett's sumptuous Jocasta, excellent work from the other soloists, and the very specific character that Stravinsky gives to every note.

Finally, under the auspices of the Bruno Walter Society (see High Fidelity, June 1972), an organization evidently— and laudably—catholic in its ambitions, we have a unique example of Wilhelm Furtwangler's way with Stravinsky (from 1951-53 broadcasts). Alas, the sound of the source material is far from ideal, with some patches of unsteadiness and a marked hiss, nor was the Berlin Philharmonic's playing on this occasion anywhere near impeccable. But there is uncommon care with phrasing, in ways that bring out important motivic connections of a sort that Stravinsky himself tended to take for granted. At the same time, the matter of rhythm is slighted, and the tempos are well chosen for a certain tendency to rush in the material based on Tchaikovsky's Humoresque. I particularly admire the flute solo in the Variation of the last movement, and there are similar felicities that will outline the numerous novelties, at least for the dedicated Stravinskyite.

Furtwangler's 1953 performance of the French Impressions is another unusual cup of tea. This side of the disc is better recorded, and both orchestras play with considerable accuracy, if also with just enough schmaltz (not only string portamento, but also a stylistically unwonted forcefulness of stress accent) to give somewhat stodgy results, especially in the Ravel, about which the conductor seems not to have any strong convictions. The two Nocturnes, however, are very consistent readings, with quite specific attention to melodic shape: one feels quite certain that Furtwangler found in these pieces a substance that interested him, although it emerges in a form that slightly offends; equally important aspects of Debussy's conception.

D.H.

SWEELINCK: Variations, Toccatas, and Fantasias for Organ and Harpsichord. Gustav Leonhardt, organ (St. Laurenskerk in Alkmaar) and harpsichord. Cambridge CR 3508, S,H.98.

Fantasia B: Chorale Variations on "Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ" by Petrucci; Fantasia 18 (played on the organ); Variations on "Vers du ciel"; Toccata; Nos. 20 and 23; Variations on "More Palatino"; Variations on "Von der Fortuna wurd ich getrieben". Padua Lachmem.

Here is one of the finest discs of early keyboard music ever recorded. Each aspect of this production combines to produce an absolutely indispensable disc for collectors interested in the period, and an excellent introduction for those not yet convinced of Sweelinck's genius.

Leonhardt has chosen some of the finest and most impressive of Sweelinck's organ and harpsichord music, devoting one record side to each instrument. The organ works are played on the magnificent organ of the St. Laurenskerk in Alkmaar, the harpsichord works on an exceptionally beautiful, mean-tone tuned French instrument from the early eighteenth century. If you've been looking for an example of mean-tone tuning (according to the practice of Sweelinck's day), this one is ideal in pinning up the strength and purity of intonation when the music stays close to the tonic key when it begins and in more distantly related tonalities the effect can often be quite startling.

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rigent harpsichordists. Furthermore, he has contributed extensively to the new edition of Sweelinck’s complete keyboard music, published by Alphen, so he certainly knows his territory well. He does sound somewhat more comfortable on the harpsichord side of the disc than the organ side: He plays the harpsichord with a smile, while there seems to be a hint of a knitted brow when he’s on the organ bench. However, the differences are only slight and noticeable only in direct comparison. The performances on both sides are really remarkably moving and communicative: Leonhardt’s exquisitely conceived phrasing and subtle rubato bring each piece alive with real flair and style.

This record was first released by Cambridge in 1963, then inexplicably deleted from the catalogue in 1969. Despite its age, the sonic quality is excellent—many modern recordings don’t sound as good—and surfaces are first rate. We’re indeed fortunate to have it available again.

TIPPETT: Little Music for String Orchestra; Concerto for Double String Orchestra; Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli. Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. Argo ZRG 680. $5.98.

Michael Tippett has become increasingly well known in this country during the past few years, and this disc makes a significant contribution to his works currently available on record here. These three works for string orchestra cover the years between the late ’30s and early ’50s (1939, 1946, and 1953 respectively) and they help considerably to focus our picture of the first large phase of Tippett’s career. Although these pieces fail to make a sufficiently strong impression to suggest a composer of the very first rank, they nevertheless reveal Tippett to be an enormously gifted musician working with a sure hand in a highly eclectic compositional style. The general orientation of all three works is conservative and neoclassical, but Tippett’s approach to traditional procedures seems much less forced and mannered than that of many followers of the school. Indeed, this is music of a remarkably sunny disposition (one of its several English characteristics), and although I find that they suffer from a certain lack of tension, it is difficult not to be overawed by their sheer exuberance.

The performances by Marriner and the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Orchestra match the quality of the music, both in its execution and in their evocation of effusive good spirits, making this record a particularly pleasant introduction to Tippett’s music. Anthony Payne’s notes and the recorded sound are also excellent.

R.P.M.


Concertos for Two Violins, Lute, and Continuo in D; for Viola d’amore, Lute, and Strings; in D minor, for Mandolin, Strings, and Organ; in G; for Two Flutes, Two Bassoons, Two Trumpets, Two Mandolins, Two Theorbs, Cello, and Strings, in C.

An attractive Vivaldi concert, both in choice of works and in the quality of performances, which are robust, well paced, and rhythmically alive. The potential danger in any work involving mandolins is of course, that a single note on the mandolin has no sustaining power whatever (far less than flute or guitar), and it takes some sleight of hand to avoid an overdose of plink, plink, plink. Modern repertory allows the mandolinist to use an almost continual tremolo, but the Vivaldian must employ embellishments to get to the most he can out of any given pitch, especially at slow tempos. The embellishments in the Largo of the Mandolin Concerto in C are fairly elaborate and accomplish their purpose this movement alone makes an interesting lesson in eighteenth-century performance practices.

The jolliest of the works here is the last concerto in the above listing, involving all those pairs of instruments that march by in turn as if they were on their way into some musical Noah’s Ark. (There is some substitute instrumentation in this performance, guitars replacing theorboes, etc . . . but the effect seems undiminished.) Another plus for the disc is that the viola d’amore comes across well, with its slightly plaintive, mysterious voice intact.

S. F.


The Volfísek Sinfonia will undoubtedly lend itself to musical one-upmanship parlor games in which the host defies his unsuspecting guests to identify this music—post-Haydn certainly, but not much later: a contemporary of Beethoven or possibly an extremely talented young composer under Beethoven’s spell, nationally uncertain, but certainly in the international style of early eighteenth-century Vienna.

Jan Václav Volfísek (or Johann Hugo Wurzischek as he was known in Vienna) was a native of Bohemia who spent the major portion of his brief life as a musician and civil servant in Vienna between 1813 and 1825. He had studied with Tomášek in Prague and with Hummel in Vienna. A friend and fervent admirer of Beethoven, he composed piano music that is said to have influenced Schubert: like John Field’s nocturnes, his impromptus foreshadow the more intensely Romantic music of Chopin.

This Sinfonia in D shows that Volfísek had learned from Haydn and Mozart how to develop a highly proficient and sometimes quite original style: but its scale and expressive impulse seldom go beyond the range of Beethoven’s earliest compositions. The second movement begins with an impressive premonition of dark tragedy, but fails to sustain or develop the implications. Nowhere, not even in the Scherzo where folk materials might have been most appropriate, is there any hint of the composer’s Slavic origins. The Bohemians of this era were still musically a part of the Austrian empire. With the imaginative and forceful reading here by the English Chamber Orchestra under Mackerras, this symphony offers considerable interest and provides a great deal of fun, if not substantial profundity.

I also cannot imagine a more ingratiating performance of Dvořák’s Czech Suite. Here the conductor does not attempt to inflate the music beyond its slight and graceful nature—Dvořák used his native Czech materials more
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We are supposed to shudder at the lot of the prodigy—pushed out of the nest by gleeeful parents (so tradition goes) into the hectic, exhausting, and eventually destructive world of commercial music-making. Behold, then, the statement (part of it) by Menuhin on this album jacket: “In listening to these recordings [I remember] the child grappling with the intransigent violin and finding an enormous sense of fulfillment and self-expression, of a totality of purpose, challenge, and ideal.” Not every prodigy is a Menuhin, of course, but it is interesting to meditate on the fact that in some cases the fledgling not only flies high at the start but maintains his altitude and looks back on the whole affair with warmth and a sense of gratitude. This is not to say that Menuhin has not had his violinistic problems. The periods of unreliable intonation, the tone difficulties, the sometimes tortured overinvolvement in interpretation are no secret. But they probably do not stem from prodigiosity.

Menuhin, New York-born and San Francisco-raised, had made his debut at seven playing the Lalo Symphonie espagnole with the San Francisco Orchestra. But the real career began at eleven, with debuts in Berlin, New York, Paris, and London. The recordings on this disc pick up at age sixteen with the 1931 Paganini Capriccio and reach to age twenty-two, the year of the Wieniawski Legende recorded with the Orchestre des Concerts Colonne under the direction of Georges Enesco (the only orchestral performance in the collection). The performances are simply astonishing—evidence of a voracious, devouring talent that takes each of these display pieces by the throat and fashions it with so much immediacy that it seems born on the spot. The tone is refined and intense; the intonation razor-edged; the bow control almost beyond belief (note the flying staccato in the Bazzini La Ronde—an example of particularly exuberant virtuosity—and the divaish in the Paganini Perpetuum mobile, where the notes travel almost faster than the ear can follow). Not all the pieces are fireworks. The quieter ones are equally impressive, and the simplicity of feeling in the Schumann-Kreisler Romance bespeaks the deep musicality and seriousness that is so much a part of Menuhin.

The recorded sound (“enhanced for stereo”) is perfectly acceptable; there is some surface scratch but the Menuhin tone bars through it like fire through gauze. Original HMV numbers are given on the album, along with the names of the accompanying pianists—among whom the most familiar name is that of Arthur Balsam. This is a record that no admirer of Menuhin or of the art of fiddle playing will want to miss.

Zelenka: Lamentations Jeremiae Prophetae. Nedda Casei, alto; Theo Altmeyer, tenor; Karel Berman, bass; Ars Rediviva Orchestra, Milan Muncinger, cond. Supraphon 1 12 0863, $6.98.

One of the more remarkable discoveries of my week has been this sampling of the vocal music of Jan Dismas Zelenka, a Czech double-bass player who became court composer at Dresden, and whose life span (1679-1745) coincides more or less with that of Bach. Zelenka, Grove’s informs us, wrote no fewer than twenty-one Masses and 108 psalms, cantatas, and motets, among much else, and to judge from this recording he had a notable gift for expressive vocal writing and interesting orchestral polyphony. These four solo cantatas, in Latin (texts provided), are drawn from a set of six written for the three Easter holy days (two cantatas for each day). The Lamentations of Jeremiah on which they are based fall into a
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A TALE OF THREE CITIES

three-against-one scheme: Nos. I, II, and IV express mourning over the lost Jerusalem, a spirit summed up in a line from No. I—"The Lord hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions." No. V—in some ways the most vital of the four—sings the praises of the Lord and voices hope for salvation: "The Lord is good unto them that wait for him." The spec-

ial flavor of each text is conveyed in the mu-

sic, and though the author of the album notes finds some pictorial descriptiveness in the or-

chestral writing, a la Ibach, it seems to me that his examples are fartrenched.

What is not fartrenched is the marvelously fluid, pertinently inflected vocal lines, with their frequent coloratura flights; the sometimes quite abrupt shifts of tonality, the affecting interplay of major and minor, the startlingly juxtaposed meters. There are no set da capo arias as in Ibach's cantatas, but in their place a kind of continual heightened recitative growing into bona fide melody. The orchestra takes over in interludes of highly developed polyphony, and frequently flows directly back into an accompaniment role without a break. And upon occasion the singer becomes simply one voice in a four- or five-part fugue. In one striking passage in No. V the tenor pursues a pair of cellos in extended imitation, after a striking passage in No. V the tenor pursues a pair of cellos in extended imitation, after a

dramatic experience. A lack of bite and clarity in the diction contributes; the word-tone equation is distinctly out of balance, in favor of sonic rather than verbal values.

Perhaps also relevant is the fact that none of these scenes except the Tchaikovsky is in the singer's usual stage repertory—and even that exception she has sung in English, rather than Russian selections. "Tit els vanita" has a fine sweep, and the Traviata scene is noteworthy not only for the presence of a ca-
pable tenor and the inclusion of "A h! fors' e lui," but also for a well-measured and steady tempo.

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Leontyne Price is in very good voice for this pro-
gram, from the bottom A flat of the Ariadne scene right up to Violetta's high Cs, although a few of the top notes are not as uniformly placed and colored as the rest of the voice. Very much in evidence, too, is her accustomed musicality, founded on careful attention to rhythmic and dynamic nuances. My own pref-

erence is for a more pointed, focused sound (we'll come to an exemplar of that in a min-
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Verdi comes off best here, certainly in part because the late Fausto Cleva was much hap-
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We couldn't think of a better way to prove the capability of the Sony STR-6065 than to test it in these three cities with heavily trafficked FM bands. The engineering sta-

staffs of the FM station listing guides located in New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. conducted the tests. (Who should know more about FM per-
formance than magazines catering to the heaviest FM users?)

In New York, where there are 57 stations within 65 miles of Manhattan, tests were made in the suburbs, 48 miles from Manhattan and in Manhattan. From Westchester, using an outdoor antenna, the Sony 6065 received 36 stations full quieting—all major New York City, Long Island, Westchester and New Jersey stations. In Manhattan, using only a 300 ohm ribbon antenna, 30 stations were received, 22 full quieting. Excellent, under the most difficult of conditions.

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While the specifications of the Sony 6065 are most impressive, how it delivers in heavy FM traffic is the true test of its performance. The Sony 6065, 220 watts IHF*, 70 +70W RMS at 8 ohms. $429.50**

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The lack of urgency in the Onegin scene is even more marked by comparison with the classic, if wrong-language (German), account by Ljuba Welitsch, recently reissued on Odeon/Dacapo (C 047-01 207, also including an imposing, previously unissued Salome finale from a 1944 broadcast), where the more pointed, intense tone in itself contributes to the effect, along with vastly more specific convictions about the necessary contrasts of tension and release. The Ariadne monologue is undermined from the start by the failure to clearly define the important motive in the section and release. The Albeniz monologue is pointedly, intense tone in itself contributes to an imposing, previously unissued Salome finale. Falla’s Spanish Dance zips into high voltage without ever getting out of control; Sor’s theme-and-variations movement abounds in zest. Even the slower music catches fire: The Albeniz Nocturne is one of the most swinging night pieces you are likely to hear.

In one instance two different musical attitudes emerge: In the Carulli slow movement the left-channel player (Williams?) snaps out a phrase with more incisiveness than the right-channel player, who repeats it with a greater sense of relaxation. But pay no heed. This is a duo to remember.

This recital is just as good as you would expect it to be in view of the artists involved. The principal achievement—particularly difficult to manage where collaboration is involved—is the dazzling sparkle of spontaneity that lights up the quick movements: The Rondo finale of the Carulli Duo simply takes flight; Falla’s Spanish Dance zips into high voltage without ever getting out of control; Sor’s theme-and-variations movement abounds in zest. Even the slower music catches fire: The Albeniz Nocturne is one of the most swinging night pieces you are likely to hear.

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ALBÉNIZ: Granada (Serenata); Zaragoza (Capricho); Malorca (Barcarola); Asturias (Leyenda); Tango Espanol. FALLA: Serenata Andaluza. TURINA: Toccata fugita, Op. 50. GUERRA: Apunte Betica. GRANADOE: Danza espagnol. No. 1 (Andaluza). MALPITEN: Sonata Chavarrí: El viejo Castillo moro.

There are all too few recordings lately by the Spaniard who surely is the supreme harp virtuoso of our era—which is fortunate for reviewers who find it increasingly difficult to say anything new in praise of (much less discover any flaw in) Zabaleta’s artistry. The present release, however, does give me a chance to carp—if only about the choice of an all (or nearly all) transcription program. The mostly fairly short selections here were originally written for piano, with the possible exception of the Scarlattian Sonatina drawn from Halftter’s ballet Danza de la Pastora and the rhapsodic Apunte Betica by Gerardo Gombau Guerra. whom I can’t find in any handy reference book. (He’s undoubtedly identified in DGG’s usually informative notes; my advance review copy of the disc arrived jacketless.)

But I certainly can’t carp with any real conviction, since Zabaleta plays all these pieces with more subtle tonal coloring and rhythmic grace than most pianists ever can! And except for the Granados favorite and four of the five Albeniz pieces most of this music is likely to be unfamiliar to all but Iberian specialists.

There is especially seductive “Spanish” charm in Albeniz’s Tango (not the famous one in D) and the tone picture of an Old Moorish Castle by Eduardo Lopez Chavarrí (1875-1970). The largest, most demanding work, however, is the Now-bold/now-atmospheric Toccata and busy (if scarcely academic) Fugue from Turina’s Cielo pianistico No. 1. And as in all earlier DGG/Zabaleta discs, the recorded sonics are a sheer delight to one’s aural sensibilities; but for that the harpist himself surely deserves practically all the credit—how could any audio engineer go wrong with him?

R.D.D.
in brief

CAMBINI: Trois Quintetti Concertante for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, and Bassoon: No. 1, in B flat; No. 2, in D minor; No. 3, in F. Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet, Ravenna 701, $5.95 (University of Washington Press, Seattle, Wash. 99105). Cambini (1746–1825) was born in Livorno and spent much of his life in Paris. The album notes speak of the “recent revival of interest in his wind quintets.” I hadn’t been aware that there was one, but maybe the author of the notes, who is the flutist of the Soni Ventorum, has hopes of planting the idea. To give Cambini his due, he wrote with skill and never was cloddish. One of the five instruments is always singing, running, skipping, noodling, or needle-slaming. It is perfectly respectably \textit{style galant}, exploits the instrumental possibilities sagely, and is at last utterly forgettable. The pieces are perhaps important as examples of some of the earliest writings for wind quintet. The Soni Ventorum, in residence at the University of Washington, plays with deft phrasing, apt tempos, and good balance.


Had this record appeared ten years ago it would have been more highly regarded than is likely today. It belongs to the plain and literal school of Haydn performance in which one follows the printed score and adds nothing. But Haydn’s contemporary friends are likely to know by now that in works of this period additions must be made to reproduce the performance tradition Haydn knew. Throughout this music the absence of a continuo is noticeable when one has easily at hand the superlative keyboard playing that adds so much to the Dorati edition. In their conservative fashion Zecchi’s performances are reasonably sympathetic and well paced. The recorded sound is average. R.F.M.


Vittorio Rieti’s\textit{ Capers} is the perfect light ballet score: tuneful, pointed, and sparkling in the best Rossini tradition. Lee Hoiby’s \textit{After Eden} is a dramatic ballet score of the kind that is more effective in the theater than in the cold blood of the turntable. Foster gives it a better performance than it deserves. A.F.


Riegger’s \textit{Dichotomy}, composed in 1932, is one of his strongest orchestral works. It is also one of his earliest atonal pieces, and the stimulus to his imagination in exploring the atonal universe results in a work of immense integrity, seriousness, and grandeur. \textit{Dichotomy} is very much of its era in the stripped, economical orchestration, very powerful rhythmic structure, and the intensities of its harmonic color, but it has weathered the years like a mountain peak. The musical profile is stronger today than it ever was. Unfortunately Mester has seen fit to couple it with an ordinary piece of movie music by one Györgi Rayki.


A new symbol, a half-0. It is needed to denote the hybrid character of a program that combines three new recordings (Opp. 314, 354, and 410) with three 1949-69 recordings drawn from the “Crown Jewels” collection reviewed here in June 1970. The sonic characteristics achieved by a different producer/engineer team aren’t at all contradictory, but they are noticeably richer and warmer, and so effectively remedy the only previous (very minor) technical weaknesses. Interpreatively, there is less difference: Ormandy maintains the marked advances over his earlier, more sentimentalized and heavy-handed Straussian approach. And even if he hasn’t yet reached the ideal of Viennese canonic grace and insouciant tilt, the present disc and tape editions well warrant the best-seller status they are sure to win.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Symphony No. 5; The Wasps: Overture. London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3244, $5.98.

The short, light, comic, folksy-tuneful overture to The Wasps is superb here, and this is the only recording of it now available outside of a two-record set containing all the music Vaughan Williams wrote for the play by Aristophanes (Angel 3739, with the First Symphony). The Fifth Symphony competes with recorded versions by Barbirolli and Boult and suffers by comparison. That is, to be sure, an essentially typical work, and Previn’s solidly straightforward approach is far (too unsympathetic to it; even so) the performance lacks the sense of climax, the distinction of episodes, and when needed, the bit that Boult brings to it.


This Phase 4 Wagnerian salad is fabulously handicapped in several respects. The earnest but routine readings lack dramatic grip; there is far too noisy a background to the quiet opening and close of the Act I Lohengrin Prelude; in Wotan’s Farewell the robust soloist is far too close and prominent; as well as afflicted by excessive vibrato; even the recorded sonics are considerably less than spellbinding, especially in unpleasantly coarse brass and percussion fortissimos. Scots-born Hurst (who has appeared in this country as both conductor and teacher) is unfortunate in what seems to be his first American recorded representation, but his standing in British musical circles suggests that he deserves another chance.


The talented associate principal trumpet of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Thomas Stevens, makes his solo record debut the hard way, exclusively in works composed within the last few years and in many less avant-garde idioms. The two that impress me most are the always interesting William Kraft’s ingenious \textit{battle-scenes} between trumpet and percussion, and Robert Henderson’s virtuoso Variation Movements for unaccompanied trumpet in C. This last work also displays both Stevens’ tonal brilliance and Lester Renssen’s auditorium-authentic records at their dramatically gripping best. But neither soloist nor engineer can give any marked distinction to Frank Campo’s amusing but very lightweight evocations of “Good Times—Hard Times—and Time to Go” for unaccompanied trumpet in B flat, or to British-born Iain Hamilton’s dodecaphonically \textit{Wild—Nocturnal—Declamato—Nocturnal—Brilliant} bits-and-pieces Quadruphono-philes will be interested to learn (from the liner notes) that the present stereo edition of this program has been edited down from four-channel masters and that a four-channel tape edition (format, order number, and price unstated) is available under the Advent label.
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when it's strong. And yet—the problem is difficult to pin down. Is it simple inconsistence. that quality that allows a song to alternately e- late and disappoint?

Greyhound begins interestingly, but then builds to a kind of panic as its tempo races insensitively and Chapin loses his vocal presence by overdoing all. Suddenly he is unconvincing and one thinks of the Kingston Trio and Tom Dooley. Does Chapin have an inner enemy, a streak of showoff? At any rate, let's hope that Harry Chapin survives such a sudden assault of success and gets his chance to build and grow.

M.A.

David Peel is a New York character who lives on the lower east side of Manhattan and spends a great deal of time hanging out in local parks with a band of cronies singing songs about the joys of marijuana. Peel is also a member of the Rock Liberation Front, a free- form organization that is concerned with promoting rock-and-roll as an authentic cultural force.

John and Yoko Lennon allowed Peel and his friends to go into the studio in order to put their sentiments on wax for the sake of posterity. The result is a disc that might offend some, bore others with its infantility, and probably delight many more.

I think it's a good, funny album. Peel's grating, urban voice has always amused me and his good-natured irreverence appeals to my own sense of anarchy. In The Hippies from New York City, he responds to Merle Haggard's ode to good country living by writing, "We hate to go to work, we live on welfare/We have our love, and always have a ball/We hate your barn- yard dances and your moonshine/We'd like to see you up against the wall." Peel also paints a picture of an obscene, VD-infected Old McDonald's Farm; he pays tribute to John and Yoko for their contributions to New York City life; he chronicles the achievements of Bob Dylan; he lambastes the Vietnam War and the Chicago Seven trial, and in the title song he describes a stoned Vatican. Life would be very dull without characters like David Peel.

H.E.

Creedence Clearwater Revival: Mardi Gras, John Fogerty, guitar and vocals; Doug Clifford, bass and vocals; Stu Cook, drums and vocals. Lookin' for a Reason, Someday Never Comes, What Are You Gonna Do, Hello Mary Lou, six more. Fantasy 9404, $4.98.

In their first LP since the group lost guitarist Tom Fogerty. CCR seeks to compensate for the loss—and perhaps avoid future losses—by spreading the responsibility around instead of having all come out like the John Fogerty Experience, as in the past.

But democracy or no, Fogerty does seem the ranking talent in the band, and on this LP

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the songs sung by him are the best. Few of those championed by Cook and Clift are better than all right. Door to Door, a familiar hard rock song sung by Cook, is quite good, as is Clift’s What Are You Gonna Do. But they are eclipsed by Foggerty’s Sweet Hitch-Hiker and Someday Never Comes. Hello Mary Lou seems to be phoenixing lately, as a version of it was just released by the New Riders of the Purple Sage as well. In his Foggerty manages to duplicate faithfully the Ricky Nelson original, if that can be considered a plus. In all, it’s a decent album but not one of the band’s important ones.

M.J.

**ROBERTA FLACK & DONNY HATHAWAY.**

Roberta Flack, vocals and keyboard accompaniment, Donny Hathaway, vocals and keyboard accompaniment, strings, horns, woodwinds, and rhythm accompaniment. I (Who Have Nothing), You’ve Got a Friend, Baby! I Love You; seven more. Atlantic SD 7216, $5.98.

This album is sheer perfection. It has been carefully conceived, tastefully arranged, and expertly produced by Joel Dorn and Arif Mardin. Miss Flack and Mr. Hathaway are both extraordinary musicians, eloquent exponents of soul music. Subtlety, sophistication, and simplicity are the hallmarks of their musical expression. Pairing them together was a brilliant idea and the results justify the inspiration.

They reinterpret rock standards like Carole King’s You’ve Got a Friend and Barry Mann’s You’ve Got That Loving Feeling and suddenly these songs are transformed into incanting ballads filled with icy passion. Miss Flack’s multileveled composition about personal devotion and a sense of pride, I’ve Reel Black for Me, is another haunting contribution. The stars work over a traditional spiritual, Come Ye Disconsolates, and capture a real feeling of religious devotion that makes the number a truly beautiful music. The mood of this disc leaves one with a sense of satisfaction.

The LP concludes with an instrumental written by Miss Flack entitled Mood, with Miss Flack on piano and Mr. Hathaway on electric piano. The result: seven minutes of truly beautiful music. The mood of this disc leaves one with a sense of satisfaction. H.E.

**YVONNE ELLIMAN.**

Yvonne Elliman, vocals. David Spinozza and Andrew Lloyd Webber, arr. Sugar Babe; Speak Your Mind; Can’t Remember; The October Room; Those Are the Days; eleven more. Decca 75341, $4.98.

As Jennifer Warren is worth experiencing, so is Yvonne Elliman. Yvonne Elliman, vocals. Roberta Flack—teaming with Hathaway. display Mary Magdalene in Jesus Christ Superstar. The highlight of her performance occurred in the brilliant, intensely emotional song, I Don’t Know How to Love Him, in which we view Mary Magdalene as an earthy, man-wise and bewildered woman touched for the first time not just by love but by spirituality in love. It is an extremely human song of despair and elation, love and fear, exquisitely written. Miss Elliman’s performance was heartbreaking. The song is included in the set, which was produced by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, who wrote Superstar. Miss Elliman’s rough sweetness pervades the album.

Yet the disc lacks concept and therefore leaves a weak impression for all Miss Elliman’s strength. Better luck next time out.

Jennifer (Warren) has a softness and humor about her that makes you want to know her. She has accessibility. Her voice is strong and interesting, her presence authoritative, and her choice of material tasteless and personal. Jennifer has been on the brink of making a hit record for some time but has not yet crossed the line. One wonders why, other than the fact that the majority of his hits are made by men. There are twenty James Taylors for every one Carole King. But Jennifer Warren is worth waiting for. In the meantime, you can buy this album and be the only one in your crowd who’s really discovered Jennifer. M.A.

**DAN HICKS AND HIS HOT LICKS.**

Striking It Rich. John L. Girton, lead guitar; Sid Page, violin and mandolin; Mary Ann Price, vocals and rhythm instruments; Dan Hicks, vocals and rhythm guitar, Jaime Leopold, string bass and skippy Sanchez; Naomi Ruth Eisenberg, vocals, second fiddle, and rhythm instruments. You Got to Believe. Walkin’ One and Only, O’Reilly At the Bar; eleven more. Blue Thumb BTS 336; $5.98.

The Dan Hicks sound is almost as indescribable as it is pleasurable. C & W, jazz, ragtime, blues. Thirties jump, and a healthy dose of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross somehow blend together to create an irresistible result. Hicks’ music is filled with a true sense of the past, but this is no nostalgia act. The nostalgia phenomenon is an attempt to take the most mindless characteristics of past eras and exaggerate them in order to create a giant pacifier. Hicks’ music serves as both a reminder of the past.
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and an attempt to create something truly timeless.

On this disc two tunes, I Scare Myself and Woe the Luck, are especially rewarding. Here, the musical and vocal lines soar in and out of each other so effortlessly and with so much dazzle that the end result is positively awesome. Hicks has always had the ability to utilize female backup voices with uncanny skill. This time around, he outdoes himself. Sid Page’s violin is breathtakingly featured on the entire album and his soaring solo on Flight of the Fly is one of the most haunting musical performances in quite some time.

I’ve only seen Hicks once—as a guest on a TV talk show. I found his act much too precious and coy. People who think they are funny rarely are. I crossed this act off my list even though I’ve always admired their music. But on hearing this album I’m impressed. His choice of material is really eclectic: Many a Mile by Patrick Sky, an American Indian singer/songwriter; You Win Again, an old Hank Williams tune; Bold Marauder by John Kay. an alumnus of the startling Steamboat, appears in his solo debut album as an instrumental in The Treasure may signal the return of the doo-wop sound, a phenomenon that developed in the late Sixties which has been missing of late.

This two-LP set ranks as the most impressive recording released by any of the various Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young partners before or after their breakup. It is a heavy dose of folk rock, in the manner of Buffalo Springfield, which spawned CSN&Y in the first place. Much of it is hard rock, the best being the final side, a scraper! The flow slows on Side 2, a country & western display, but picks up quickly. The final track, Blues Man, is an acoustic blues tribute to Jimi Hendrix. Alan Wilson, and Duane Allman.

The instrumental in The Treasure may signal the return of the doo-wop sound, a phenomenon that developed in the late Sixties but which has been missing of late. M.J.

JOHN KAY: Forgotten Songs and Unsung Heroes. John Kay, vocals and guitar. Kent Henry, vocals and guitar; Dallas Taylor, drums; Paul Harris, keyboards; Fuzzy Samuels, bass; Al Perkins, guitar and steel guitar; Joe Lala, congas, timbales, and vocals, instrumental accompaniment: Cong of Love; Rock & Roll Crazies; Cuban Bluegrass; Right Now, The Treasure: (Take One); Blues Man; sixteen more. Atlantic SD 2-903. $11.96 (two discs).

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with the compositional output of Ellington. And here on this disc these two brilliant minds come together—Hines the brilliant pianist and Ellington the brilliant composer. It becomes an interesting battle of wills. Can Hines the improviser ouste Ellington the creator?

The answer to this question is, in general, no. Ellington's tunes, it turns out, do not lend themselves to Hines's more exalted flights. These melodies have such shape and form and such determined quality that Hines finds himself, most of the time, locked into situations that, despite their own merits, do not provide the kind of display cases in which he might normally choose to show his wares.

When Ellington moves into the basic jazz idiom, the blues, Hines finds himself on the kind of familiar ground where he can strut his stuff to the full. This happens most noticeably on the free and easy, C Jam Blues (a piece that is an invitation to extempore) and, in a different way, on Mood Indigo which, Ellington scholars will recall, was originally called Dusky Blues—and Hines's dream is full of Tatumesque runs.

In a confrontation such as this the listener cannot lose. Whatever is not superb Hines is superb Ellington. Who could ask for anything more? J.S.W.

**Clarence Williams Orchestra**

1927-1928. Ed Allen and King Oliver, cornets; Charlie Irvis and Ed Cuffee, trombone; Coleman Hawkins, Buster Bailey, Alberto Socarras, and Arville Harris or Ben Waters, reeds, Clarence Williams, piano; Leroy Harris, banjo; Cyrus St. Clair, tuba. Long, Deep and Wide; Beau Koo Jack; Squeeze Me; thirteen more. Biograph 12038. $5.98

Clarence Williams' versatility may have deprived him of the prominent place in the history of jazz he might otherwise have had. Williams was a songwriter (Royal Garden Blues; Baby, Won't you Please Come Home; Sugar Blues; West End Blues; Squeeze Me; Ain't Gonna Give Nobody Nove of My Jelly Roll) and music publisher, a&r man (although the term did not exist in his day), pianist, and band leader. His recording units in the Twenties included Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, Coleman Hawkins, and King Oliver. Some of his groups were essentially washboard bands. But the most distinguishing element of Clarence Williams' recording bands was his use of the deep, rich tuba bass line played by Cyrus St. Clair.

This collection of Clarence Williams recordings of 1927 and 1928 are focused on the presence of King Oliver. But Cyrus St. Clair is also present and although these are not, for the most part, arrangements that show off St. Clair's mastery of the tuba to its fullest advantage, he can be heard chiefly and putting vigorously all through the set. Coleman Hawkins erupts from time to time and the plaintive cornet of King Oliver makes itself felt through most of the recordings. The real quality of this collection rests in twelve selections (out of sixteen) made for QRS in 1928 with King Oliver on cornet. Cyrus St. Clair puts out a strong foundation on tuba. Ben Waters, Arville Harris, and Buster Bailey playing clarinet trios in the Fletcher Henderson manner, and Ed Cuffee adding the gruff tones of his trombone.

J.S.W.

Sullivan's collaboration with Gilbert in the series of "Savoy Operas" brought him world fame and immortality but he suffered from this partnership to the extent that his independent genius as a composer has been almost completely ignored.

In this first definitive and critical biography, Dr. Young examines each facet of Sullivan's life and work, throwing new light as well on the composer's social and musical environment: His early years in Leipzig and the effect of his music in Germany; his adventures in the United States; his friendship with the royal family and leading figures of the intellectual world, and his popularity with the English public as foundation for its response to the English musical revival under Elgar. No. 283...$12.50


There should be a large audience for this fascinating book, not only because of the enormous interest in the music of India and its influence in recent decades on Western music, but also because it presents a perceptive discussion of the background of Hindu philosophy and its relation to that music.

Ravi Shankar in his foreword notes that he has known the author since her first trip to India in 1953. The book reflects her deep interest in and understanding of the country and its music. No. 282...$7.95


This is the key to this work on the composer and political activist who became known to the entire world through his scores for the films, "Z" and "Zorba the Greek," and his imprisonment and subsequent liberation in his native Greece. A culture hero to many, he received a standing ovation when he appeared before a meeting of the United Nations Youth Conference in Jan. 1970.

The author, a young Greek American, who has worked closely with Theodorakis since the composer's release by the Greek government in 1970, takes a broad sociocultural approach to his subject. A book of interest to anyone concerned with the impact of political and social problems on the contemporary artist, an issue not limited to Greece. No. 283...$8.95


An analysis of black music from both sides of the Atlantic, with particular emphasis on that of the Americas. Roberts, who is the editor of "Africa Report" and author of "A Land Full of People," covers the entire range of black music from the Yoruba-language cult music (still surviving in Brazil) to North American soul singers such as Aretha Franklin, Latin American bands such as Johnny Pacheco's, and the Calypso and Rocksteady of the West Indies.

A fascinating chapter describes the new "African Afro-American" music that has sprung up in Africa since the 1930's with the advent of records there and the beginnings of a "diaspora-wide" black music. No. 284...$10.00

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THE RECORDINGS OF BEETHOVEN. As viewed by the Critics of High Fidelity.

To celebrate the Beethoven Bicentenary, High Fidelity published the most immense critical discography ever undertaken by any magazine, appraising every available recording of the composer's works. At the end of the year, these separate discographies were completely revised and updated and are here collected into one convenient book. It is hard to imagine any record collection without it on an adjacent shelf. Index to performers. No. 281...$16.95

TWENTIETH CENTURY VIEWS OF MUSIC HISTORY. William Hays, Editor.

Explanatory and critical essays covering Western music from Gregorian chant to electronic music and rock. Includes works by internationally recognized musicologists such as Paul Henry Lang, Hugo Leichtentritt and Leo Schrade. Each of the 34 selections has a lengthy introduction by editor Hays, well known musician, recitalist and lecturer, and is followed by a bibliography. General introduction by Richard French of the Union Theological Seminary. No. 284...$12.50
THE GODFATHER. Original Soundtrack, composed by Nino Rota and conducted by Carlo Savina. Connies Wedding, composed by Carlo Savina. Paramount PAS 1003, $4.98.

No. I have not seen The Godfather. but I have heard the theme from the film, which is receiving a great deal of airplay. Judging from that version, I was prepared to loathe the score. It is corny, trite "Italian," and every inch as insipid as Frances Lai's theme for Love Story, not to mention Plazon Suite and Ryan's Daughter (Lai keeps ruining good films for me).

I was deceived about Nino Rota's score for The Godfather. While the radio version is awful, the soundtrack album is rich with the fragrance of a strong film. The music is involving, beginning with a hauntingly recorded cornet solo, an echo down a lonely hall, followed by a mournful cello solo. Poignancy is set at once. To be sure, the flavor is Italian, but not trivially so. I cannot say the Godfather Theme is my favorite song, even well scored as it is in the album. But I can say that it is natural and even moving in the context of the project, which is what good film scoring is all about.

The same goes for Al Martino's vocal, I Have But One Heart, sung both in English and Italian and performed. I believe, during the wedding sequence. Again, it is not my kind of listening, but one senses its perfect entry in the film.

The album is bound to do well and deserves to. It runs high in emotion and pacing, and is thoughtfully produced by veteran soundtrack producer Tom Mack.

As for the radio theme of The Godfather, sold as a single record, it is an injustice to the score and to the film itself, leveling all aspects of the project down to what various administrators consider to be the lowest common denominator of American taste. It was an unnecessary, no-class decision.

DON IMUS: 1200 Hamburgers to Go. RCA LSP 4699, $5.98.

Imus is a New York DJ who has been getting quite a bit of attention because of the satirical sketches and outrageous opinions he has brought to early morning radio. The sketches may be satirical, the opinions may be outrageous, but none of it is very funny. This LP of his radio tapes just goes to prove that I'd much rather wake up with Bob and Ray. H.E.

JOHN BALDRY: Everything Stops for Tea. Warner Bros. BS 2614, $5.98.

A follow-up to Baldray's notable 1971 release, "It Ain't Easy." Produced by Rod Stewart and Elton John like the last, it's a worthy display of melodic and well-paced ballads. It's hard to believe that he had his first number-one hit in 1964.

LIZA MINNELLI: Live at the Olympia in Paris. A&M 4345, $5.98

Listen, there's no denying it. Miss Minnelli has become one of the most electric performers of any time. It shows in this album.

JACK JONES: Bread Winners. RCA LSP 4692, $5.98

This album comes up with a perfect marriage. Jack Jones and the hit songs of the group Bread, all written by David Gates. Songs include Make It With You, It Don't Matter to Me, Baby I'm a Want You, all sounding as lovely from Jones as they did in Gates's original versions. This Jack Jones's best in a long time. Strong concept, warmly convincing performances.

DENNIS LAMBERT: Bags and Things. Dunhill 50119, $4.98.

Dennis Lambert has one of the most appealing voices I've heard lately in pop music, both strong and warm. Happily, Lambert has a song that is on its way to being a hit, an interesting thing called Ashes to Ashes (co-written by himself and Brian Potter), about the irreversible changes we all experience these days. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, It's the way the world was won.

JOHN BALDRY: Everything Stops for Tea. Warner Bros. BS 2614, $5.98

FANS OF THOSE HARD-DRIVING GROUPS will like this album. They sympatheically trace Eric Clapton's career from his Yardbird days through his association with Cream, Blind Faith, Bonnie and Delaney, and Derek and the Dominos, and they refuse to indulge in any of the "hype" that surrounds the lives of rock giants. The recordings, which feature tracks representative of the many different stages in the career of rock's most beloved lead guitarist, are superb.

DENNIS LAMBERT: Bags and Things. Dunhill 50119, $4.98. Tape: M8749, $6.98.

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HISTORY OF ERIC CLAPTON. Atlantic SD 2-803, $11.96 (two discs).

Jean-Charles Costa's detailed liner notes on this two-record set are certainly deserving of a Grammy Award nomination. They sympathetically trace Eric Clapton's career from his Yardbird days through his association with Cream, Blind Faith, Bonnie and Delaney, and Derek and the Dominos, and they refuse to indulge in any of the "hype" that surrounds the lives of rock giants. The recordings, which feature tracks representative of the many different stages in the career of rock's most beloved lead guitarist, are superb.

THE FABULOUS RHINESTONES. Just Sunshine JSS 1, $4.98

This new band contains former members of Electric Flag and the Illinois Speed Press. Fans of those hard-driving groups will like this hard-driving group.
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For hopeful competitors, season's glad you did.
the tape deck  BY R.D. DARRELL

Old Comrades and Personal Susceptibilities.  Some old musical friends turned up a while back, bringing with them (as old friends often do) some awkward problems. At first I was tempted to avoid writing about them at all. Since I would have to acknowledge the obvious weaknesses that might make them non grata in many listeners' homes. But finally I decided to risk it in the hope that there may be others who will share at least some of my personal relish in welcoming back old comrades—perhaps as much for their flaws as in spite of them.

Objectively, there's much to complain about Bernard Herrmann's "Impressionists" program with the London Philharmonic (London/Ampex 8-track cartridge M 95062 and cassette M 94062, $6.95 each; 7½-ips reel L 75062, $7.95). The title is inaccurate except for Debussy's Clair de Lune and Plus que lent, the performances are mostly too soulfully expressive and lacking in infectious zest, and the Phase 4 recording is too fully expressive and lacking in infectious zest; and the Phase 4 recording is too fully expressive and lacking in infectious zest. But I decided to risk it in the hope that there may be others who will share at least some of my personal relish in welcoming back old comrades—perhaps as much for their flaws as in spite of them.

The title, is inaccurate except for Debussy's Clair de Lune and Plus que lent, the performances are mostly too soulfully expressive and lacking in infectious zest, and the Phase 4 recording is too fully expressive and lacking in infectious zest. Yet altogether apart from giving us the first recording in some forty years of the amusing Ravel-Branga sumptuously opulent for its materials.

The tape deck.—Conversely, the recording is timed so that the parts are greater (or at least easier to take) than the whole. The more familiar Lohengrin is another work that is now-spellbinding, now-horrible for many listeners who are not wholehearted devotees of German musical romanticism. I must admit, however, that its latest taping (now the only available one) holds my attention better than most versions even those boasting solos vocally superior to the present James King (Lohengrin) and Gwyneth Jones (Ortrud), if not necessarily to Gundula Janowitz ( Elsa). Kubelik's beautifully proportioned reading, the first-rate Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra and Chorus performances, and above all the expansively warm yet lucid recording (here favoring chorus and orchestra vis-a-vis soloists, where the reverse was true of Oberon) enable one to appreciate perhaps better than ever before Wagner's fabulously matured powers of sonority (DGG/Ampex U 3095, three 7½-ips reels, $6.95; notes-and-texts booklet included).

Late Weber; Pre-Ring Wagner. A conversational problem, also stemming from a reviewer's personal experience and susceptibilities, is how to give due justice to works of high merit and still admit that one's heart isn't really in it—that respect doesn't necessarily include love. The first stereo (and tape) Oberon well may be considered an outstanding triumph by many listeners, and even I have only relatively minor complaints about the Kubelik performance starring Birgit Nilsson and Placido Domingo; and I have nothing but the liveliest praise for the sweet yet vivid recording (DGG/Ampex R 7035, two 7½-ips reels, $21.95; notes-and-texts booklet included). Yet apart from a few shapely magnificent musical moments, the over-all lack of dramatic grip, the long stretches of tedium (including those of unmercifully extended dialogue) stretch one's powers of patience to the limit. Purist opponent of excerpted performances though I normally am, Oberon is one work where I'm forced to admit that the parts are greater (or at least easier to take) than the whole.

The more familiar Lohengrin is another work that is now-spellbinding, now-horrible for many listeners who are not wholehearted devotees of German musical romanticism. I must admit, however, that its latest taping (now the only available one) holds my attention better than most versions even those boasting solos vocally superior to the present James King (Lohengrin) and Gwyneth Jones (Ortrud), if not necessarily to Gundula Janowitz ( Elsa). Kubelik's beautifully proportioned reading, the first-rate Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra and Chorus performances, and above all the expansively warm yet lucid recording (here favoring chorus and orchestra vis-a-vis soloists, where the reverse was true of Oberon) enable one to appreciate perhaps better than ever before Wagner's fabulously matured powers of sonority (DGG/Ampex U 3095, three 7½-ips reels, $6.95; notes-and-texts booklet included).

Solti's Chicagans at Krannert Center. What a relief to turn at last to a release that can be commended without either subjective or objective qualifications. The latest symphony in Solti's Mahler series, the Seventh (Song of the Night), is one of his very best (London/Ampex K 80249, 7½-ips double-play reel; also K 80249, 7½-ips double-play reel; also K 80249, 7½-ips double-play reel; also K 80249, 7½-ips double-play reel). Not all Mahlerian aficionados, especially Bernstein's fans, will agree with every detail of the Solti reading, but I doubt that anyone can question the clear-cut supremacy of the Chicagans' executant virtuosity. And I am particularly impressed by the solidity and strength, as well as the lucidity, of the recording itself—Solti's first, but surely not the last, to be made in the Great Hall of the Krannert Center of the University of Illinois. That the ambience is an improvement over London's earlier Chicago Symphony recordings is undeniable, but whether for this or other reasons the engineering characteristics also differ considerably. The sonic qualities somewhat resemble those of American Decca's Cincinnati series: seemingly dark, even bottom-heavy in the first moments of audiance, but before long revealing no lack of genuine brilliance (at least from a mid-hand vantage point) as well as exceptionally satisfactory overall sonority and impact. This would be a decisive first choice even if the 1966 Bernstein/Columbia taping were still in print along with the less competitive Abravanel/Vanguard reel also of 1966.

Recorded Pianoism Par Excellence. The Horowitz legend gains a new chapter with the release of an all-Chopin program that combines a leftover from a November 1966 Carnegie Hall concert with a batch of studio recordings made five years later (Columbia MR 30643, 7½-ips reel. $7.98; also MT 30643 Dolbyized cassette and MA 30643 8-track cartridge, $6.98 each). The faultily assures live performance of the Op. 61 Polonaise-Fantaisie, the studio ones feature the seldom-heard, lightweight, but engagingly brava Introduction and Rondo, Op. 16, along with four more familiar pieces—all played with almost unbelievably dexterous articulation and point. Both types of recordings are first rate, with a naturally somewhat warmer acoustical ambience in the "live" session. And the Dolbyized cassette edition matches the reel in every respect, including surface quietness, while excelling it in freedom from some slight opening pre-echo.

Then the Cliburn legend receives another boost, the best since its sensational beginning, in a less spectacular but richly satisfying Rachmaninoff recital (RCA Red Seal RK 1215 cassette and RSS 1215 8-track cartridge, $6.95 each). The pianist seems more emotionally involved here than in most of his recent releases, yet his executant—and dramatic—grip has tightened rather than loosened in the two Op. 79 Rhapsodies, Op. 118, No. 3 Ballade; Op. 116, No. 3 Capriccio; Op. 39, No. 15 Waltz in A flat; and six intermezzos from Opp. 116, 117, 118, and 119. The recorded piano tonal qualities are just about the most opulent ever captured on discs or tapes and while some smooth surface noise is evident in the quietest passages, the cassette processing is quite admirable by non-Dolby standards. And here the tape editor with whom I have jousted in the past demonstrates how skillful he can be!
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