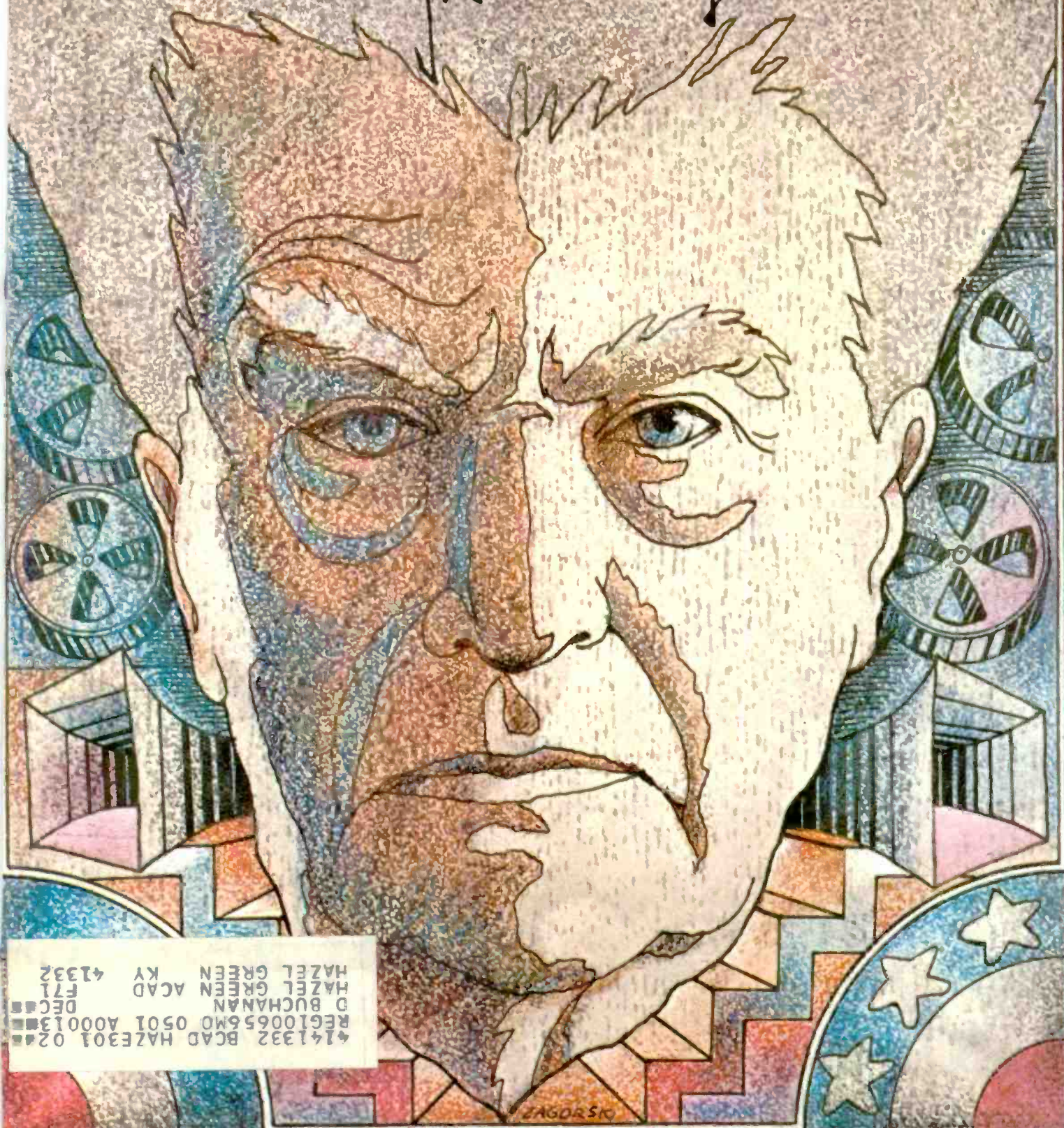


# Stereo Review

JUNE 1971 • 60 CENTS

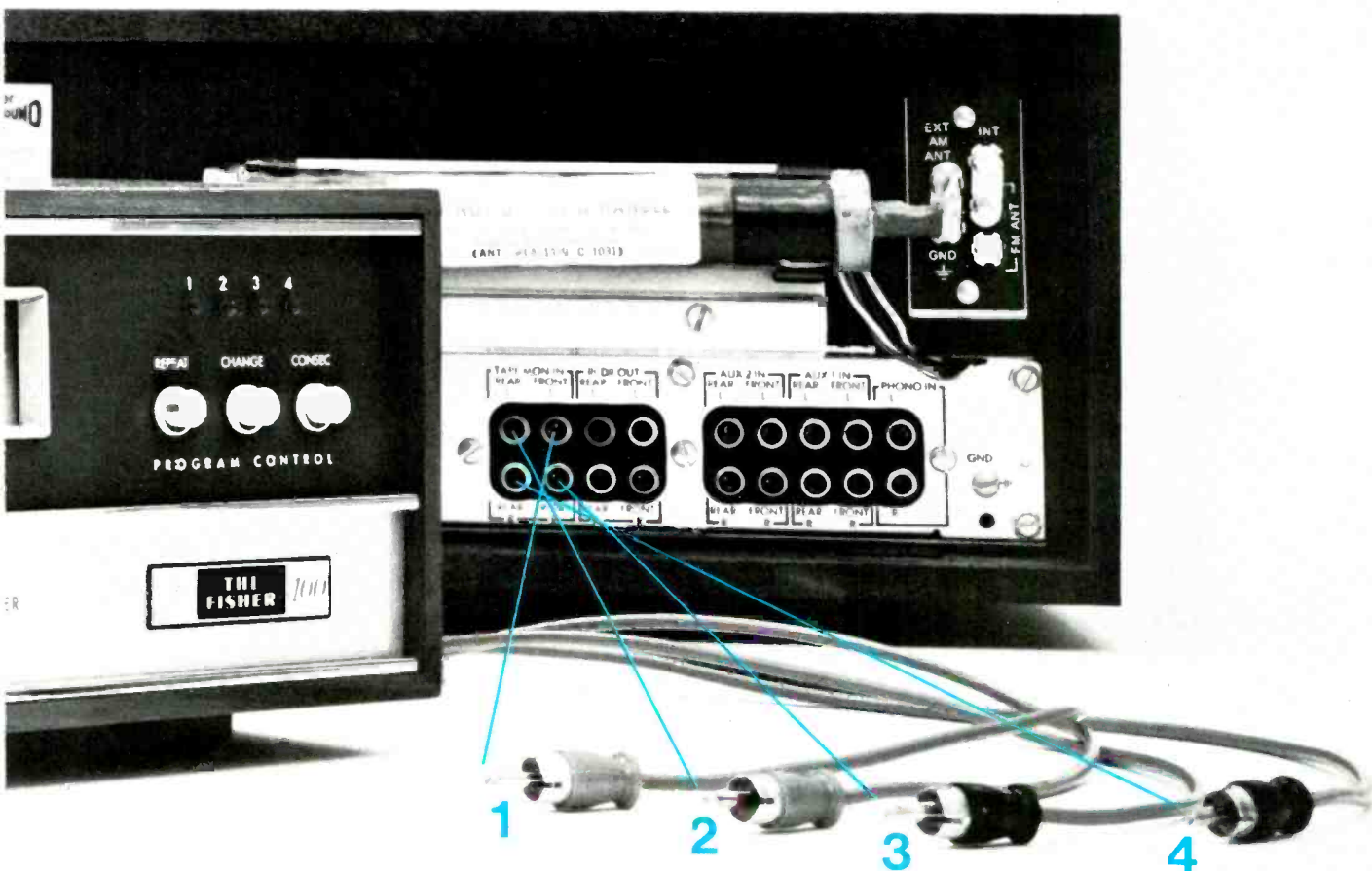
*Egged Variety*



4141332 BCAD HAZE301 02  
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LAGORSKI

# The Fisher CP-100 8-track tape cartridge player.



So far, there has been a big But. Ordinary 8-track cartridge *players* simply don't have the audio quality demanded by owners of fine component stereo systems. And that's where the new Fisher CP-100 comes in. An 8-track tape cartridge player designed to meet Fisher standards. Suddenly, you're in business: you can play 4-channel Bach or rock (and lots of it) with excellent fidelity.

#### The new CP-100 is different.

The Fisher CP-100 is a ruggedly built tape deck with low flutter and wow. It has four separate low-distortion playback channels from tape head to output. To play either the new 4-channel or standard 2-channel 8-track cartridges, simply plug the CP-100 into the tape monitor or "aux" input of your system

(as shown above). Switching to the correct mode, 4-channel or 2-channel, is completely automatic, indicated by red jewel lights. You select the tape sequence you want to listen to by pushing one of the three convenient program control buttons (jewel lights indicate your choice). Frequency response is 50 to 12,000 Hz, which compares favorably even with open-reel machines. The list price is \$169.95.

#### What to use with it.

Of course, to get the most out of your 4-channel 8-track cartridges, the CP-100 should be plugged into the best possible 4-channel stereo system. Which brings us, as any alert audiophile could have told you, to the Fisher 701. The 701 is a true 4-channel AM/FM stereo receiver with 250 watts of power,

push-button electronic tuning *without moving parts* (from the front panel or by remote control), toroidal filters on FM and other ultrasophisticated electronics. In addition to being the most advanced piece of 4-channel equipment you can buy, it's also a sensationally fine receiver for conventional 2-channel stereo. Not to mention mono.

With the CP-100 and the 701, you're ready for all the current action in 4-channel stereo. And you can also use them to simulate a 4-channel effect with a 2-channel program source. That, of course, doesn't sound as good as true 4-channel, but who's going to sue you?

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\*Please glue or tape coin on picture of handbook above.

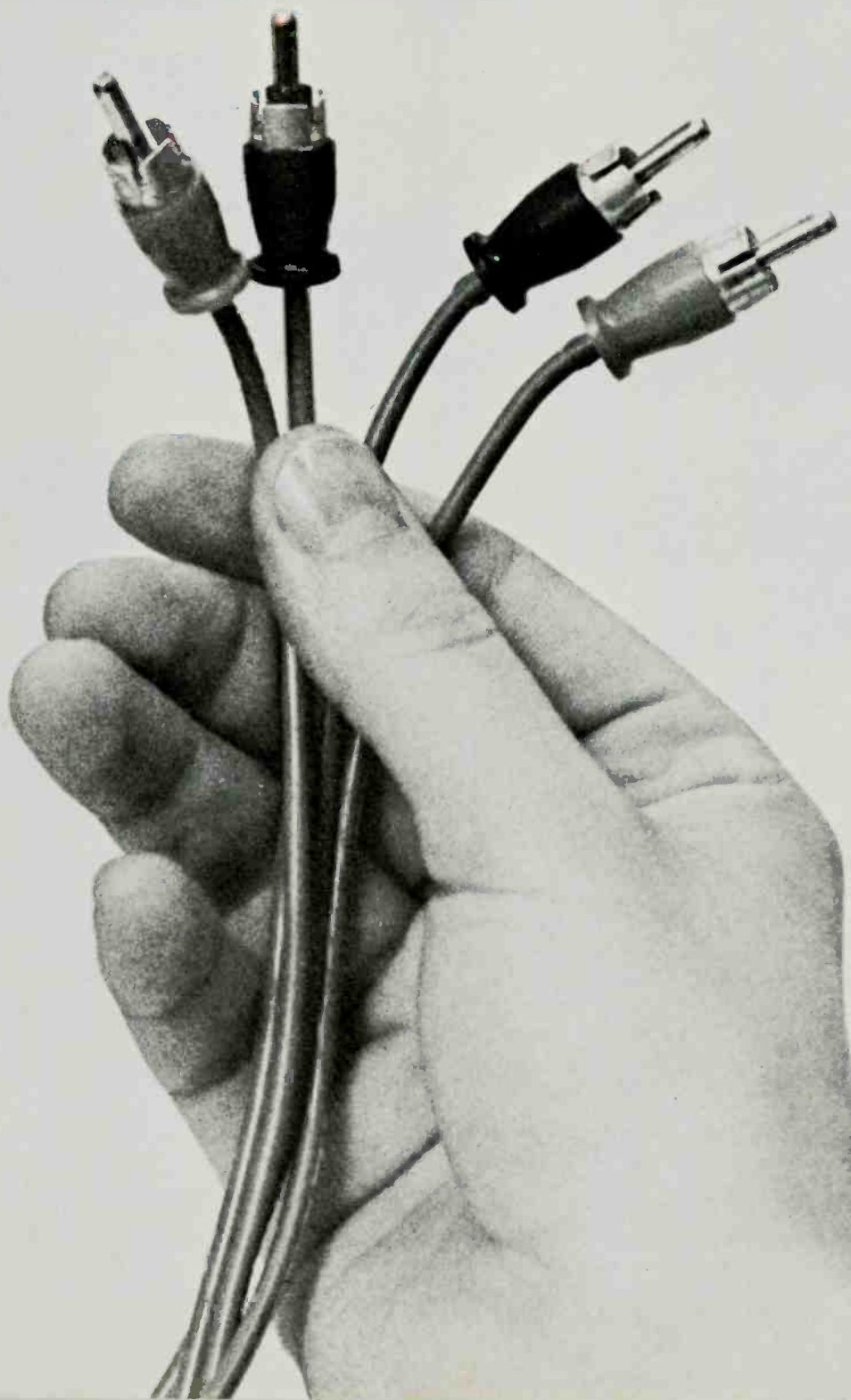
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Even with a true 4-channel stereo system of the highest quality (like the Fisher 701 receiver and XP-9C speakers shown on the right), you must confront the question of *what* to listen to.

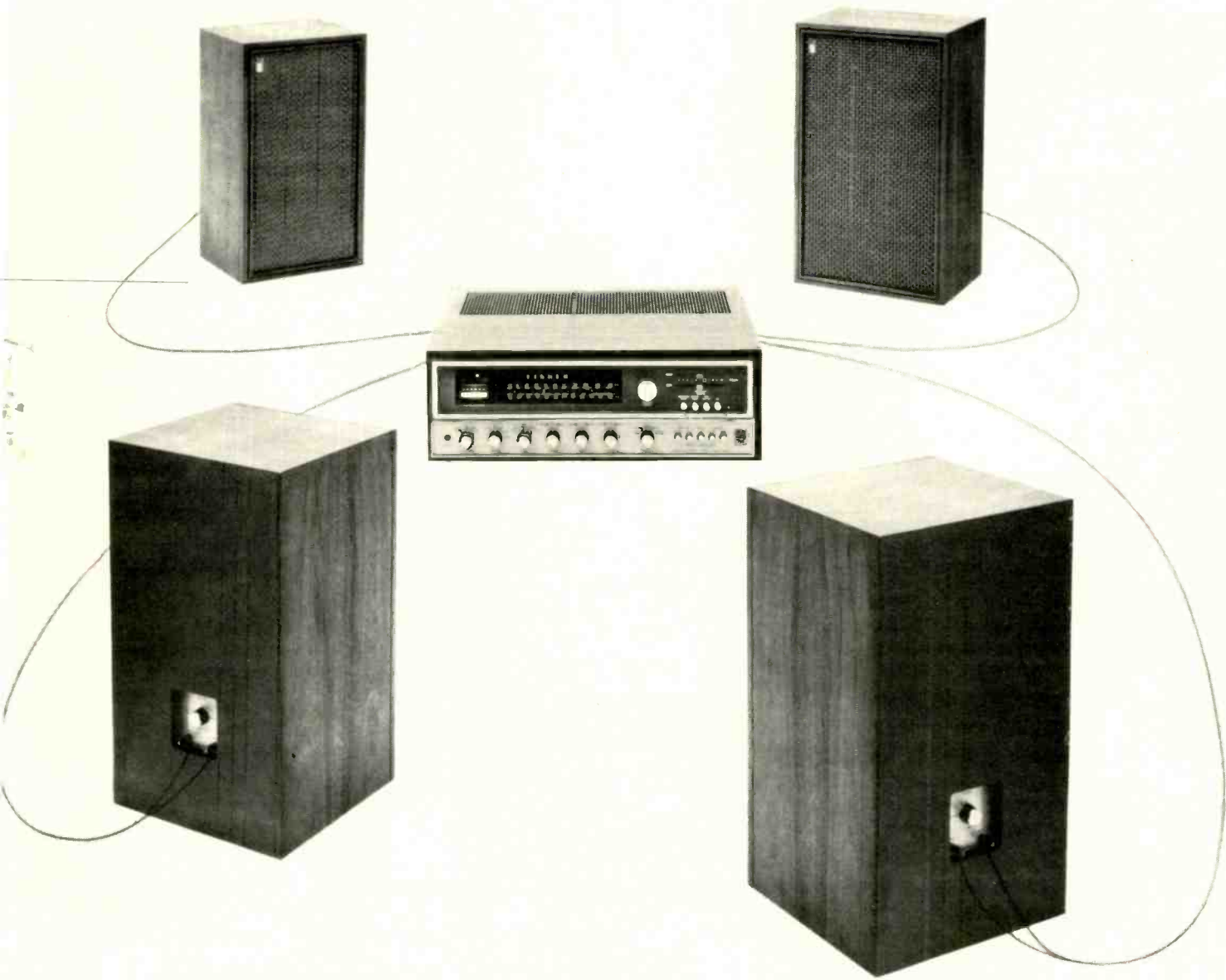
### Why 8-track cartridges?

The 4-channel LP record and 4-channel FM broadcasting are undoubtedly coming but aren't here yet. Tape is the only readily available source of true 4-channel stereo. Open-reel 7½ ips 4-channel tapes can be superb, but if you want a reasonably extensive repertoire of classical and popular music, your choice is necessarily the 8-track tape cartridge. With two 4-track sequences at 3¾ ips, the 8-track cartridge is capable of good fidelity and has the unqualified backing of several major record companies. But!

**There's no higher fi than a true 4-channel stereo system.  
But what do you feed into it?**



(Lift flap.) →



Shown above: The Fisher 701 true 4-channel AM/FM stereo receiver (\$699.95) plus four Fisher XP-9C four-way bookshelf speaker systems (\$219.95 each).

# We've added a new feature to two of our best-selling receivers. A lower price.

Many stereo buyers have asked our dealers why Pioneer components are never on sale, except for discontinued models. The reason is quite simple. Pioneer dealers can sell all the Pioneer units they're allotted as fast as they come in.

How come a lower price now, and on the popular SX-440 and SX-770 stereo receivers? We've

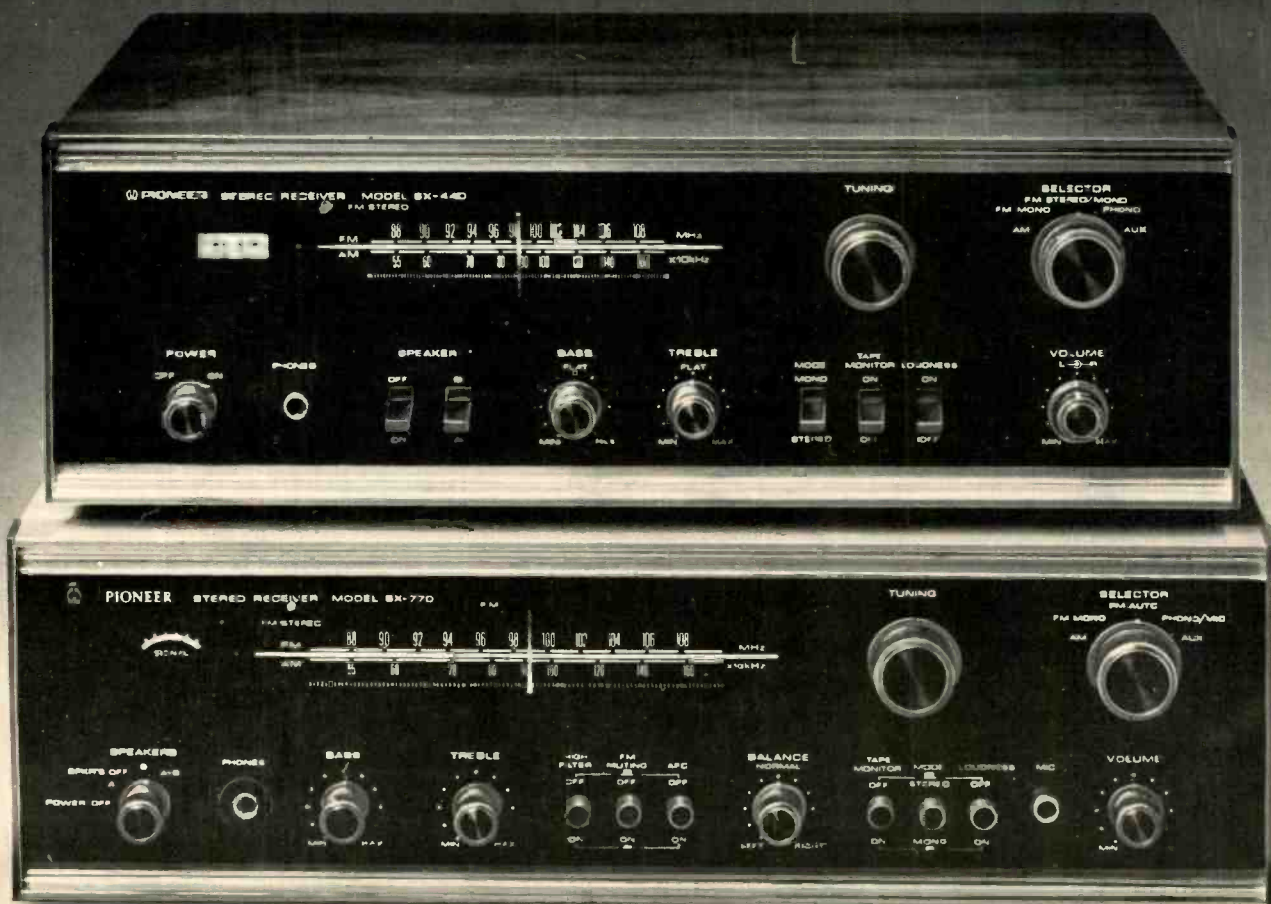
been advertising on television and in general consumer publications. We feel the great mass of the buying public is still not thoroughly familiar with the enjoyable and relaxing hobby of high fidelity. So to get them started with hi-fi, we're enticing them with our 40 watt SX-440 stereo receiver for \$169.95 (formerly \$199.95) and the 70 watt SX-770 for \$199.95 (formerly \$249.95). These are brand new, factory sealed units from our present stock. They carry the

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FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

# Stereo Review

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

### NOSTALGIA: GOING HOME TO EDEN

ON ANY list of human capabilities, nostalgia ought properly to rank just above petty thievery and just below eating peas with a knife; it is often maudlin, usually untrue, and always useless. Most of all, it is counterproductive." Thus critic Clifford Ridley, commenting fashionably on *No, No, Nanette* in a recent issue of the *National Observer*. We needn't take Mr. Ridley too seriously in this, however, for his is a very selective contempt: having described the crime, he promptly goes on to commit it by composing, in the time-honored "they don't write 'em like they used to" mode, a nostalgic hymn in praise of Gershwin, Porter, Kern, and Schwartz. Since others might easily level Mr. Ridley's earlier strictures against his later favorites, it can be seen that what we have here is merely a question of brand preference; nostalgia by any other name is still nostalgia.

We are all, of course, subject to recurrent bouts of nostalgia—once we get old enough to have some pleasant memories to be nostalgic about. Nostalgia is therefore "chronic" in two senses: looking backward is one of the important ways we form perceptions of ourselves (both individually and collectively) in time, and the tendency to do so, moreover, is always with us. But everybody, everywhere, and all the time suggests an impressively universal activity, and rather than dismiss it, as Mr. Ridley does, as a reprehensibly "counterproductive" vice, we ought to be willing to entertain for a little while the idea that it may, on the contrary, be a useful virtue.

Is nostalgia maudlin? Sometimes, but this is not so much a characteristic of nostalgia itself as of some of the sentimentalists who practice it too perfectly. Infatuation with any one of the three tenses in which we must spend our lives can lead to a kind of spiritual dislocation: it is equally limiting to our human potentialities to be maudlin about the past, smugly content with the present, or too much in love with the future (see the March editorial *Keeping the Future in Its Place*). Let us, then, respect the accomplishments of the past for what they are: they are the only authors of the actualities of the present, and these will in turn, in time, determine what are still only the possibilities of the future. We are what we have been; we will be what we were.

Is nostalgia "untrue"? Yes; it almost has to be if it is going to be of any use to us at all. Because of the way we remember (and forget), nostalgia is a selective (and therefore "untrue") view of the real past, a censored account of what actually happened, emphasizing the positive and pleasant aspects of its subject matter, omitting the negative and the unpleasant. This is as it should be: if it were not for our trick memories—distillers of pleasure, suppressors of pain—who would ever have the courage to fall in love, have a baby, or go to a dentist more than once?

Is nostalgia useless? In the general sense, no, though it might occasionally be difficult to discover the particular use of a given nostalgic exercise. Life is to be lived, certainly, but just as certainly not without a measure of examination and reflection. The principal use of the past is to give us direction; without it we will more than likely discover only the shortest way into the swamp. When we criticize the shortcomings of the present, as we should, we do so against the (edited) example of the past. When we lay our plans for a more perfect future, as we must, we do so by manipulating the (selected) materials and experiences of the past. Either activity requires that we make use of the past in its idealized, nostalgic form.

Nostalgia is therefore nothing less than the wellspring of human ideals and aspirations. Beyond the comparatively recent Good Old Days of our fathers lies the fabled Golden Age of the ancients, and beyond that is Paradise Lost, the Garden of Eden. Nostalgia is thus a part of the continual working out of the grandest myth, the most powerful psychological metaphor, of them all. Its subject is youth and innocence—not a personal, individual youth, but the youth of the race itself—and what it is trying to tell us was spelled out long ago in the original Greek: *nostalgia* means "going home"—going home to Eden.



"Very Heavy." That's the recording artist's hip way of expressing satisfaction after a recording session because every single sound has been captured exactly as it was created. Ultimate fidelity. Audio perfection. And chances are it was achieved on Ampex sound equipment. Which is why Ampex is in 90% of the world's recording studios.

Now for the first time, you can experience virtually this same studio versatility and quality at home. We created the AX-300 for the man who has a passion for true, pure sound. The audio perfectionist. And because the AX-300 has more professional innovations than others, we dubbed it the 45 Lb. Studio. You'll soon see... and hear... why it warrants this distinction.

The AX-300 is a six head bi-directional stereo tape deck. The Ampex Deep-Gap heads are symmetrically located so that tape is always pulled over heads in either direction for better tape-to-head interface. 3 motor drive system. Heavy duty hysteresis synchronous capstan motor assures steady, even tape motion regardless of voltage fluctuations.

Symmetrically arranged push-buttons control all tape motion functions thru positive action solenoid operation.

Exclusive motion sensing controlled solid-state logic circuit prevents tape stretch, breaks and spills, even when changing from fast wind directly to play.

Built-in studio 4 line mixer. 4 separate controls let you mix 4 independent sources for mono,

# THE AMPEX 45 lb. STUDIO



or 2 stereo sources for stereo recording.

Function programmer. Operates independently of mixer panel and allows total recording and playback convenience

with choice of stereo operation, channel 1 mono, channel 2 mono, sound-on-sound or sound-with-sound. All programmed internally without external patching.

Stereo echo effect. Allows addition of controlled feedback in both channels without the use of external patchcords.

Controlled bandwidth. Built-in active filtering limits the bandwidth to allow full bias, provides extremely clean recordings throughout the audio spectrum. Provides extremely low signal-to-noise ratio, virtually eliminates intermodulation distortion and dropouts.

Externally adjustable bias and VU meter calibration. Automatic reverse and repeat play. Pause/edit control. Variable noise reduction filter. Source/tape monitoring. 6 solid state pre-amps. Auto shut-off. 3-speed operation. Optional remote control. Plus many more features we simply don't have room to list.

AX-300 means studio innovations, studio capabilities for the audio perfectionist. One of the most technically versatile decks you can buy. Yet it's a breeze to operate. We built in everything you need. And nothing you don't.

For in-depth coverage of all the features of the AX-300, order the AX-300 instruction manual. Just send \$1.00 to cover postage and handling to Ampex, Dept. 300, 2201 Landmeier Road, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007. Or stop by your audio dealer and ask him about the AX-300. And be prepared to do a lot of listening.

The 45 Lb. Studio  
Very Heavy, Indeed!

**AMPEX**

CIRCLE NO. 5 ON READER SERVICE CARD

## Very Heavy



These long  
playing  
cartridges will  
outperform  
any long  
playing  
records  
you own.



Here are two exciting stereo cartridges that barely touch your records, yet track them like radar, at forces so low that your records will be good as new after years of use.\*

**1000ZE/X "Measurement Standard"**  
—Tracks as low as 0.1 gram in laboratory playback arms. List Price—\$99.95.

Each 1000ZE/X and 999VE/X cartridge is individually adjusted to have a flat frequency response within  $\pm 1$  dB from 20-20,000 Hz. Stereo separation is better than 35 dB at 1 K Hz and remains 25 dB or better all the way out to 20,000 Hz. Overall frequency response a phenomenal 4-40,000 Hz. There are no electrical or mechanical peaks and total IM distortion at the standard 3.54 cm/sec groove velocity does not exceed .05% at any frequency within the full spectrum. Uses a .2 x .7 mil hand polished miniature diamond for exceptional low mass.

**999VE/X "Professional"** — Recommended tracking force  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  grams. List Price—\$79.95.

\*Based on Empire's 5000 play tests (more than 50 times the normal life usage of a record).

Write for your free copy of "1971 Guide to Sound Design:" Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

**EMPIRE**



CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE PAGE



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Bel Canto Banquet

● I enjoyed Martha Bennett Stiles' article on food fit for a diva ("The Bel Canto Banquet," April), but it is, alas, incomplete. She omitted that all-time popular favorite—Fresh Garden Peas!

WILLIAM B. OBER  
Tenafly, N. J.

*All banquets, like articles, must end, and just proportion sometimes means that something must be left out—there was room neither for Mary's Garden Peas nor her Salad, and the Olives Fremstad (pimolas in sour cream spiked with garlic) are still in the kitchen.*

### Kris Kristofferson

● I do hope that Kris Kristofferson ("Kris Kristofferson: Odysseus in Levis," April) is talented, as he does seem to be such an unappealing cat.

STEVE ADAMSON  
Stoughton, Mass.

*We suggest that now that Mr. Adamson has looked, he also listen a little.*

### Grammy Awards

● Your recent series of thought-provoking articles on the "classical crisis" can be graphically amplified by the way the classical category was handled—or scuttled—at the March 16th Grammy Awards. The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) represents the recording industry. The awards are presented each year to those responsible for excellence in just about every area of the recording field. Three points serve to illustrate what the recording industry thinks of classical music:

In all categories *except classical*, each nominee for a given award was announced before the award was presented to the winner. In classical, only the winners were announced.

At least one winner in the classical field was not given enough time to go to the podium to receive his award. When Robert Myers of Angel Records was only halfway to the podium, the next award was announced.

The two people chosen to present the classical awards were not familiar with the music. One even stated that she did not know how to "pronounce these names." Needless to say, she did not try.

It seems in a city the size of Los Angeles,

NARAS could have found *someone* who knew the music well enough to be able to pronounce those names! It almost seems as if the recording industry is deliberately trying to destroy a part of its own lifeblood, and this is frightening.

ROBERT A. NORBERG,  
Recording Engineer  
Capitol-Angel Records  
Hollywood, Cal.

*The Editor replies: "Mr. Norberg's letter may come as something of a surprise to those readers who saw the Grammy Awards televised. If one were to judge from that oddly unprofessional spectacle alone, there are no Grammy awards for classical music."*

### Quadrasonics

● For some time now I have been increasingly aware of a misspelling that began appearing in the various audio magazines I was reading, the spelling of the prefix *quadri-* (or *quadru-* or *quadr-* before vowels) as "*quadro-*" or "*quadra-*," spellings which appalled me, as they are so far out of line with regard to normal good English. I did some research in my back magazine files and found that you were the first one to use the spelling "*quadra-*" in the September 1969 issue of *STEREO REVIEW*. The misspelling "*quadra-*" has now spread to several other publications, making it harder to eradicate it. The problem is not whether it is *-phonic* or *-sonic*, Greek or Latin (and there is plenty of precedent for mixing the two), but whether the prefix is spelled correctly. The only correct spelling is as in *quadriphonic* or *quadrisonic* or *quadriscat*.

PHILIP N. BRIDGES  
Ashton, Md.

*The Editor replies: "I agree with Mr. Bridges that, according to the 'rules' of word coinage, the spelling 'quadri-' is 'correct' and 'quadra-' is not. Neologistics is hardly an exact science, however, and one is therefore free to make (or break) a few rules without being tossed out of the game. 'Quadra-' was chosen over 'quadri-' for the best reason in the world: it is easier to read. In English, the 'a' in that position scans easily as a 'schwa' (the phoneticist's expression for an unaccented neutral vowel sound), but the 'i' presents a problem, a momentary hesitation: how does one pronounce it—as 'quadrnh-*

*(Continued on page 8)*

STEREO REVIEW

# The History Savers at work.



David Hall and Sam Sanders discuss a fine point.

Deep inside a building at New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, recorded history is being recorded again. At the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, technician Sam Sanders is busy continually transcribing all sorts of old recordings, transcriptions and acetates. Not only will there then be a more permanent record of this valuable material, but access to it is made easy through a sophisticated catalogue system, by which interested persons can hear material that was otherwise unavailable.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound are part of the New York Public Library, Research Library of the Performing Arts, and encompass virtually the entire history of recorded sound. But to get these early (and often irreplaceable) discs onto tape wasn't easy. Because until the recording industry established its own standards, playing speeds, groove widths and depths were widely varied.



Stanton engineers worked closely with Archive Head David Hall and engineer Sam Sanders

when the Archive Preservation Laboratory was being set up. Standard Stanton 681 cartridge bodies were chosen for their superior reproduction characteristics. However, some 30 different stylus types had to be prepared to give the tape transfer operation the variety needed to match the various old groove specifications. Each was hand-made by Stanton engineers to fit a particular disc's requirements. So when Sam Sanders begins the careful disc-to-tape transfer, he must first match the stylus to the record. Both microscope and trial-and-error techniques must be often used together. But one of the special styli will enable every last bit of material to be extracted from these recorded rarities.

It goes without saying that a company willing to take such care in helping to preserve recorded history must also be interested in superior reproduction of today's high fidelity pressings. Which is one reason why Stanton cartridges remain the choice of professionals the world over.

For an informative brochure about our professional-quality cartridges, write to Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.



# NEW, TRANSPARENT AND BEAUTIFUL.



ADC's brand new 450A is a "high transparency" speaker system for the perfectionist who wants to own the best bookshelf system money can buy.

This two-way system avoids the use of complex crossover networks and the resultant phase distortion. By enabling the majority of the audio spectrum to be radiated by the high frequency unit, we achieve essentially a "single point source". The low frequency driver is then left to do the demanding but uncomplicated job of reproducing the low and basically non-directional portion of the audio spectrum.

The result is an extremely transparent true-to-life bookshelf speaker system you must hear to appreciate.

## ADC 450A SPECIFICATIONS

Type . . . Full-sized bookshelf.  
Cabinet . . . Oiled Walnut.  
Dimensions . . . 25" H x 14" W x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ " D.  
Weight . . . 50 lbs. each.  
Frequency Response . . . 25 Hz to 30 kHz  $\pm$  3 dB (measured in average listening room).  
Speakers (2) . . .  $\frac{3}{4}$ " "point source" wide range tweeter and 12" high compliance woofer.  
Nominal Impedance . . . 6 ohms (for optimum performance from transistorized amplifiers).  
Power Required . . . 10 watts RMS minimum.  
Price . . . \$150 (suggested resale).



# AUDIO FOR AUDIOPHILES

CIRCLE NO. 7 ON READER SERVICE CARD

sonic' or as 'quadree-sonic?' We are all sub-vocalizers, and either of these, it seems to me, is impossible for speakers of English to do justice to without a prissily unnatural set of the lips.

By christening this new art (if 'art' it is) in print, I was hoping thereby to give it, as soon as possible, a descriptive and easily pronounced handle everyone could agree on. This was perhaps overbold and presumptuous of me, for almost immediately there was a veritable eruption of elegant variations, all of them affected and a few of them monstrous (in the third and fourth Webster senses), difference only for difference's sake. But then, rules can be broken by anyone—I am willing to break the one about 'quadri-' and 'quadra-'; for example, and Mr. Bridges apparently doesn't mind fracturing the one about mixing Latin and Greek roots. I am a little firmer on the latter than he is, but I am capable, in this music magazine, of breaking practically any rule, without qualm, for Euphony's sake.

Which brings us to the last point: I have a sense, which etymologies might, with a great deal of difficulty, explain, that we should pay some attention to how we use the roots 'phon-' and 'son-'. Audio really has two 'business ends,' the input and the output, and we have customarily been using 'phon-' for the input end (megaphone, microphone, telephone—and, yes, phonograph is an exception); I favor preserving the difference. Thus, music may be quadratically recorded (by microphones), but it is quadratically reproduced (by loudspeakers). Knowing from experience, however, that this is one area in which barbarous etymological boobery is almost always triumphant, I expect in time to find all the world chanting 'kwodreefonix' with one voice, and without causing discernible pain to any lexical ganglia but Mr. Bridges' and mine."

## Multi-Channel Enthusiasm

● Since all the talk began about four-channel sound some months ago, my reaction has been to dismiss it as just a gimmick. However, as Ralph Hodges pointed out in his April article, "Multi-Channel Listening," it was simple to set up a "free home trial," since I had enough equipment at hand already.

How shall I say it? I saw the light; I heard the sound—and I loved it. It really works, adding an extra dimension to many of my records. Of course, it does nothing for mono and very little for certain stereo discs, but I've hit a few winners and I'm just starting to re-audition the records and tapes in my collection. The big hit of my early experimentation was the first Swingle Singers album "Bach's Greatest Hits." It's unbelievable. The effect is so splendid that the two extra speakers have become a much enjoyed addition to a music system that has never had any use for flashy fads. Incidentally, although my front speakers are \$250 units, I'm using \$55 speakers in the rear.

I do hope that the impact of Mr. Hodges article, despite my complete enthusiasm, does not require another change of name for your fine magazine. *Quadrasonic Review* doesn't sound quite right to my otherwise four-channel ears.

EDWARD BUXBAUM  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

● Adding a difference-signal channel to my audio system ("Multi-Channel Listening," April) made a remarkable difference. The improved distinctness of individual instruments, the sense of the concert hall environment, and the feeling of a room full of sound are truly

startling on some performances. I hope that recording companies will soon begin to experiment with difference-signal mixing.

The Hafler system may be a particular boon to people who, like myself, have pretty modest accommodations. The extra channel seems to compensate for the lack of air space and reflective surface in a small, acoustically "dead" room. It certainly is cheaper than moving to a bigger apartment, especially in New York.

JOSEPH H. BALL  
New York, N. Y.

● After some experimentation with the four-channel setup shown in the April issue, I must give a strong second to the idea. All the information given worked as shown, and gives me something to tie to the remote speaker terminals to provide on-off control. I augmented the Sony STR-6120/AR4x setup here with a pair of Allied-Radio Shack Solo-103 units at the rear corners of the room, aimed straight up. The sense of space gained from this is astonishing. It appears that the rear level needs to run some 10 dB lower than the main channels to achieve the maximum effect. Augmentation of the bass region also gives one pause for thought as to the efficiency of coupling provided by a conventional setup.

Thank you for the information. May I suggest Bernstein's *Peter and the Wolf* recording on Columbia for some nice "hall" reverb effects, and *Fairwell to Tarwathie* from Judy Collins' "Whales and Nightingales" leaves one fairly dripping with seawater.

DOUGLAS K. BECK  
Sunnyvale, Cal.

● Many thanks for Ralph Hodges' article on multi-channel listening in the April issue. For several years I have had a pair of Jensen wall speakers that were wired in parallel with my main speakers and were used to supplement them. The diagram on page 64 revealed that all that was required was to disconnect the ground wires at the amplifier speaker terminals and twist them together. Quite an improvement, especially for snare drums, cymbals, and triangles. It really brings them out and seems to add depth to the sound. All program material is noticeably benefitted.

Incidentally, each of the Jensen speakers has a five-inch woofer, two tweeters, and a level control. Just right for "free" quadrasonics.

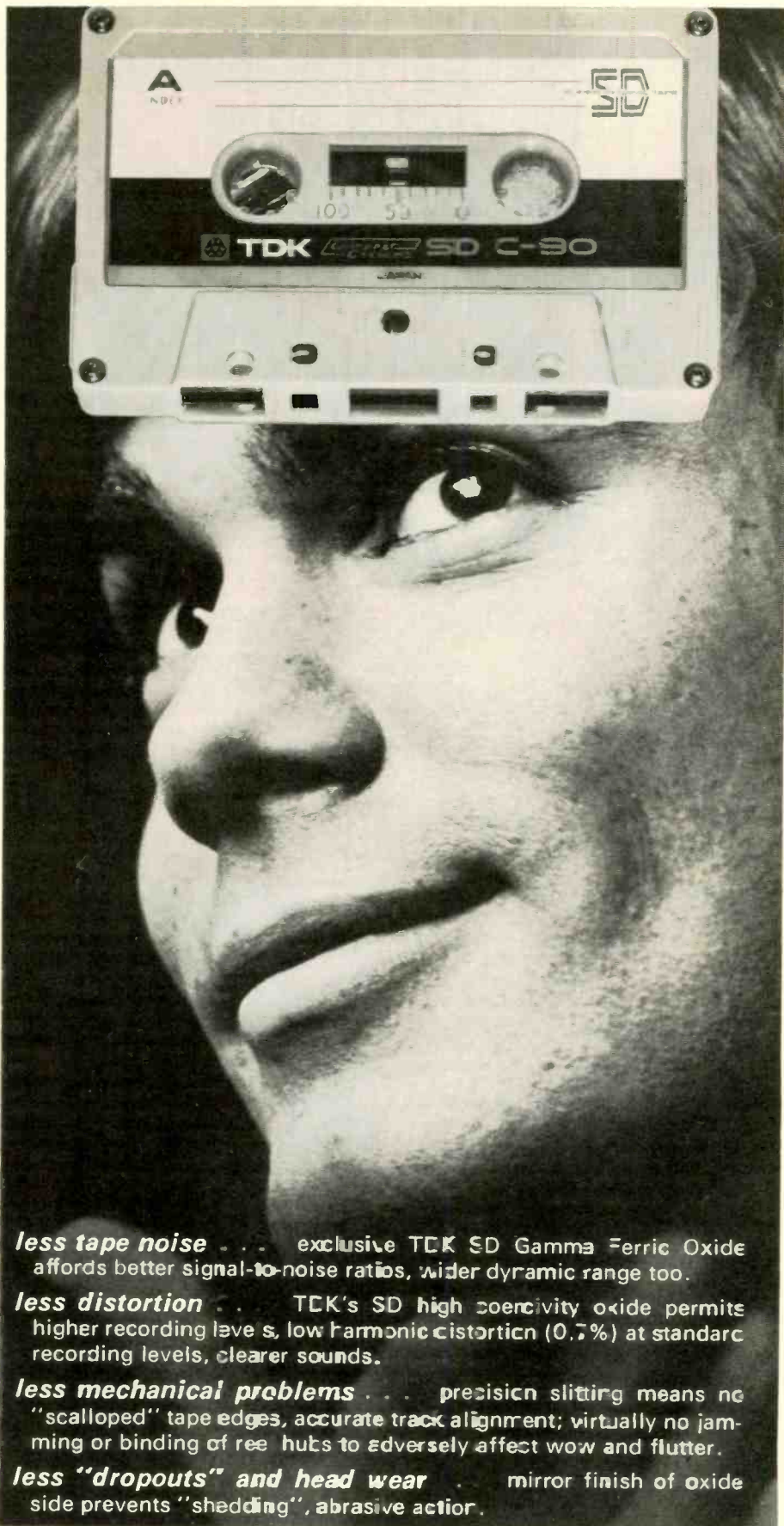
JOHN S. MCLEAN  
Richards Landing, Ont.

● Ralph Hodges' article in the April issue was excellent coverage of "Multi-Channel Listening." It would be useful to know whether amplifiers with a center channel speaker outlet would provide a "difference signal." Two or more speakers could be powered by the center channel and, if properly placed, would perhaps be as effective as the hook-up described in the article. The manual accompanying my amplifier describes the method of wiring the third (center channel) speaker, but doesn't give the purpose or effect to be achieved.

JAMES V. HENRY  
McLean, Va.

Mr. Hodges replies: "Sorry to disappoint you, Mr. Henry, but the answer to your implied question and the queries from numerous other readers on alternate hook-ups is 'No.' The center-channel output provides not a 'difference' signal but a 'sum' signal, which can be used to drive a center-fill speaker between the main  
(Continued on page 10)

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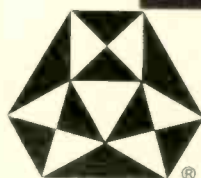


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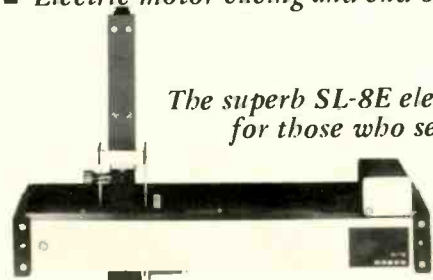
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stereo pair or a mono extension speaker. Although several readers have reported pleasing results from using the sum signal for rear-channel purposes, we know of no theoretical justification for doing so, and do not find the results as satisfactory."

**Melanie and Piaf**

● I have just read Noel Coppage's April review of Melanie's "Candles in the Rain" tape. Although she is not my favorite female vocal artist, I do like her. But from there to comparing her with the immortal Piaf is another matter. You'll probably compare Tiny Tim to Maurice Chevalier next! Why is it that talent is always weighed and measured by someone else's accomplishment and not by its own value and merit?

MICHELINE ROBIDOUX  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*The Editor replies: "Simply because measuring or weighing anything requires a standard. In this case, Piaf is the standard, and other singers may be measured against her accomplishment without any implication that they are her equal. Knowing that, to Mr. Coppage, Melanie 'sounds a little like Piaf' (and that is all he said) gives us some idea of the kind of singer she is very quickly, and probably better than a long disquisition on her voice and performing style would."*

**"Get-Ready Man"**

● I can tell you exactly where the "Get-Ready Man" mentioned in William Anderson's "Editorially Speaking" column for March comes from. He appears in "The Car We Had to Push," the second chapter of *My Life and Hard Times* by James Thurber. It is a shame that he forgot that Thurber created the Get-Ready Man, but whether or not one remembers the name of the creator isn't nearly as significant as remembering the creation itself—which is, incidentally, a point that is just as true about music as it is about literature and all other art.

BERNARD SPUNBERG  
North Hollywood, Cal.

*The Editor replies: "I am grateful to Mr. Spunberg for supplying the locus classicus, but then I'm also grateful to James Thurber for inventing the Get-Ready Man. Mr. Spunberg's point about significant memory is well made, but I'm a little compulsive about giving credit where credit is due."*

**Jeanette MacDonald**

● The RCA album LPV 526 does not contain original soundtrack recordings of Jeanette MacDonald, as Mr. Mallery states in his letter to the Editor (February), but rather recordings of the 1930's and 1940's. The word "original" on the album cover is used to distinguish them from the second and third versions of the same songs, which were recorded by MacDonald and Eddy in later years, up to 1958.

I have ninety-eight selections by Jeanette MacDonald, all of which have been released commercially on RCA and HMV. To the best of my knowledge, none is a soundtrack.

And for those interested in hearing Miss MacDonald sing grand opera, the selections in LM 2908 are actually from *Faust*, *Bohème*, *Butterfly*, *Louise*, and *Roméo et Juliette*.

WILLIAM F. CORCORAN  
New London, Conn.

(Continued on page 12)

STEREO REVIEW

# Have the high notes on your records become only a memory?

When Jascha Heifetz plays a high note on your favorite violin recording, are you actually hearing it? Or are you just remembering it?

That's something to think about when you consider how many hundreds of dollars you've invested in your records. And what can happen when you play them.

As soon as the stylus touches down in the groove, a running battle begins. The stylus is violently tossed up, down and sideways, thousands of times a second. These motions are either producing beautiful high notes, or expensive memories. It all depends on the tonearm.

## How the tonearm should work.

If the tonearm does its various jobs properly, your records can last a lifetime. So we think it is worth investing a few minutes of your time to understand the essentials of what a tonearm is supposed to do.

The tonearm must apply just the right amount of pressure to the stylus, keep this pressure equal on both walls of the groove, and follow the stylus without resistance as the groove spirals inward. Then the stylus will be able to respond freely to all the twists and turns in the record groove, without digging in or chopping away.

And the pending four-channel records are likely to require the stylus to perform even more complex gyrations.

## It takes some engineering.

Dual tonearms do all these jobs extraordinarily well. For example, the tonearm of the 1219 works like a gyroscope. It pivots up and down on one ring, left and right on another.

And all four pivot points are identical. This suspension system is called a gimbal. And no other automatic tonearm has a pivot system like it.



Twin-ring gimbal system of Dual 1219. Arm pivots vertically from inner ring, horizontally from outer ring. All four suspension points have identical low-friction bearings.

## It takes extraordinary precision.

Every stylus is made to apply even pressure on the groove walls. But during play, the groove pulls the stylus against the inner wall. Better tonearms have a special setting to compensate for this "skating" effect.



Anti-skating system of Dual 1209 and 1219 has separate calibrations for elliptical and conical styli.

However, for an anti-skating system to be effective, bearing friction must not only be low, but consistent. If you can imagine fifteen thousandths of a gram, that's the maximum bearing friction of the 1219. Guaranteed.

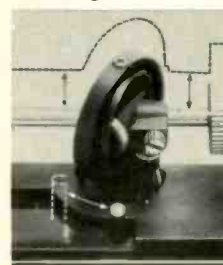
## And some other angles.

Apart from preventing record wear, tonearm design should prevent distortion. This largely depends on the angle of the stylus in the groove. Which depends in some cases on tonearm design, in others on the way the cartridge fits into the tonearm head.

The longer the tonearm, the lower the tracking error. The 1219 is 8¾" from pivot to stylus tip, longest of all automatic tonearms.

The angle of the stylus in the groove alters during play depending on whether you are playing one record

or a stack. The Dual 1219 is an exception because its tonearm can be set for the correct angle in either single or multiple play.



Mode Selector of Dual 1219 lowers tonearm base for single play. Stylus tracks at correct 15° angle.

## The professionals' choice.

Dual turntables have been the choice of professionals for many years because of their precision, ruggedness and simplicity of operation. And not always the most expensive Dual, either.

If you'd like to know what independent test labs say, we'll send you complete reprints of their reports. Plus an article on what to look for in record playing equipment reprinted from a leading music magazine.

But if you're already convinced and can't wait, just visit your authorized United Audio dealer and ask for a demonstration.

Dual automatic turntables are priced from \$99.50 to \$175.00. When you think about it, that's not very much to pay to keep your records from becoming a costly memory.

United Audio Products, Inc., 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553.



1209, \$129.50

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## Honeywell

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### Dynaflap

● So it goes for me . . . the new Plymouth has to have a crankshaft replaced . . . the new Signature refrigerator is now awaiting its third compressor . . . Now, I've purchased my first RCA Dynaflex disc ("The New Skinny Disc," April) and—you guessed it—I got one in which the little gas bubbles didn't get out of the vinyl.

DONALD R. HOGER  
New York, N. Y.

● Bravo to RCA. In a time of new, sensational, never-before seen, heard, or dreamed-of developments touted by every firm in America, it is nice to have a new idea enter quietly through a side door ("The New Skinny Disc," April). I'm sure RCA could have screamed and shouted about the revolutionary development of the Dynaflex process, but they chose instead to permit the public a rare moment of unpublicized discovery.

CLIFF KAWANA  
Honolulu, Hawaii

### Disc Quality

● I have recently seen quite a bit of material in STEREO REVIEW concerning poor disc quality. A radical improvement in overall quality may not be economically feasible, but why couldn't record companies manufacture limited numbers of high-quality discs to be sold to a group of subscribers to this service, like the record clubs many of them now operate? There would be extra cost involved, but I for one would gladly pay it, and so would others.

JOHN SCHAFFNER  
Clarendon Hills, Ill.

● Thank you for demonstrating that I'm not the only one who's fed up with poor record quality. Your synopsis, "The Product" is, sad to say, accurate. American record pressings are terrible. I'm tired of returning 50 per cent of my purchases because the discs are unplayable. Sorry, but one gram sylvus force will not track a record whose surface visually resembles a sine wave; and \$1,500 worth of equipment will sound no better than a \$79 portable when the ratio of vinyl to sand is half and half.

DAVID D. HYDE  
St. Louis, Mo.

### More Classical Crisis

● In reference to STEREO REVIEW's series on the classical music dilemma, I, as do many of my rock-music-listening friends, also appreciate some classical music. However, when we go to record stores to buy classical music, there is such a huge, confusing selection of works and artists to choose from.

If I may presume to speak for the under-thirty people, I would say that concomitant with expanding our experience we would very much like to know about and hear more classical music. Along with Canned Heat, we can dig Beethoven too, but the question is where to start?

JOEL DON-BATALLA  
Hayward, Cal.

● I feel that the classical music business has fallen victim to the absentee ownership and management of retail firms. This has led to a drastic decline of interest in serving the customer both in quality of product and in the sales personnel's knowledge of what they are selling.

FRANK PEDROJA  
Wichita, Kans.

STEREO REVIEW



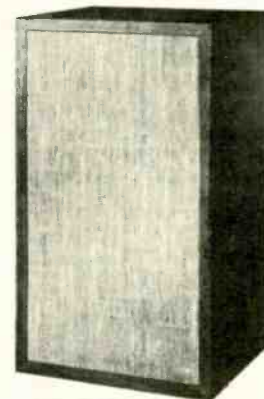
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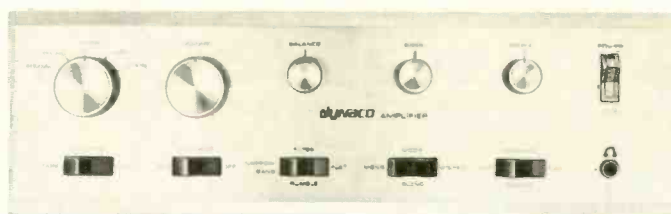
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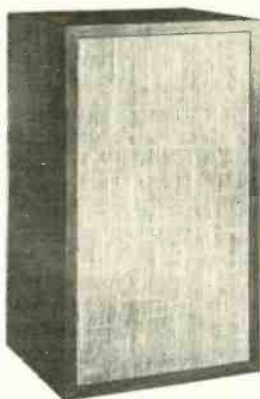
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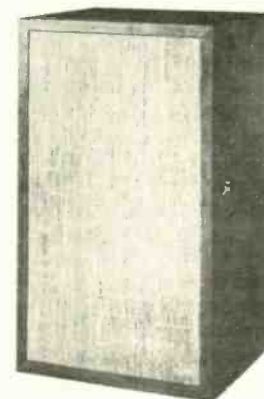
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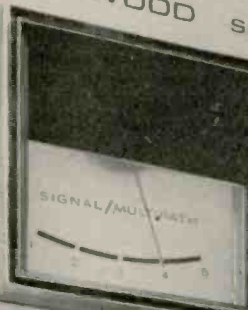
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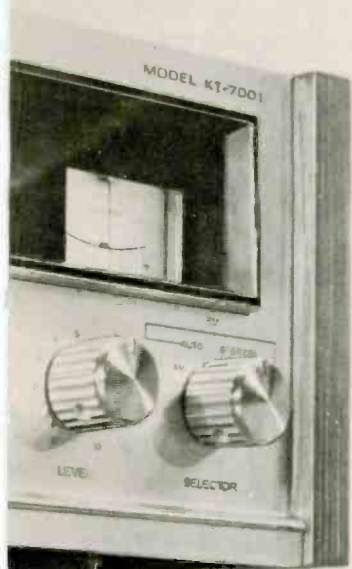
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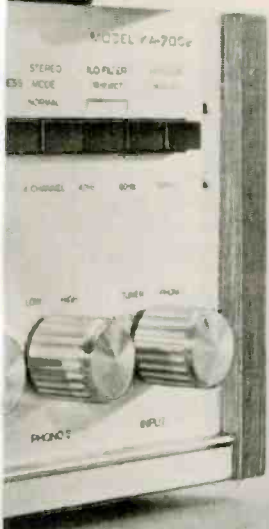
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**SPECIFICATIONS:** FM Sensitivity (IHF): 1.5  $\mu$ V ■ FM Frequency Response: 20-15k Hz (+0, -1.5 dB) ■ FM Harmonic Distortion (at 400 Hz, 100% Mod.): Mono: less than 0.25%; Stereo: less than 0.5% ■ FM S/N Ratio (at 100% Mod.): better than 75 dB at 30  $\mu$ V Input; better than 60 dB at 5  $\mu$ V Input ■ FM Capture Ratio (IHF): 1 dB ■ FM Selectivity (Alt. Channel, IHF): better than 90 dB ■ FM Stereo Separation: better than 30 dB (20-15k Hz); better than 40 dB (300-10k Hz) ■ AM Sensitivity (IHF): 15  $\mu$ V ■ AM Selectivity: better than 30 dB ■ Dimensions: 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ "W, 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ "H, 11"D ■ Weight: 18 lbs. ■ Price: \$279.95 ■



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Two Differential Amplifiers for first and pre-drive stages, Output Coupling Capacitorless Complementary-symmetry Driver Stages, Dual-balanced Plus and Minus Power Supplies, and Direct-coupling Circuitry from input to speakers combine to produce exceptional wide frequency range from DC up to ultrasonic with purer, richer, lower frequency response, freedom from IM Distortion; phase shift over the entire audio range, roll-off at very low frequencies; crossover distortion-free sound even under low output level and high damping factor down through extremely low frequencies ■ Provision for 4-channel Stereo, 2 Phonos, 2 Tape Decks, 2 Auxiliaries, Mike, Tuner, 3 sets of Stereo Speakers ■ Separate Pre-amplifier and Main Amplifier ■ Null Balance Control ■ 2 dB Step-type Tone Control Switches ■

**SPECIFICATIONS:** Power Output (IHF): 196 watts @ 4 ohms, 170 watts @ 8 ohms; 100 watts RMS Continuous Power, 50 watts per channel with both channels operating simultaneously with 8 ohms load at any frequency from 20-20k Hz ■ Harmonic Distortion: less than 0.5%, rated output from 20-20k Hz ■ IM Distortion: less than 0.3%, rated output or any level less ■ Frequency Response: 20-50k Hz ( $\pm$  1 dB) ■ Sensitivity: Phono 1 and Mic, 2.5 mV; Phono 2, 2.5 mV/0.06 mV (switchable); Aux 1-2/Tape Play A-B, 200 mV ■ Main Amp Input: 1V ■ Signal-to-Noise Ratio (below rated output): Phono 1-2 (2.5 mV), 65 dB; Mic, 67 dB; Aux/Tuner/Tape Play, 77 dB ■ Damping Factor: 45 @ 8 ohms ■ Bass Control:  $\pm$  10 dB @ 100 Hz w/2 dB Step Switch (Tone Control Switch @ 300 Hz) ■ Treble Control:  $\pm$  10 dB @ 10k Hz w/2 dB Step Switch (Tone Control Switch @ 2k Hz) ■ Low & High Filter: 18 dB per octave ■ Dimensions: 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ "W, 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ "H, 11"D ■ Weight: 22 lbs. ■ Price: \$299.95 ■

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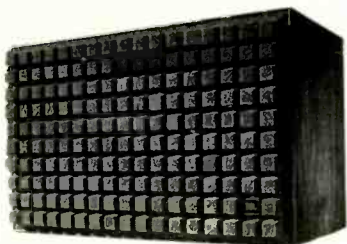
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# NEW PRODUCTS

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## James B. Lansing L100 Speaker



● JAMES B. LANSING's new L100 speaker system is a three-way design in a sealed bookshelf-size walnut cabinet measuring 24 x 14 x 13 inches. The direct-radiator drivers consist of a 12-inch woofer with a 27-Hz free-air resonance, a 4-inch cone mid-range, and a 2-inch cone tweeter. Crossover frequencies are 2,500 and 7,000 Hz. Output-level controls for both the mid-range and tweeter provide a 9-dB range of adjustment; they are calibrated in decibels and installed on the front panel of the enclosure behind the removable

grille cloth. On-axis frequency response of the L100 is 40 to 15,000 Hz  $\pm 3$  dB. Response remains within 6 dB of this range up to 45 degrees off-axis in any direction. Power-handling capability is 50 watts, and efficiency for a 1-watt input is rated at 78 dB sound-pressure level at a distance of 15 feet. The system has a nominal 8-ohm impedance. The grille-cloth material, molded in a raised checkerboard pattern, comes in shades of orange, blue, or brown. Price of the L100: \$264.

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## Kenwood KA-5002 Amplifier and KT-5000 AM/Stereo FM Tuner



● KENWOOD's new KA-5002 integrated stereo amplifier and KT-5000 AM/stereo FM tuner are matched components of similar styling and size. The tuner (top) has an FM sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts, a frequency response of 20 to 15,000 Hz  $\pm 0$ ,  $-2$  dB, and a capture ratio of 2.5 dB. Harmonic distortion is under 0.6 per cent for mono FM reception and 0.9 per cent for stereo. Selectivity is better than 50 dB. The unit has separate signal-strength and center-of-channel tuning meters and an output-level control located on the front panel. Indicators light when the FM interstation-noise muting and multiplex-filter switches are activated.

The KA-5002 amplifier has complete dubbing and monitoring facilities for two three-head stereo tape decks or a single four-channel machine. In the latter application two of the four signals are processed by the KA-5002's power amplifiers to drive two speakers; the other two signals are available at the second pair of tape-output jacks, from whence they can be routed to a second stereo amplifier and on to the second pair of speakers. When a front-panel pushbutton on the KA-5002 is depressed the large volume knob serves as a master control for all four signals.

The KA-5002 delivers a continuous power output of 30 watts per channel, both driven into 8-ohm loads, throughout the audio-frequency band. Distortion at this output is less than 0.5 per cent (har-

monic) and 0.3 per cent (intermodulation), and signal-to-noise ratios are 77 dB for high-level inputs and 65 dB for the phono input. Frequency response is 20 to 50,000 Hz  $\pm 1$  dB. The unusually complete control features include high- and low-cut filters (12-dB-per-octave rolloff above 7,000 Hz and below 80 Hz, respectively), loudness compensation, a  $-20$ -dB muting switch for brief listening interruptions, and a "null" function for electronically balancing the two stereo channels. All these are controlled by pushbuttons. Inputs provided are two phono (one affected by a front-panel sensitivity switch), two auxiliary, tuner, and microphone. They are chosen by means of a rotary selector, the position of which is indicated by miniature lamps arranged to either side of the front-panel headphone jack. Off-the-tape monitoring from either deck and interdeck dubbing are under the control of a second rotary switch, while a third selects mode (either or both channels, stereo reverse, and mono), and a fourth turns two pairs of speakers on or off. The bass and treble controls are calibrated in 2-dB intervals over a range of  $\pm 10$  dB.

The tuner and amplifier are of identical size—approximately 17 x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 11 inches and weigh 14 and 20 pounds, respectively. Walnut end pieces are fitted to both units. Prices: KT-5000 tuner, \$179.95; KA-5002 amplifier, \$219.95.

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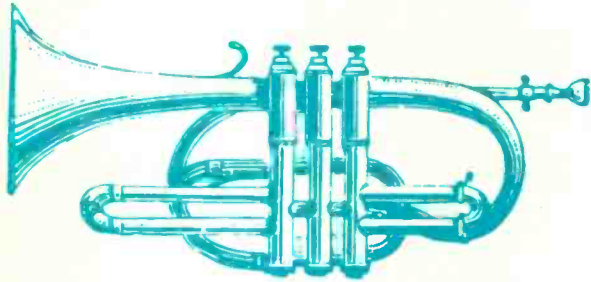
## Sherwood S-4100 Stereo Compact



● SHERWOOD's new Model S-4100 is essentially an AM/stereo FM/phono compact system without speakers, which enables the buyer to select those of his choice. The S-4100 has output and switching facilities for two pairs of speakers plus stereo headphones (front-panel jack for low- or high-impedance phones). The built-in amplifiers provide 25 watts per channel continuous power into 8 ohms, with harmonic and intermodulation distortion both 1 per cent at rated

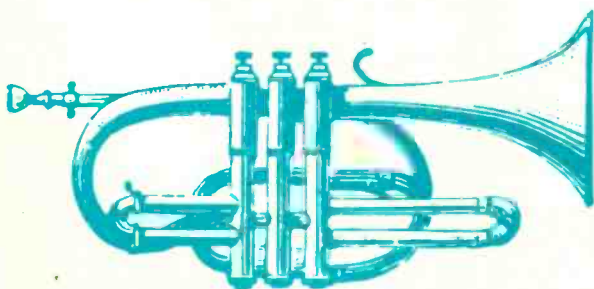
output, and 0.35 per cent or less at a 10-watt level. The frequency response of the audio section is 30 to 20,000 Hz  $\pm 2$  dB and signal-to-noise ratios are 65 dB for the phono inputs and 75 dB for high-level inputs. FM specifications include an IHF sensitivity of 1.9 microvolts, a 2.8-dB capture ratio, and a stereo frequency response of 20 to 15,000 Hz  $\pm 1$  dB. Stereo separation is 40 dB at 1,000 Hz.

The phono section consists of a BSR 4- (Continued on page 20)



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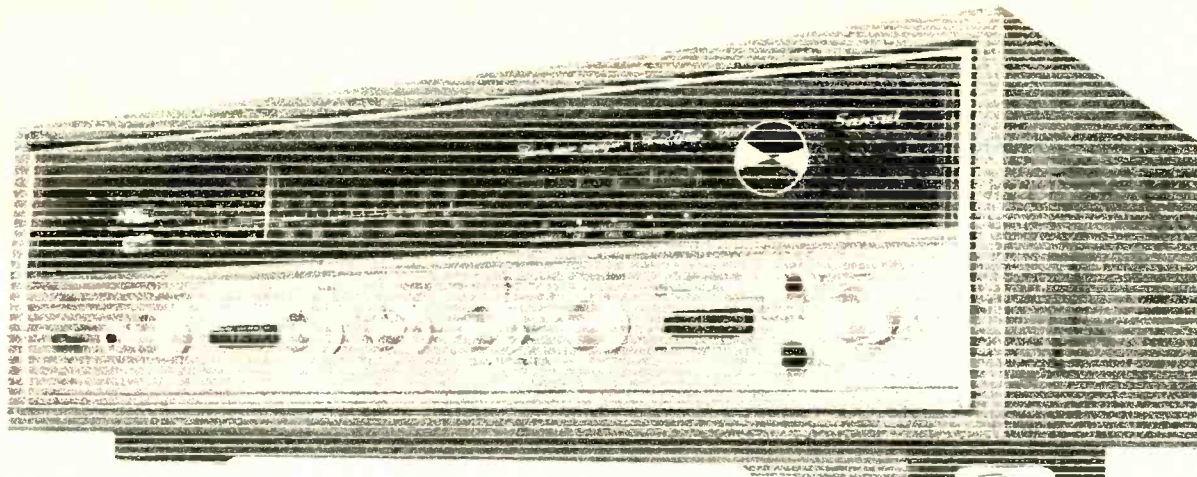
# Stereo Review

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## IF YOU RECOGNIZE THE LOOKS, YOU KNOW THE QUALITY

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If you immediately think, "That's a Sansui", when you spot the distinctive styling, you know enough to assume it will also have sumptuous sound, velvety operating feel, fabulous specifications and deluxe features to match. And you're absolutely right.

Continuous power is 60 watts per channel at 8 ohms, by our own tough standard (or 200 watts of IHF music power). At a total harmonic distortion below 0.5%, not "under 1%." With IHF power bandwidth of 15 to 30,000 hz, not 20 to 20,000. FM sensitivity is 1.8  $\mu$ v IHF—and the sensitivity curve bends sharply beyond that point for real pickup power.

It's got a microphone input with its own control for blending in live voice and instrumental performance with disc, broadcast, tape or any other input. Tape in/out facilities for up to four decks. Exclusive stereo-only FM mode. Linear-tuning FM dial. Separable pre- and power amplifiers. Foolproof pushbutton speaker connectors . . . to mention just a few features. Of course it's a Sansui . . . \$399.95



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# NEW PRODUCTS

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EQUIPMENT

speed (16 $\frac{2}{3}$ , 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ , 45, and 78 rpm) automatic turntable with cueing and adjustable anti-skating and a Shure M75 magnetic cartridge with 0.6-mil conical stylus. The four-position input selector also provides for a high-level auxiliary input. Tape facilities include a source/tape lever switch and a front-panel dubbing jack to supplement the inputs and outputs on the rear panel. Controls beyond those already mentioned include the usual volume, bal-

ance, bass, and treble, plus lever switches for mono/stereo mode, FM interstation-noise muting, and loudness compensation. The FM section is equipped with a signal-strength tuning meter and a stereo-broadcast indicator light. The complete unit, which has dimensions of 17 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 18 inches (including the tinted-plastic dust cover supplied), is finished in oiled walnut. Price: \$279.95.

*Circle 146 on reader service card*

## Garrard Zero 100 Automatic Turntable



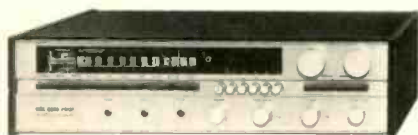
● GARRARD's new Zero 100 automatic turntable has an articulated tone arm that eliminates lateral tracking-angle error. The arm's operation is based on a pivoted cartridge holder whose angular offset is continuously varied to maintain tangency to the groove at all points on the playing area. Since the skating force changes with angular offset, anti-skating compensation is applied by a magnetic system, the effect of which decreases as a theoretically correct rate as the arm moves inward toward the record center. The anti-skating adjustment has settings that correspond to tracking force, with separate calibrations for conical and elliptical styli. A counterweight and a calibrated slider that moves along the underside of the arm establish tracking force. Vertical tracking angle is adjustable at the cartridge shell by means of a lever that tilts the cartridge, selecting the correct vertical angle for single-play

operation or for the center disc of a six-record stack.

The 12-inch platter of the Zero 100 is driven by Garrard's "Synchro-Lab" combination induction-synchronous motor. The operating speeds of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm are adjustable over a range of approximately  $\pm 3$  per cent, and can be tuned with the aid of an illuminated stroboscopic pattern visible through a window in the motorboard. According to the setting of the speed selector, the arm indexes for 7-, 10-, or 12-inch records. The other operating controls—three finger-tab levers—are for automatic and manual play and tone-arm cueing. The motorboard of the Zero 100 is 14 x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches; vertical space required for installation is about 7 inches. Price: \$189.50. A simulated walnut plastic base and a dust cover are available for \$6.50 each.

*Circle 147 on reader service card*

## Kirksaeter RTX 800 Stereo FM Receiver



● KIRKSAETER, a new name on the U.S. audio market, is importing an unusually versatile line of stereo FM receivers based on modular construction and integrated circuits. The five receivers of the Kirksaeter RTX series, headed by the top-of-the-line 8000 (shown), are essentially identical except for the output available from their interchangeable power-amplifier modules. The RTX 8000 provides 70 watts per channel continuous, both channels driven, with harmonic and intermodulation distortion both 0.15 per cent at rated output. Other power options are available down to 37.5 watts per channel within the RTX series, and to 25 watts per channel in the less expensive compact series. Frequency response for the RTX series is 20 to 20,000 Hz  $\pm 0.2$  dB.

The RTX series features manual FM tuning and pushbutton automatic tuning of five preselected FM stations. FM sensitivity is 1.1 microvolts for 26 dB quieting, with 60 dB selectivity and AM and spurious response rejection of 50 and 65 dB, respectively. Capture ratio is 1.5 dB. The extensive array of inputs, pushbutton-selected, include tape head, micro-

phone (front-panel jack), tape (with source/tape monitoring pushbutton), auxiliary, and two phono inputs. The signal-to-noise ratio for the phono inputs is 65 dB at full power for a 2-millivolt input signal. The phono and tape inputs are paralleled by DIN jacks on the rear panel. Among the control facilities are volume, balance, bass and treble (separate for each channel), and a rotary switch for selective control of three pairs of stereo speakers. Pushbuttons are provided for high- and low-cut filters (12-dB-per-octave slopes), FM interstation-noise muting, mono/stereo mode, FM mono/stereo, AFC, loudness compensation, and "presence" (an elevation in response centered at about 5,000 Hz). There are two front-panel headphone jacks, and tuning meters for FM signal strength and channel center. The Kirksaeter receivers measure approximately 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide by 4 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches high. Depth varies with model (the RTX 8000 is 14 inches deep). Prices range from \$695 (RTX 8000) to \$369. Wood cabinets in palisander, teak, and various colors cost \$14.95 extra.

*Circle 148 on reader service card*



Woody Herman chose AR-2ax speaker systems for his listening at home. The sound of live music, be it rock or big band, is reproduced accurately on AR equipment.



The accuracy with which AR speaker systems reproduce music serves as a valuable tool for many notable musicians. Among the most notable is Woody Herman, whose big bands have long enjoyed great success. His secret seems to be an ability to stay in tune with the evolution of musical styles, as is documented by the Herd's latest recordings

on the Cadet label. In spite of a schedule of more than 200 concerts every year, Mr. Herman can sometimes relax in the seclusion of his Hollywood home. Here, he listens to a high fidelity system consisting of an AR receiver, AR turntable with Shure V-15 type II cartridge, and a pair of AR-2ax speaker systems.



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## Parkening's Bach!

"Parkening's playing of Bach is so intelligent, sensitive and adept that one can forget everything but the music."

That is Donal Henahan's (*The New York Times*) reaction to the 22-year-old guitarist and his feeling for Bach. In his newest album for us, Chris Parkening concentrates on 8 transcriptions of Bach compositions. Among them, "Jesu, joy of man's desiring" and "Sheep may safely graze."

We call it, "Parkening Plays Bach." It follows 3 earlier albums — *In the Classic Style*, *In the Spanish Style*, and *Romanza*. They are all best-sellers.

This album presents Parkening at his most sensitive.

It may also be Bach at his most beautiful.

**PARKENING PLAYS BACH**  
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR GUITAR  
OF 8 COMPOSITIONS



CIRCLE NO. 6 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



### Dolby FM Broadcasts

**Q.** Would the Dolby noise-reduction system be suitable in any way for use with FM broadcasting?

PETER SELKER  
Detroit, Mich.

**A.** Yes, without question—as a matter of fact, an experimental Dolbyized FM system was demonstrated in New York in mid-March. It has been designed to deal with a basic FM problem—noise—which limits tuner sensitivity to perhaps 1.2 microvolts at the very best. By a not-so-odd coincidence, the type of noise that troubles FM is mostly hiss, which has much in common, in respect to its source and sound, with the hiss that disturbs tape reproduction.

If the problem of hiss in tape playing and in FM reception is much the same, then perhaps the tape solution—namely a Dolby Type B system that works only on low-level high frequencies—will serve for FM also. I'm pleased to report that it will, and beautifully too. The velvety silent background that is an all-too-seldom-delivered promise of FM becomes a reality with Dolbyized broadcasts. The effect of Dolbyizing the audio signal at the broadcast studio and then "de-Dolbyizing" it in the home is the equivalent of a gain in sensitivity by a factor of perhaps three in a tuner for weak-station reception. From the point of view of the broadcaster, the station achieves perhaps a 100 per cent extension of the geographical area covered for a given noise level at the listener's receiver.

It's important to keep in mind that the actual signal strength of the Dolbyized broadcast station is *not* increased. A given FM tuner with a Dolby adapter in a given location will not pick up *more* stations, but those that are picked up will be 10 dB quieter. (A 10-dB improvement may not seem like a lot, but it can, for example, reduce the audible noise of a prerecorded cassette down to that of a good record.) We then have the equivalent (in signal-to-noise ratio at the tuner) of a tenfold increase in transmitter power.

Obviously, since the Dolby system

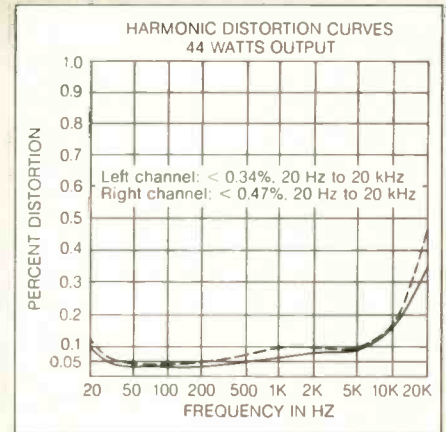
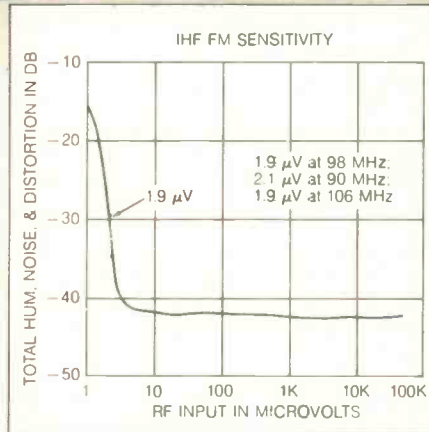
does not increase the actual power of the broadcast signal, it is not a cure-all for every FM reception problem. If you are troubled with signal flutter, or fading, or multipath distortion, it won't help—although it may smooth the sharp edges of the high-frequency "gravel" sound that multipath produces. I suspect that the worse (or cheaper) the design of an FM receiver, the more audible will be the benefit obtained from Dolby FM processing. But, on the other hand, the cheaper the FM receiver (or radio), the less likely that it will have a Dolby circuit built in.

Which brings us to the question of compatibility. How will the Dolbyized broadcasts sound over non-Dolby radios, tuners, and receivers? The situation is quite analogous to that which exists for Dolbyized prerecorded cassettes played on non-Dolby equipment. Those who are listening to FM on inexpensive table-model radios, portables, or cheap consoles will probably never be aware of the boost given to low-level, high-frequency signals by Dolby processing. If anything, it might even restore a little of the missing sparkle to the highs. On the other hand, those with good equipment can compensate reasonably well for the Dolby frequency equalization by reducing the highs slightly with the treble tone control. And, of course, those really concerned with top quality will add a Dolby adapter—or buy units with it built in.

Ideally, the broadcast stations should play discs and tapes that were B processed from Dolby A masters. In line with this, Dolby Laboratories and English Decca plan to make available to FM stations this fall a series of A-Type Dolby master tapes. If these tapes were to be converted from their four-band professional A form and broadcast in a single-band Dolby B form, those listeners with a Dolby-B adapter on their tuners should hear a signal that is significantly superior to that commonly available today. Incidentally, this approach will also provide the tape hobbyist with the opportunity to record, in effect, a Dolby B-type master tape for later playback through a Dolby adapter.

(Continued on page 24)

# Until now, you had to buy your components separately to get this kind of quality.



You get Altec's new 44/44 watt RMS receiver, Garrard's best turntable and Shure's high-track cartridge. These components come all put together in the new Altec 911A stereo AM/FM music center. The high-performance receiver section is actually an Altec 714A receiver on a different chassis. It delivers 44 watts RMS power per channel—both channels driven at 8 ohms—with less than 0.5% harmonic distortion. (For comparison purposes the IHF music power is 180 watts.) It includes 2 crystal filters for better selectivity and 3 FET's for better sensitivity. The Garrard automatic transcription turntable is the SL95B. And the Shure elliptical high-track cartridge is the M93E. For the first time, 3 separate top-of-the-line stereo components are built into a single, convenient package. So the new Altec 911A music center will save you space and save you money and truly give you component quality.

When HIGH FIDELITY tested the 714A receiver which is the same receiver component in the new Altec 911A music center, they reported "FM performance either met or exceeded manufacturer's specifications." "IHF sensitivity came in right on the nose at 1.9 microvolts. Capture ratio was outstanding at 1.1 dB." They went on to report, "in our cable-FM test the 714A easily climbed into the champion class by logging a total of 60 stations, of which 45 were judged suitable for critical listening or for off-the-air taping. Even without the cable antenna hookup, the 714A—fed only by an indoor folded dipole in a different reception area—pulled in no less than 34 FM stations, of which 22 were in the 'good to excellent' class. Our past data tells us that this is a new record."

HIGH FIDELITY also reported on the amplifier section; "... offers high power, linear response, accurate equalization, very low distortion." "The unit's specifications were either met or exceeded in CBS Labs' tests. With both channels driven simultaneously the 714A furnished better than 44 watts on each channel; its bandwidth response for this power level at rated distortion of 0.5% ran from below 10 Hz to 30 kHz. Frequency response at a 1-watt level extended within 0.75 dB from 20 Hz to 20 kHz."

The new Altec 911A stereo AM/FM music center is at your local Altec dealer's right now. It sells for \$499.00 and includes an oiled walnut base and molded dust cover. Check it out for yourself. Or, write us directly for a copy of HIGH FIDELITY's test report and a complete Altec catalog. Altec Lansing, 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, CA 92803.

Built a little better.



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Test report excerpts courtesy of HIGH FIDELITY magazine.

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The new premium cassette tapes make any cassette recorder sound better. And the new Concord F-106E stereo cassette deck makes new tapes sound better. It's the first cassette deck to make true high fidelity recordings.

A Concord exclusive, Endmatic, provides complete automatic shutoff at the end of a cassette. The transport stops. The drive mechanism disengages—no chance of damage to the pinch roller.

The secret is a little switch and a unique circuit that adjusts the record bias from the normal value used for standard tapes to the higher levels that let premium cassettes just open up and sing.

At your Concord dealer, \$119.79 (includes quality dynamic microphone, remote control, super dynamic cassette). Concord Electronics Corporation, 1935 Armacost Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90025/a subsidiary of Ehrenreich Photo-Optical Industries, Inc. 

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Get all the newest and latest information on the new McIntosh Solid State equipment in the McIntosh catalog. In addition you will receive an FM station directory that covers all of North America.



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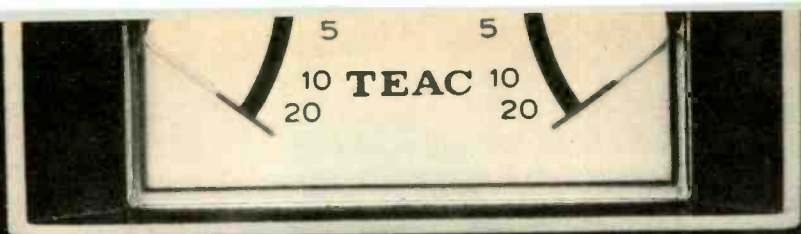
This technique will not only wipe out FM reception noise, but the noise of the tape machine as well. To repeat, the Dolby system can affect *only* those noises that originate *after* the Dolby input device and *before* the Dolby output device—in other words, while the signal is in its Dolby-equalized form. For this reason, it is best to get the Dolby into the recording chain as *early* as possible and into the home playback system as *late* as possible. Noisy program material that is Dolbyized for broadcast will be just as noisy when received.

An unanswered question is: What does the United States Federal Communications Commission (it sets the rules for FM transmissions) think of the idea? Obviously, the FCC is not about to okay an audio-manipulation technique that provides anything less than a fully acceptable signal for those listeners who never heard of Dr. Ray Dolby and his magic noise killer. Comments by some station engineers indicate that the matter might not require a ruling from the FCC since the Dolbyized signal, although changed from the original, is still within the FCC specification for flat frequency response. The legal ramifications are hazy at this point. I suspect that the major determinant of the FCC's attitude will be the demand by FM broadcasters for the Dolby system (a one-time equipment cost of about \$1,000 would be enough to equip a station for Dolbyized stereo broadcasts).

THERE are other aspects of the Dolby FM system and the Dolby situation in general worth mentioning. A number of manufacturers already have in the works plans for separate Dolby adapters, receivers with Dolby circuits built in, and a variety of Dolbyized cassette and open-reel tape decks. As of this writing perhaps 90 per cent of the recorder manufacturers have a Dolby license or are negotiating for one. In this interim period, it will be unfortunate if the upcoming recorders, amplifiers, or whatever do not have inputs and outputs available for external use of their internal Dolby circuits. At this moment it would seem to make more sense for audiophiles to buy a separate Dolby adapter and a non-Dolby component than to buy or wait for the combination units that are either presently available or will be forthcoming shortly.

I have suggested to Dolby Labs that some form of integrated circuit (IC) that incorporated the bulk of the Dolby circuitry would be a good idea, both in respect to installation in already crowded chassis and as a means of cost reduction. At this time, it costs the manufacturer perhaps \$10 to install a two-channel Dolby circuit with its associated switching and metering. An IC could reduce the cost by 50 per cent or more. When that point arrives, it would then make more sense for every component that can use it to have its own built-in Dolby circuit.

STEREO REVIEW



OR — RECORD MODE — REC. BIAS

LEFT

RIGHT

HIGH

E

OFF

NORMAL

# TEAC announces a current event: BiaTron.

It's the latest and greatest in dual capability: TEAC has incorporated a bias-current switch in the superlative A-1230 stereo deck. We call this feature BiaTron because it lets you choose the right bias for both standard and low-noise, high-output tapes.

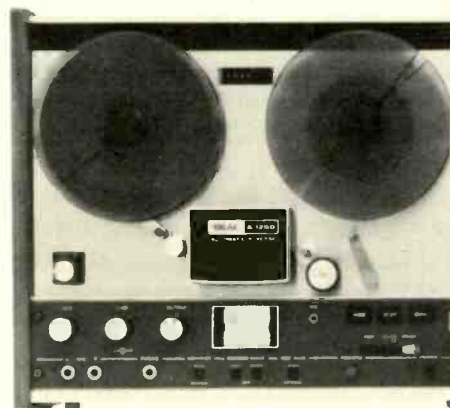
The A-1230 has lots of other good news going for it, too. Like the remarkable Edi-Q Pause Control that lets you edit and cue the cleanest, click-free, pro-quality tapes while recording. And three precision motors: hysteresis-synchronous for capstan drive, eddy current types for turntable drive. TEAC constant-contact hyperbolic heads. And hair-trigger solenoid controls that make this one of the most humanly engineered decks to be found anywhere. No wonder it delivers this kind of high-performance characteristics: 30 to 20,000 Hz frequency response, 50 dB or better signal-to-noise ratio, 0.12% or less wow and flutter at 7½ ips.

Add to that such TEAC exclusives in a deck of this class as MIC

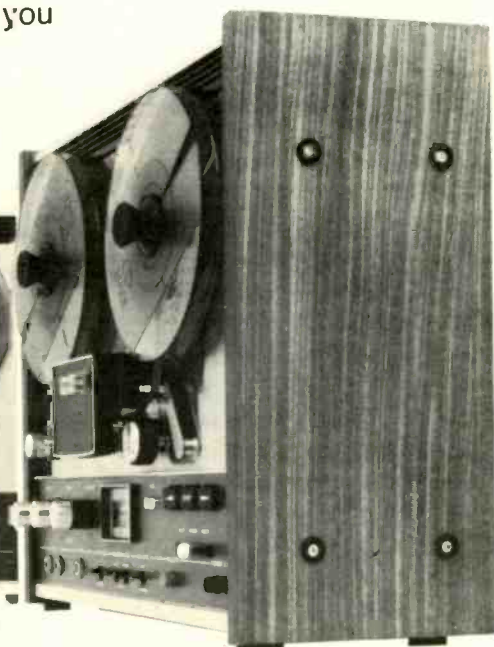
and LINE mixing, TAPE and SOURCE monitoring, turntable height adjustment, independent headphone monitoring with built-in volume control. And the price is a surprisingly low \$349.50.

Then to double your enjoyment, we added an auto-reverse mechanism to the A-1230, and called it the A-1250. This one is still a buy at \$449.50.

Whatever your choice, you can't help keeping current when you stay tuned to TEAC.



A-1250 AUTO-REVERSE STEREO TAPE DECK



A-1230 STEREO TAPE DECK

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## AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES

### AMPLIFIER POWER

POWER is defined as the capability for doing work. The work done by an audio amplifier is moving the speaker cone, and since, in general, the more vigorously the speaker cone moves the louder the sound, amplifier power is associated with loudness. But the association is a complicated one.

Most of us think of amplifier-power requirements in terms of speaker efficiency—the speaker's acoustical-power output for a given electrical-power input (note that efficiency has no necessary bearing on speaker quality). Therefore, we choose an amplifier with a higher power rating for speaker X than for speaker Y because speaker X is less efficient. But let's take a closer look. Most of the popular "bookshelf" speakers of the acoustic-suspension type have comparable efficiencies, somewhere in the neighborhood of 0.25 to 1.5 per cent. If we drive two such speakers, one of them being twice as efficient as the other, with equal amounts of electrical power, the more efficient one will put out twice the acoustical power. But because of the way our ears work, doubling the acoustical power (a 3-dB increase) results in only a barely perceptible change in loudness.

The fact is, speaker efficiency is only one of the considerations you face when deciding on how much power you need, and it may well not be the most important one. For example, I am writing this in a small, sparsely furnished office that also contains a pair of medium-price acoustic-suspension speakers and an amplifier barely capable of 6 "clean" watts per channel. They are playing at what I consider a good background level (which may be very loud for you and practically inaudible for someone else) and sound surprisingly satisfactory, although a lack of bass and a bit of fuzziness on the loudest passages suggest that the amplifier is operating right at its 6-watt limit on peaks. Suppose I took these speakers home to my living room; how would my power requirements change, if at all? First, let's assume that the room is twice the size (volume) of the office (actually it is more). As a general rule of thumb, an increase in room volume calls for a proportional increase in power input—from 6 to 12 watts per channel—for the same loudness. Second, the room is furnished with a carpet, large sofa, and upholstered chairs, all of which soak up sound. To compensate, we add an additional two-thirds power to what we already have, bringing us to 20 watts per channel. Finally, I am now listening seriously and want the music a bit louder—about 6-dB worth louder, which is roughly what you get when you ask someone to "turn it up a little." So figure 20 more watts for the first 3 dB and 40 more for the second, which adds up to a grand total of 80 watts per channel! Actually, I suspect that 40 clean watts per channel, if it is available over the entire audio-frequency range, would be quite adequate. But any way you look at it, our little 6-watt unit, which did perfectly well under one set of conditions, has been left far behind under another. And please note that this startling progression from 6 to 80 watts per channel has been based entirely upon my own preferences in sound levels, which may differ widely from yours.

# oh?

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# ah!

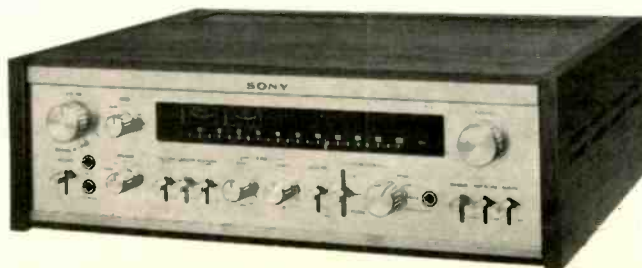
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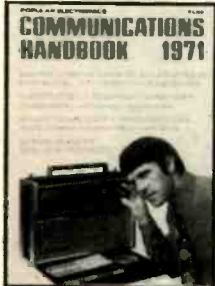
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# GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND  
Music Editor



## I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

IT was some years ago that Frank Sullivan wrote a book called *The Night the Old Nostalgia Burned Down*. It does my heart good to report that on the evening of March 8, 1971 (the night of the Frazier-Ali championship fight; Sullivan, I think, would want that to be noted), the Old Nostalgia was rebuilt—every singing brick of it. The occasion was the first annual awards dinner of the Songwriters' Hall of Fame and, as one songwriter (probably younger and certainly more sardonic than most of those who were feted or being feted) has put it, "Elsa and Noel, Tallulah and Cole, and everybody was there." Everybody indeed was. Certainly those who were able were there physically. But it was the more intangible, though strongly palpable, presences of those who were *not* able that filled the room like so many ghosts of Christmases past. It was not merely an awards dinner; it was a gathering of the clan, of the whole *mishpochah*, if you will.

The dead were honored first. Prior to the dinner, the board of directors had, by general agreement, elected fifty illustrious deceased songwriters to an official immortality. I cannot resist listing (with an occasional song title to jog the memory) at least some of the names. It is almost all I can do to keep from listing all of them: Ernest R. Ball (*When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*); Johnny Burke (*Going My Way*); Buddy De Silva (*April Showers*); Paul Dresser (*My Gal Sal*); Vernon Duke; Fred Fisher (*Dardanella*); George Gershwin; Oscar Hammerstein II; W. C. Handy; Lorenz Hart; Victor Herbert; Jerome Kern; Frank Loesser; Cole Porter; Jimmie Rodgers; Sigmund Romberg; Harry Von Tilzer (*A Bird in a Gilded Cage*); Fats Waller; Kurt Weill; Richard Whiting (*Too Marvelous for Words*); and Vincent Youmans. Johnny Mercer had the honor of announcing the names from the stage.

The living had a better show. There were thirty nominations which had been voted on by the membership at large in an effort to choose ten to be elected this

year. The results of the voting were not heard until later on in the evening. Two other writers, Richard Rodgers and Irving Berlin, had already been elected by acclamation, and it would be pretty difficult to argue with that. But all the nominees were treated to a musical and pictorial presentation which also constituted the evening's entertainment. There has not been such an entertainment for many years and there may never again be one quite like it.

To begin with, there were the photographs thrown on the screen, mostly old, old photographs, sepia-toned. I have a particular weakness for such pictures; I find their nostalgia content second only to songs. The faces we saw were those of America in the days when we could and did refer to America as the "melting pot." There were the faces of the Lower East Side that had "first generation" stamped all over them. There was an already elegant and distinguished Edward Kennedy Ellington, and an unfamiliarly serious Hoagy Carmichael ("My studied pose," Hoagy said later). The faces were young, the expressions optimistic. They were on the way up and they knew it.

After the pictures there were projected the lists of song titles, the "hits." There was an occasional gasp or "Oh, my God," from some member of the audience who knew all the songs but who had never before put them all together under the name of a single creator. Lyricists and composers were mixed indiscriminately. If a man had had a hand in the song, then he wrote it, and that was that—and that was as it should have been.

And then, there were the songs themselves, one per nominee, some of them illuminated by voices that called as strongly upon the memory as the songs themselves did. Gordon MacRae sang Irving Caesar's (and Vincent Youmans') *Tea for Two*; Lanny Ross sang *Stardust* in a tenor voice certainly no more tremulous than it had been years ago; Johnny Mercer sang Benny Davis' *Margie*. Anita Gillette sang Harold Arlen's *Over the Rain-*

STEREO REVIEW



bow, and later, with hair flying and arms waving, the Warren-Dubin *Lullaby of Broadway*, on pitch, up to tempo, and with every word (including one or two wrong ones) clear and ringing. Blind Al Hibbler was led to the microphone and tore the house down on the very first line of Ellington's *Don't Get Around Much Any More*.

Allan Jones sang (of course) Friml's *Donkey Serenade*, among other things; Margaret Whiting was especially poignant with Leo Robin's lyric for *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, the music of which was written by her late father, Richard Whiting. Celeste Holm, all ladylike elegance with a trace of daffiness, sang Yip Harburg's *Right as the Rain* and Howard Dietz's *That's Entertainment*. Oscar Brand sang Pete Seeger's *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?*, not an intrusion exactly, but certainly out of a different tradition. And Lee Wiley, who was, maybe, the greatest thrush of them all, came out of retirement to render the Gershwins' *I've Got a Crush on You* and Ned Washington's *A Hundred Years from Today* in exactly the same sweet, breathy, beautifully inflected voice that I know so well from records of twenty years ago.

YOU couldn't really pick ten out of the thirty songwriters to vote for. But it had to be done and it was done, and one at least had the knowledge that the others would be elected next year or the year after. The winners were Dorothy Fields, Duke Ellington, Sammy Cahn, Hoagy Carmichael, Ira Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy Van Heusen, Alan Jay Lerner, and Rudolf Friml. When Hoagy Carmichael came up on stage, the lighting man in the upstairs alcove stopped what he was doing, leaned out from his perch, and applauded. Johnny Mercer, who shared the m.c. duties with disc jockey William B. Williams, struck a note of almost unbelievable modesty at the announcement of *his* name by brush-

ing his hand across his eyes before saying his thank you's.

It was a nice touch to have each announcement made by another, younger songwriter. Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, Jackie DeShannon, and Charlie Singleton were among those who helped out. And as they took turns at the microphone, the good little orchestra, with Skitch Henderson leading and playing fine piano, sketched out *their* hits. It provided an interesting test of audience demographics. When Carol Hall and Kris Kristofferson came on stage the lady next to me whispered frantically, "Who's he?" I explained who Kris was. "And who's she?" the lady asked.

A couple of solo appearances and a chorus closed the evening. Eubie Blake, eighty-eight last February, sat down to the piano and gave us two choruses of his own *Memories of You*. Rudolf Friml, going on ninety-two, and never a man to leave the last word to someone else, accompanied Lanny Ross in *Tingle-eling* and Allan Jones in *Giannina Mia*, and then segued into the *Vagabond Song*. Then the entire audience was invited to sing a chorus of *Say It with Music* as a tribute to the unfortunately absent Irving Berlin, and they did. And the evening was over.

What do I have to say about it? That they're just not writing them like that anymore? No, they're not. They're writing them quite differently these days. But isn't it nice to know that once upon a time they did write them like that? Nostalgia, I suppose. About three-quarters of the way through the evening, Carol, my wife, leaned over to me and said, "It's funny, but somehow it just makes me feel terribly proud to be an American, and I don't feel that way very often these days." Thank you, dear. You put your finger right on it. To be reminded of a time when one *did* feel continually proud to be an American—that's the *real* nostalgia of the thing.

"Popsie"



Night of nostalgia—the Songwriters' Hall of Fame first annual awards dinner. Left to right: Eddie Condon, Johnny Mercer, Lee Wiley, Duke Ellington, Stephen James, and Celeste Holm.

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# TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

## ● DAMPING FACTOR AND BANDWIDTH:

Among amplifier specifications there are two that occasionally provoke arguments among engineers and audiophiles. These are damping factor and bandwidth. In my view the importance of a high damping factor has been overemphasized. Damping factor is the ratio of the rated load impedance of the speaker to the internal output impedance of the amplifier. Typical damping-factor values range from about 15 up to several hundred. As an example, an amplifier with an impedance at its speaker terminals of 0.08 ohm would be considered to have a damping factor of 100 when used with an 8-ohm speaker.

A high damping factor (or d.f.) has been claimed to provide better control of the speaker cone's movement, with a resulting improvement in sound quality. To a limited degree, this is true, and with most speakers an amplifier with a d.f. of 10 will usually sound better than one with a d.f. of 1. However, when the d.f.'s being compared are 100 and 10, we have a different situation. The amplifier with the higher d.f. may sound better, but not simply because of the fact that it is higher. A very high d.f. is usually the result of the amplifier's using large amounts of negative feedback obtained from the speaker-output terminals. This both reduces distortion and extends the bandwidth—the primary reasons for feedback—and as a by-product, the amplifier's speaker-output impedance is lowered and the damping factor is therefore increased.

The reason why very high damping factors (anything over about 15) do not contribute to useful speaker damping is simple. The effective "source" impedance "seen" by the speaker includes the amplifier impedance, plus the resistance of the speaker leads, plus the d.c. resistance of its own voice coil. Whatever crossover network is in series with the speaker further increases the source impedance.

The d.c. resistance of a speaker rated at 8 ohms is

at least several ohms (we have measured values of more than 6 ohms on some popular speaker systems). Such a speaker "couldn't care less" whether the amplifier source impedance is 0.08 ohm or 0.8 ohm—it is driven from an impedance of more than 6 ohms and has an effective damping factor of about 1.3, whether the amplifier's "damping factor" is 10 or 100! Even if the speaker's d.c. resistance is much lower—1 ohm, for example—the situation is not materially different. And don't forget, speaker wires, especially if more than 10 feet in length, can have a resistance amounting to a significant fraction of an ohm—far greater than that of the amplifier. In view of these facts, I have often wondered about all the hue and cry concerning damping factor over the years. To be sure, it is not stressed as much as it once was, but it is still a part of almost every amplifier's published specifications.

A more likely subject for legitimate disagreement is the amplifier's bandwidth specification, because it relates to the area of psychoacoustics. Should the range of frequencies that an amplifier can handle (its bandwidth) cover only those frequencies that are audible—20 to 20,000 Hz—with perhaps an additional octave or so at each end, or should it extend from nearly d.c. ("zero" Hz) to the megahertz (one million Hz) region? This is a highly controversial subject, to say the least,

and I would not presume to try to settle the question here. For one thing, unlike most of the proponents and opponents of wide-band designs, I don't claim to know the answer! However, I do have an opinion (which is really all I have ever seen presented by the proponents of either side of the question), based on a combination of experience and intuition.

The wide-band school holds that the ability of an amplifier to deliver faithful replicas of transient signals with a rise time of 1 microsecond (which implies a bandwidth of something like 1 megahertz) contributes to improved listening quality. I have never seen

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any theoretical or truly objective experimental justification for this claim. Bear in mind (1) that no speaker system has much output above 20,000 Hz (and few have any real capability at that frequency), (2) that almost no one can hear beyond 20,000 Hz, except at very high levels, and (3) that no program source now available to the public has even that much bandwidth.

Generally, when this is pointed out, the rebuttal from the wide-band faction is that very low phase shift over the *audible* range (implied by faithful reproduction of short rise-time pulses) is really the key factor. Perhaps so, but what about the phase shift that takes place in speakers, which is hundreds or even thousands of times greater than that which takes place in the amplifier?

Finally, the argument is made that we really don't know very much about the entire audio-reproduction process (how true!), and that although the reasons aren't known, wide-band amplifiers simply sound better than others with more restricted bandwidth. I'm afraid I haven't yet heard a convincing demonstration of this effect. Yes, some of the ampli-

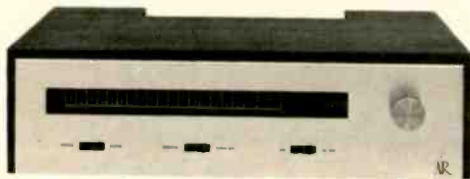
fiers that sound best do have very wide bandwidths, but others that sound equally good have perhaps one-tenth as much. My own experimentation on this matter has been limited to inserting a low-pass filter, cutting off sharply at about 23,000 Hz, into the signal path going to an amplifier with a bandwidth of several times that figure. I couldn't detect any change in sound when the filter was switched in or out. This didn't surprise me, but on the other hand I'm sure it won't cause wide-band enthusiasts to deviate from their "true faith." Incidentally, this sort of test should always be done with a broad-band random "white" noise signal, which is far more revealing of frequency-response deviations than any musical program and also eliminates any question of subjective involvement with the program content.

The narrow-band proponents generally present arguments along the lines of those I have expressed. Thus my remarks might seem to place me in their camp, but actually my view is that of an agnostic; I'm willing to be convinced of the validity of either approach, but only by more substantial arguments and demonstrations than have so far been presented.

## EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

### ACOUSTIC RESEARCH STEREO FM TUNER



● IN OUR report on the AR receiver (STEREO REVIEW, May, 1970), we commented on its excellent FM performance. The recently announced AR FM tuner is, in effect, the tuner portion of this receiver, separately packaged and styled to match their amplifier.

In the AR tradition, the FM tuner is rather starkly simple. The long rectangular panel cut-out exposes a black slide-rule dial scale, with linear (evenly spaced) frequency calibrations. An illuminated zero-center tuning meter and a red stereo-indicator light are located to the right of the dial. The tuning control is the only knob on the front panel. Three rocker switches control stereo/mono operation, the interstation-noise muting circuit (or HUSH, as AR refers to it), and the power to the tuner. In the rear are the antenna terminals, two pairs of audio-output jacks, an output-level control, and the receptacle for the detachable line cord. Both audio outputs are controlled by the level adjustment. One, at a 1,000-ohm impedance level, is the standard output to the amplifier; the other, intended for driving a tape recorder directly, is at a 10,000-ohm impedance.

The "front end," which employs an FET mixer, is coupled to a four-pole, linear-phase, crystal-filter i.f. stage. Two integrated-circuit (IC) amplifier/limiter stages follow, and another transistor amplifier drives the Foster-Seeley discriminator. The multiplex decoder has a two-transistor shunt-type modulator whose outputs go through 15-

kHz low-pass filters before reaching the audio emitter-follower output stages.

The electrical specifications of the AR FM tuner are identical to those of the receiver. It is rated at 2 microvolts sensitivity, with less than 0.5 per cent distortion, and has a 65-dB signal-to-noise ratio. The unit is 15 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches wide by 4 $\frac{3}{16}$  inches high by 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches deep, excluding the knobs, and is supplied with a black aluminum cover. The AR FM tuner sells for \$210. An optional wooden cover is \$15. The tuner carries an exceptionally comprehensive two-year guarantee.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The IHF sensitivity of the AR FM tuner was 1.6 microvolts, slightly bettering our measurement on the AR receiver. Limiting was very steep and was complete at 5 microvolts. We measured the distortion above the limiting point as 0.67 per cent at full modulation. (Our signal generator has a residual distortion of about 0.5 per cent, thus making it impossible to verify AR's specification of less than 0.5 per cent. Since the distortion component in the generator's signal may add to or subtract from the tested unit's distortion, it is probable that the AR tuner's distortion matched or bettered their specification.) The maximum audio output from a fully modulated signal was 0.88 volt, adjustable with the control in the rear of the tuner.

The signal-to-noise ratio was 68 dB—slightly better than rated. Capture-ratio measurements are difficult to make with accuracy and repeatability; nevertheless, we found the AR tuner's to be 2.2 dB, comparing favorably with the rated 2 dB. Image rejection at 100 MHz was 67 dB, close to the rated 70 dB. AM rejection was 54 dB.

In stereo, the effectiveness of the AR's 15-kHz low-pass filters was demonstrated by the tuner's very flat frequency response. It was within  $\pm 0.5$  dB from 30 to 12,000 Hz, (Continued on page 34)

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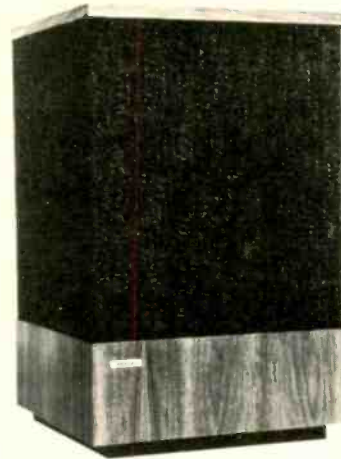
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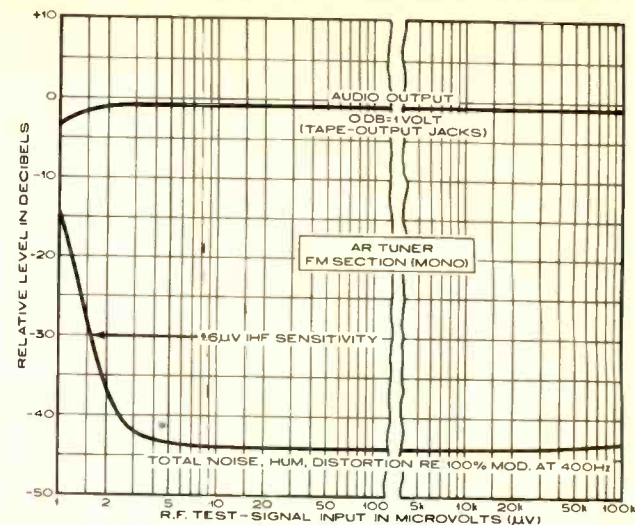
and down only 1 dB at 15,000 Hz. There was virtually no trace of 19-kHz or 38-kHz multiplex signals in the audio outputs. The stereo separation was also exceptional, and in all probability reflected the limits of our test equipment. It was 22 to 23 dB at 30 and 15,000 Hz, and increased smoothly to about 43 dB between 400 and 900 Hz.

When the interstation-noise muting is used and the mode switch is set to STEREO, the noise-sensing circuits in the tuner automatically switch it to MONO when the signal drops below a critical level, which we measured as 6.5 microvolts. When the signal level increased to 8 microvolts, the tuner returned to the stereo mode. In the presence of a flutter fade, such as that caused by a passing airplane, a weak signal may rapidly switch the tuner back and forth between the two modes, causing fluctuations in hiss level. If one desires to listen to weak stereo signals under such adverse conditions, AR suggests switching off the muting circuit. The tuner will then remain in stereo as long as the station is transmitting in that mode.

The threshold of the interstation-noise muting, which is fixed by an internal adjustment, was 4 microvolts. This is an excellent choice of level, since any signal stronger than 4 microvolts will be received (in mono, if under 8 microvolts) with full quieting and minimum distortion. The muting action was positive and smooth, although there was some tendency for noise bursts to occur when tuning off a station.

The calibration of the AR tuner dial was excellent. In general, it was as accurate as the width of the pointer would allow, and nowhere off more than 100 kHz. Since this is half the closest channel spacing, and one fourth the normal minimum interval between stations in a given area, one is never in doubt as to what station the tuner is set to receive.

● *Comment.* The performance of the AR FM tuner cannot be described adequately by mere graphs and numbers. Its *effective* sensitivity is exceptional, and in side-by-side comparison with other fine FM units it generally provided

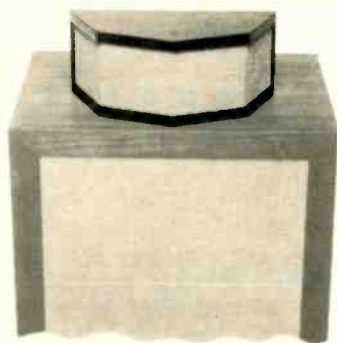


listenable reception of very weak signals that could be heard barely, if at all, on other receivers or tuners operating from the same antenna. It had no handling idiosyncrasies that we could find. Since its styling matches that of the AR amplifier, it is an ideal addition to a system based on that unit. Of course, it is equally usable with any other high-quality amplifier.

In our review of the AR receiver, we stated that we knew of no tuner of comparable quality selling for \$170 (the price differential between the receiver and the amplifier). Naturally, in its own cabinet with its own power supply, the AR tuner costs a little more, but the original statement still stands. Most other tuners of comparable quality sell for \$250 or more. They may offer AM reception, or a few extra features, but we haven't seen one yet that could top the overall FM performance of the AR FM tuner.

*For more information, circle 156 on reader service card*

## MICROSTATIC HIGH-FREQUENCY ADAPTER



● THE Microstatic high-frequency speaker-system adapter is a product of the recently formed Micro/Acoustics Corp. It consists of an array of high-frequency drivers designed, according to the manufacturer, specifically for use with low- to medium-efficiency speaker systems. Its four small cone tweeters have differing diameters; the two outer ones have 1 3/4-inch cones, the two center ones have 1 1/4-inch cones. The four drivers are mounted at angular increments of 45 degrees so that their radiation patterns will overlap to provide essentially uniform coverage of a full 180 degrees in the horizontal plane.

According to Micro/Acoustics, there are many speaker systems that have a uniform, low-distortion frequency response over the full audio range when measured on the axis of the systems. They point out, however, that almost invariably the off-axis output at high frequencies, especially above 10,000 Hz, drops off appreciably. It was the primary goal of the designers of the Microstatic system to extend the already flat frequency response of these speakers across a wider angle, making listener location in the room less critical for high-frequency balance and for good stereo imaging. The claim is also made that the Microstatic provides extra energy and hence a flatter frequency response—both on and off axis—in the area above 10,000 Hz for most systems.

The Microstatic array is housed in a small five-sided walnut cabinet with maximum dimensions of 9 1/8 inches wide by 5 1/4 inches deep by 3 3/4 inches high. It weighs a mere 2 pounds, 5 ounces. The Microstatic is designed to be placed on the companion speaker close to its tweeter, and to be connected directly across the terminals of the speaker. (The Microstatic's nominal 16-ohm impedance should not significantly reduce the total impedance seen by the amplifier.) A built-in 6-dB-per-octave crossover limits the frequencies received by the Microstatic from the amplifier to those above 3,500 or 7,000 Hz. The preferred crossover is

*(Continued on page 45)*

**ZERO 100** is the model number of  
the newest, most advanced automatic turntable.

The name stands for Zero Tracking Error... up to 160 times  
less than with any conventional tone arm... new freedom from  
distortion... new life for your records. In the following pages,  
we offer you technical and nontechnical explanations...



We proudly present the

# GARRARD ZERO 100

Two-Speed (33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm) Automatic Turntable

**\$18950**

less base and cartridge



**This is the brilliant new star among automatic turntables, featuring zero degree tracking error and 12 other major advances.**

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<input type="checkbox"/> 15% vertical tracking adjustment	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Cartridge overhang adjustments	4
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<input type="checkbox"/> Patented Synchro-Lab Motor	7
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<input type="checkbox"/> Gentle 2-point record support	7
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**Again, the innovator!**

The components that comprise high fidelity systems have become increasingly sophisticated. In turn, the demands placed on the automatic turntable for higher performance standards have also increased. These stringent requirements have led to higher price categories for automatic turntables than ever before.

Nevertheless, the Garrard Laboratories resisted the temptation to build a so-called "super changer", until they were satisfied that sufficiently meaningful improvements were feasible, to justify the establishment of such a new product category.

Over the years, Garrard has invented, pioneered and introduced virtually every significant new feature in automatic record playing units. Many of these have been revolutionary, and together they have upgraded the entire character of the automatic turntable.

But change, merely for the sake of change, has been sternly resisted.

Therefore, such notable innovations as anti-skating controls, built-in stylus pressure gauges, cueing and pause controls, dynamically balanced low mass tone arms and combination synchronous-induction motors (to name a few) were first introduced on Garrard automatic turntables . . . but only after the need was established and they were thoroughly researched, tested and perfected. Today, they are standard on most of the higher-priced automatic turntables of all manufacturers.

The Zero 100 is a dramatic new concept, with styling as advanced as its features. It is a new classic, which others will emulate for years to come.

While the appearance of a product does not improve performance, it does connote craftsmanship and quality — and reflects the aesthetics most people appreciate in products which are precision-engineered. In the Zero 100, new materials have been used — such as plexiglas, brass, machined parts, satin finish aluminum — all set off on a sparkling white unit plate. Garrard has made the Zero 100 the very personification of quality. □



# Heart of the **ZERO 100** is a revolutionary new tone arm

## "ZERO" stands for Zero Tracking Error

The maintenance of zero degree tracking error over the full surface of the record has long been an experts' dream. From an engineering standpoint, the value of the principle is well-recognized, not only for obtaining the finest sound reproduction and eliminating distortion, but for preserving the record grooves. The problem has been to obtain these results with minimal friction and realistic cost. Since the feature is so desirable, there have been some separate tone arms and manual combinations attempting to play records back with zero degree tracking error, but these have had unacceptable friction levels, or were unduly expensive. Certainly, they could not be used on automatic players.

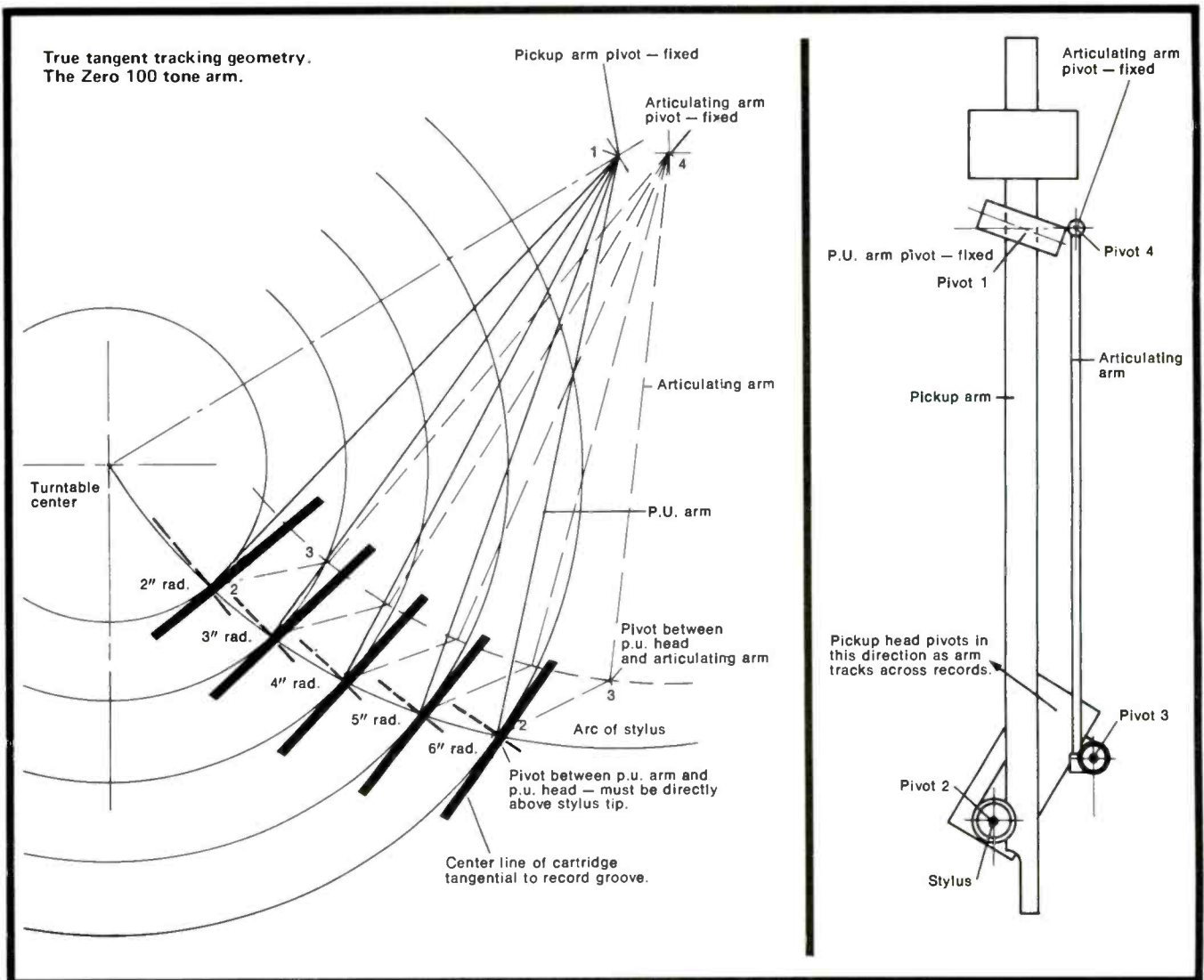
Garrard has spent many years on this development, discarding hundreds of ideas which did not meet its criteria. Now, at last, this advancement of the first magnitude is presented for home use on the Zero 100 automatic turntable.

## How the arm is built

In common with many examples of engineering ingenuity, the solution to the problem of tracking error looks deceptively simple on the surface.

The new arm is designed so that the cartridge housing is pivoted directly above the stylus tip. The degree of pivot is controlled by an auxiliary articulating arm. The amount of cartridge head pivoting, the length and position of the articulating arm... indeed, all the complex geometrical problems involved... were solved and optimized by computer. Without this procedure, the successful design and execution of this tone arm would have been impossible.

The combination of computerized design and arm articulation through advanced pivotry, results in the tracking geometry shown in the diagram. Note that the stylus is perpendicularly tangent to the groove throughout the record — a dramatic achievement of primary importance in the search for perfect reproduction.



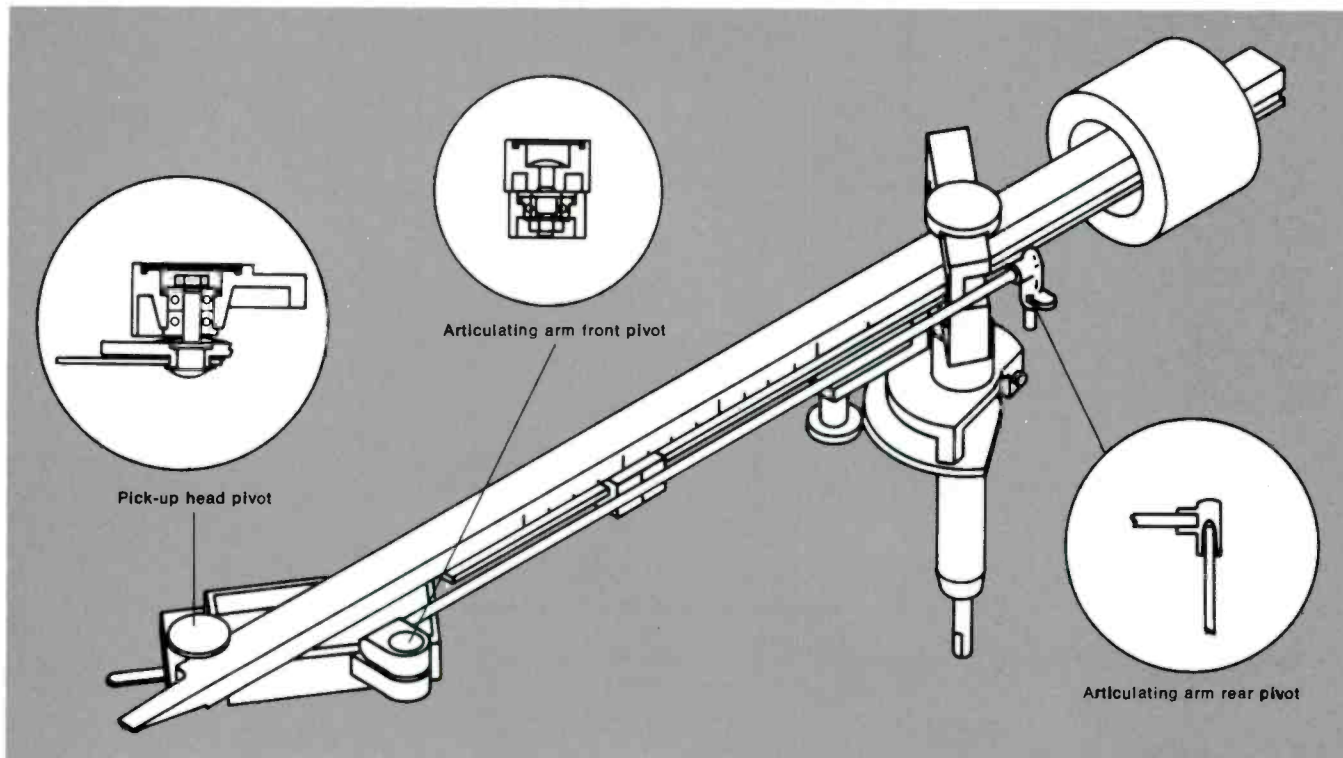
### Advanced pivoting for minimal friction

The extremely low — in fact, negligible friction — which is essential to this concept, has been achieved with costly, precision-loaded ball bearings, and a free-floating universal pivot. These are among the very few parts of the Zero 100 which Garrard does not build. Instead, they are purchased from an outstanding manufacturer specializing entirely in the design and construction of

pivots for gyroscopes and other sophisticated space-age equipment. The articulating arm, which depends upon this advanced pivoting, is fashioned of stainless steel tube by Garrard.

Records are made with the cutter perpendicular (tangent at right angle) to each groove. When a conventional tone arm plays this back, the arm describes an arc from its pivot. Because of the fixed head, it produces a varying

amount of tracking error, which can only measure zero at the two points where the cartridge is truly perpendicular to the groove. Tracking error, therefore, is inherent in the performance of all conventional tone arms. It is measured and expressed in degrees per inch. It produces distortion in the second harmonic, and, until now, could not be successfully eliminated by any tone arm on automatic playback units.



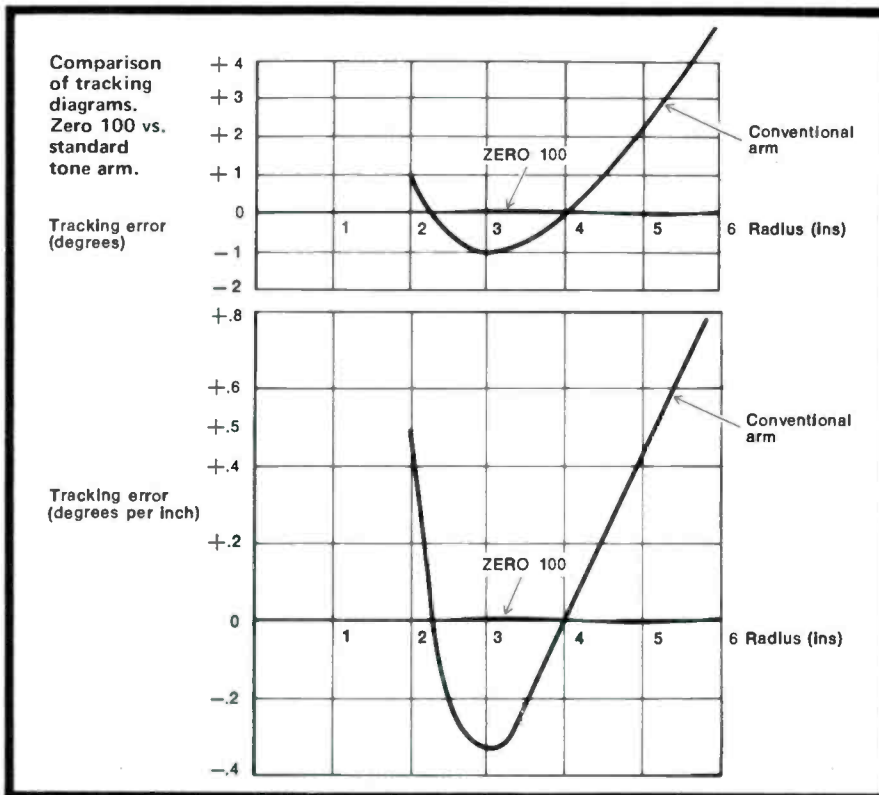
### Tracking error up to 160 times as low per inch as standard tone arm!

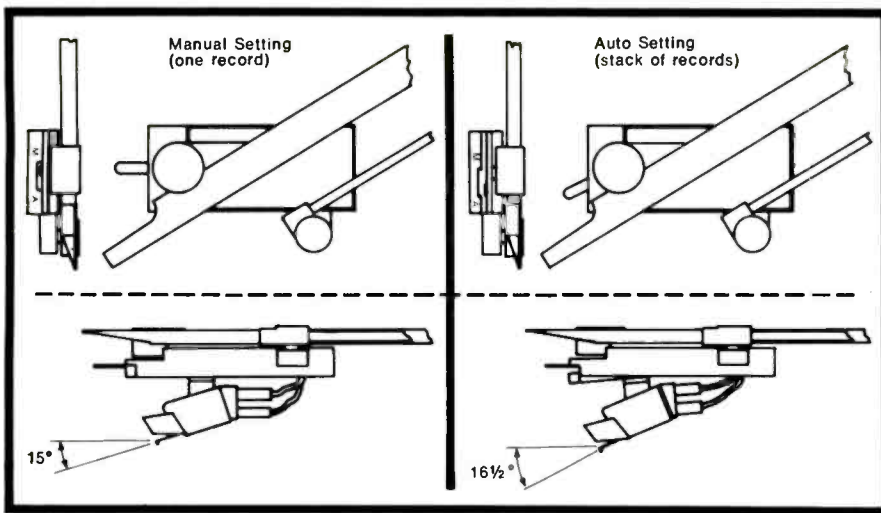
A comparison of the tracking error measurements of any conventionally pivoted tone arm with those of the Zero 100, indicates the magnitude of the breakthrough which Garrard has achieved.

Consider that there are 3,600 seconds of arc in a degree . . . and that a conventional tone arm may produce tracking error as high as 4 degrees, or 14,400 seconds at its full playing radius. The tracking error of the Zero 100 tone arm is calculated to measure a remarkable 90 seconds, placing it in the area of 160 times as small per inch as the error of conventional tone arms.

The true tangent tone arm clearly establishes the Zero 100 as a revolutionary development of the first order.

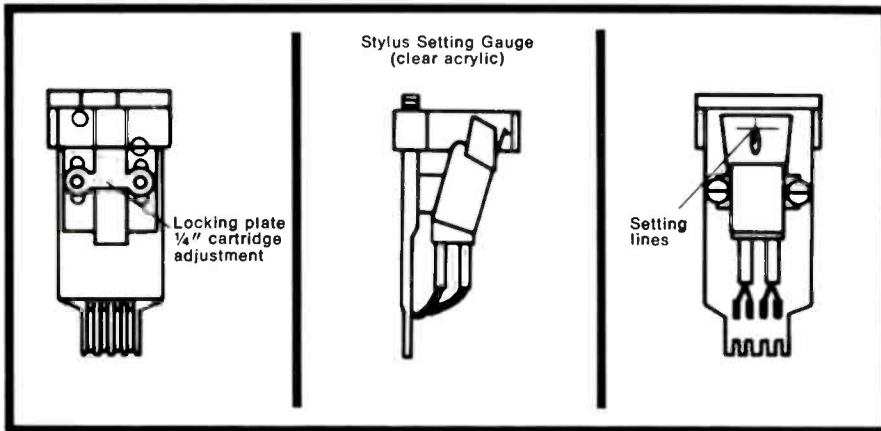
Conversely, above and beyond the tone arm, the features described on the following pages place the Zero 100 in a class by itself, at the very forefront of all automatic turntables available today.





### 15° Vertical tracking adjustment

Discs are recorded with the cutter set at 15°. Therefore, for the finest reproduction, the stylus should approach this angle as closely as possible. The Zero 100 tone arm shell provides an adjustment lever for this purpose. When single records are played, a flick of the lever to "Manual" sets the cartridge and stylus angle at precisely 15°. When a stack of records is played, the lever is moved to "Automatic," and the angle of the stylus will be precisely 15° at the third record. □



### Cartridge overhang adjustment

In order to assure the full benefits of zero degrees tracking error, and the 15° adjustment, the stylus tip must be positioned with absolute accuracy. The slotted cartridge carrier of the Zero 100 is provided with a lucite gauge, used when the cartridge is mounted. The cartridge carrier is inserted into the gauge, and the cartridge is accurately positioned for mounting by simply moving it to the point where the stylus tip lines up with the two cross hairs on the gauge. □

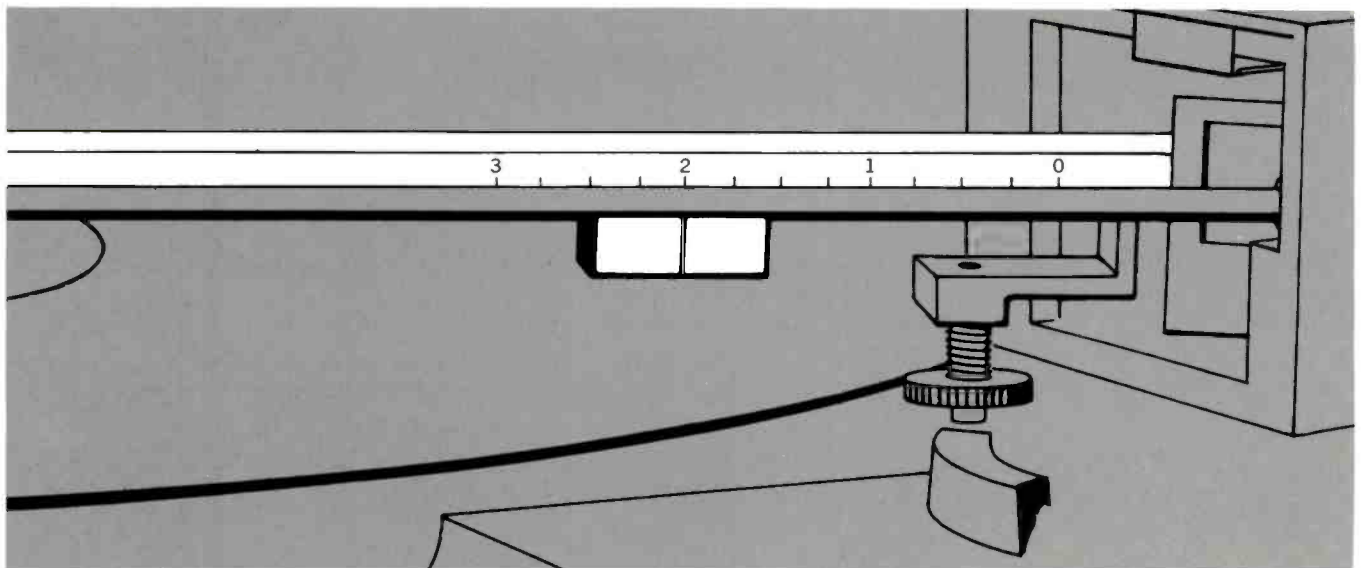
### Sliding weight for setting stylus force along an extended scale

In order to impart stability and precision to the increasingly important stylus force setting, the Zero 100 tone arm utilizes a brass weight which slides under the arm.

With the weight set at "Zero", the arm is balanced to a neutral "see-saw" position. The weight is then moved forward under the arm to set in the correct stylus force. It is frictionally engaged to

the tone arm, to retain its exact position; yet it can be easily moved when desired.

Since it requires a movement of 1/8" to change the stylus force by one gram, a fraction of a gram can be set with extreme accuracy. This carries through the concept of the Zero 100 tone arm, which is designed to track the most sensitive cartridges at the precise fractional forces required for their optimum performance. □



### Magnetic anti-skating control

Garrard introduced the first anti-skating device in an automatic turntable with its patented sliding weight design, which is still used in the (up-to-now) 3 top Garrard models.

An anti-skating control is necessary to offset the normal tendency of the tone arm to move (skate) across the record toward the center. As the disc revolves, with the arm tracking, an inward skating force is created which must be counteracted and neutralized by an equal force in the opposite direction. This prevents wear on the inner side of the groove, premature damage to the record, and distortion.

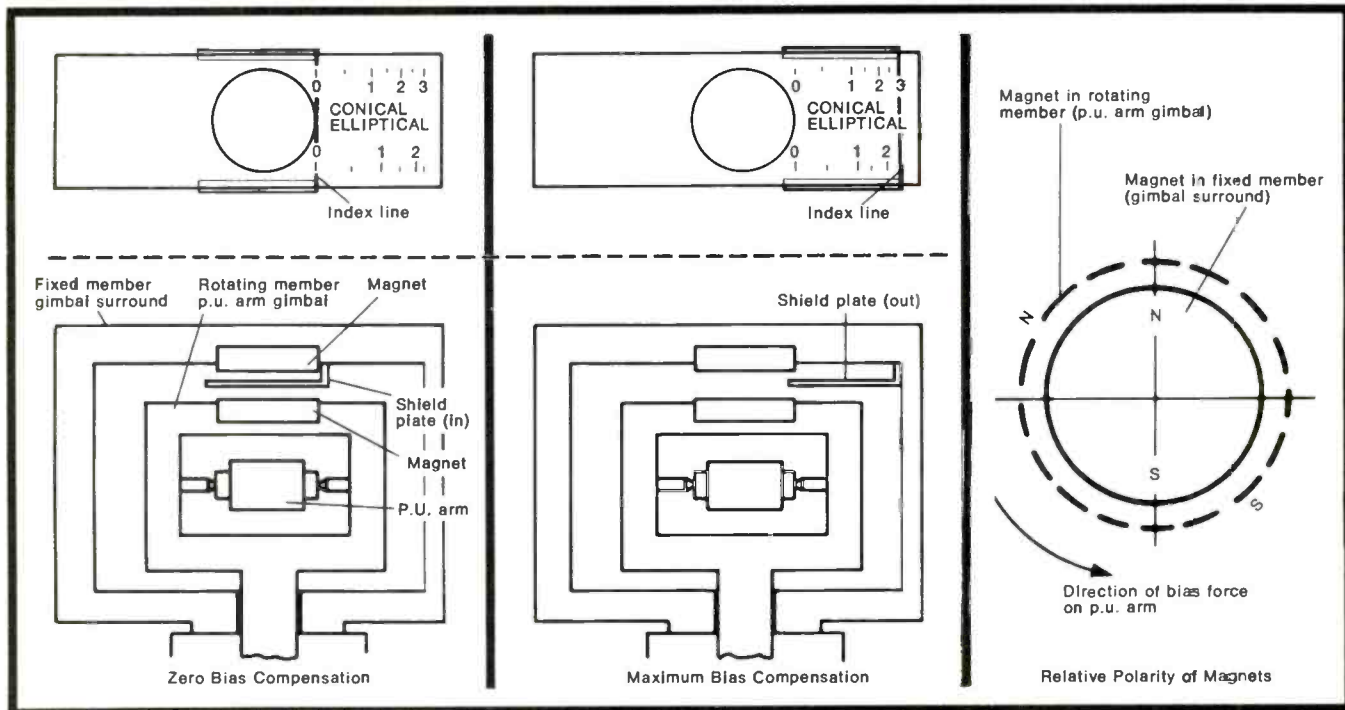
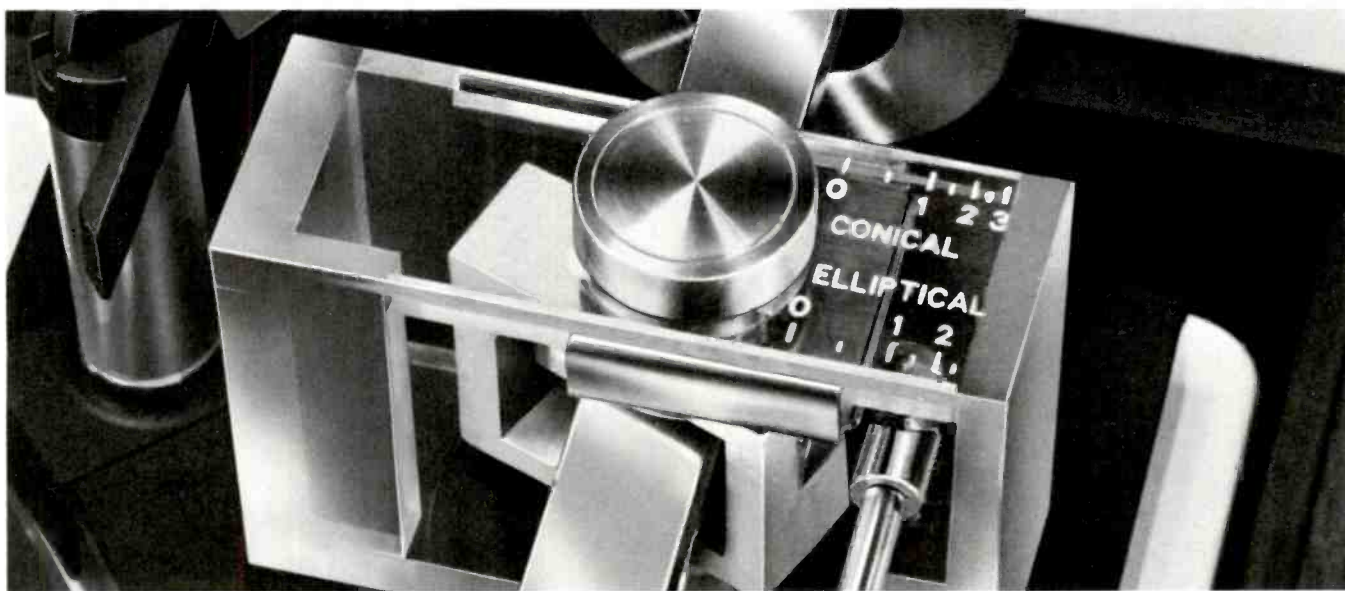
Now, a unique and exceptionally precise anti-skating control has been designed for the Zero 100 and built

into the tone arm assembly. A precision sliding scale, calibrated in fractions of a gram and reading conveniently from the top, shows the exact amount of anti-skating force being applied. The scale has two settings: one for elliptical; the other for conical stylus.

The simple but ingenious Zero 100 anti-skating control utilizes the well-known magnetic principle that like poles repel each other. Built differently than any previous device of its kind, it is frictionless; not mechanically connected to the tone arm; and requires neither springs nor weights.

A ceramic disc magnet is mounted on the pivoting tone arm gimbal; and another affixed above it on the rigid plexiglas tone arm housing. A ferrous metal shield, with the precision reading

scale mounted on it, slides between the two magnets, to set the anti-skating force desired. When the shield is between the total areas of the magnets, they have no effect on each other, since the shield blocks the magnetic flux. However, as the shield is moved outward, it exposes the magnetic field, creating an infinitely variable amount of magnetic repulsion. This, in turn, exerts a controllable and measurable twisting force on the tone arm, as the two magnetic poles push apart, establishing the correct starting amount of anti-skating force desired, as indicated on the reading scale; and varying to the correct force required at every distance from the center of the record as the stylus moves inward along the radius. □



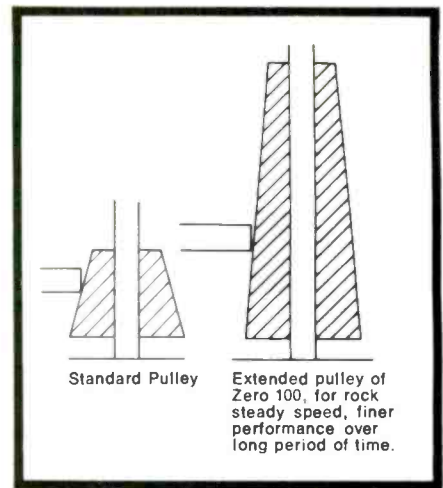
### Variable speed control

( $\pm 3\frac{1}{2}\%$  @  $33\frac{1}{3}$   $\pm 2\frac{1}{2}\%$  @ 45 rpm)

Variable speed is actually non-essential for the usual listening purposes when the record playing unit is equipped with a synchronous motor, since the motor insures accurate, stable speed. However, it is a welcome convenience for critical listeners with perfect pitch who prefer to play recordings at the exact speed they select; for others who simply enjoy records best at speeds they determine themselves; and for musicians who wish to "tune" the record player in order to accompany a musical instrument.

Variable speed units are not new. For satisfactory performance, the inherent requirements are to have a completely stable motor, and a minimal taper on the pulley which controls the speed variation, so that it does not introduce wow or flutter. Now, with Garrard's proven synchronous motor, and with the development of a long, very slightly tapered pulley, the speed control in the Zero 100 has achieved the necessary degree of perfection.

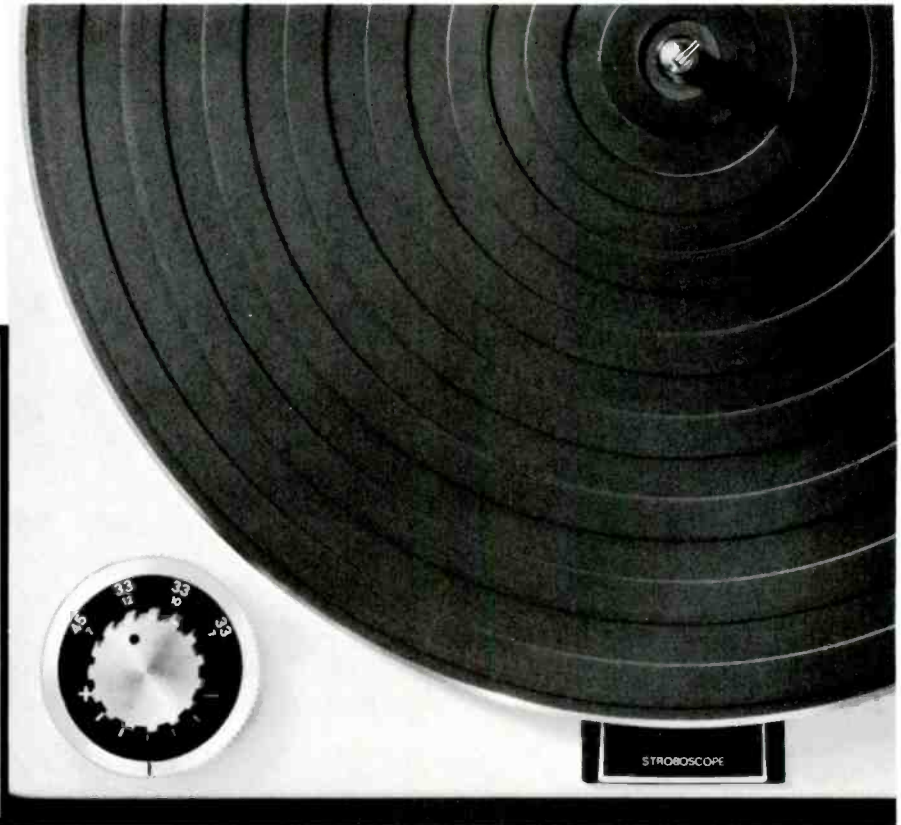
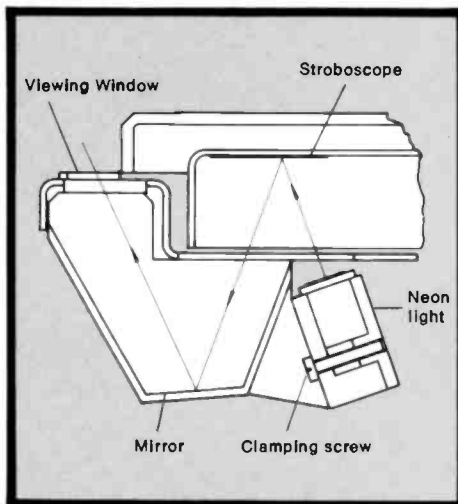
Speed variation in the Zero 100 is approximately  $\pm 3\%$ . This creates an adjustment in pitch equivalent to one semi-tone. □



### Illuminated stroboscope

(Essential with variable speed.)

The speed of the turntable is easily and accurately adjusted by moving a ring around the control knob which sets speed and record size. It can be monitored continuously through the stroboscope window, by watching the highly visible, illuminated line. □

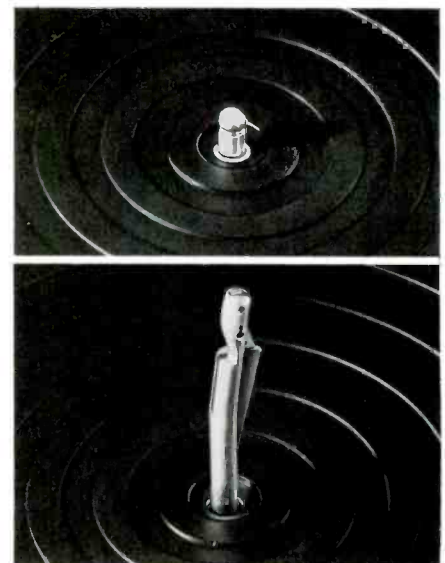
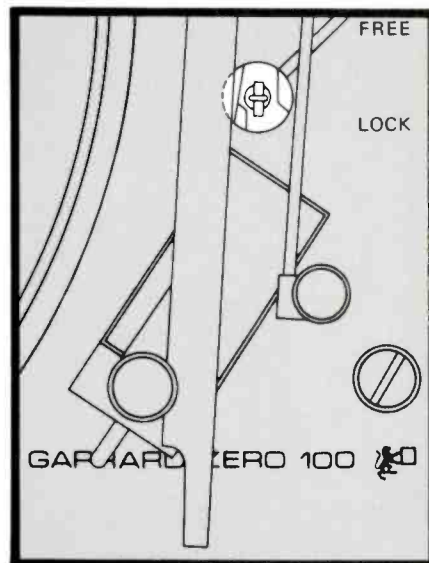


### Tone arm safety restrictor

No effort has been spared by the Garrard Laboratories to insure enjoyment by the owner. One example is the tone arm safety restrictor built into the Zero 100 tone arm to prevent it from being set down on the unit plate outside the edge of the record. A positive stop prevents accidental damage to the stylus. □

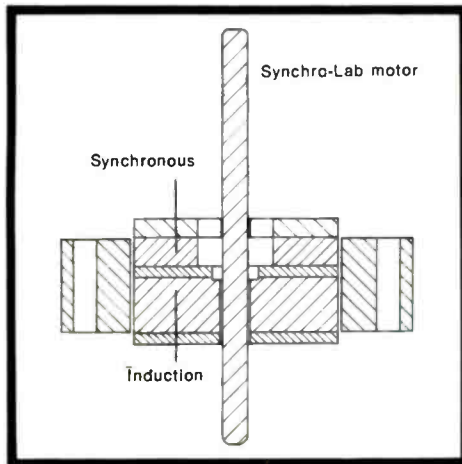
### Interchangeable spindles

There are two instantly removable spindles. The short one, for single play, rotates in the same manner as spindles on manual turntables. The long spindle accommodates a stack of six records for automatic play at  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm. An optional automatic spindle is available for wide hole, 45 rpm records. □



## Proven features retained

The innovations described on the previous pages are all introduced for the first time on the Zero 100. In addition, it retains the fully-tested major features of the advanced series of Garrard automatic turntables, which it now heads.



## GARRARD ZERO 100

SPECIFICATIONS: 2 speed, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm, 100-130 volts, 60 cycles AC (50 cycle kit available).  
MINIMUM CABINET DIMENSIONS: Left to right, 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Front to rear, 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Above motor board, 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Below motor board, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".  
MINIMUM CABINET DIMENSIONS (Turntable on Base with Dust Cover): Left to right, 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Front to rear, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Top to bottom, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".



**Retained—The Garrard Synchro-Lab Motor**, an ingenious concept based upon split-rotor design. It combines the powerful torque and instant acceleration of the traditional induction motor; with the unwavering, perfect speed of a synchronous motor, locked into the accurately controlled 60-cycle frequency of the electric current. With

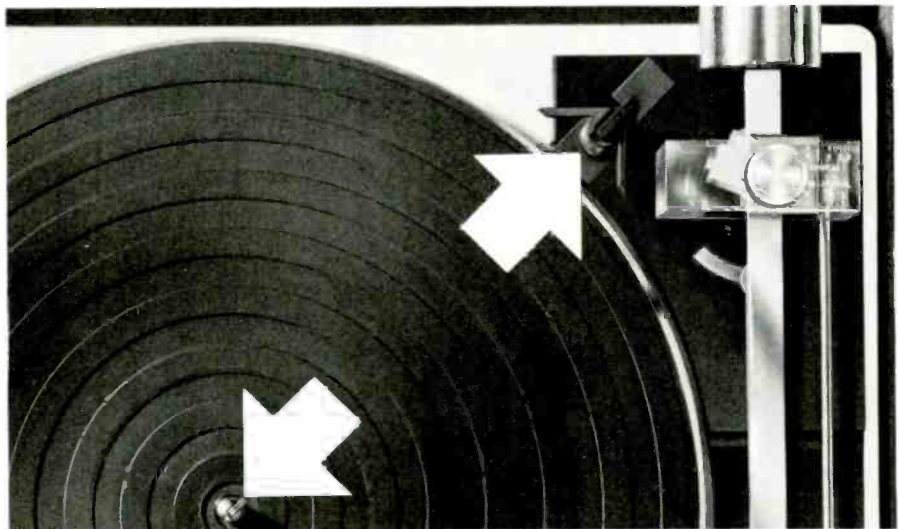
the Synchro-Lab Motor, there are no changes in musical pitch caused by drops in voltage due to appliances or other heavy loads on the line at the same time. □

**Retained—The Garrard full-diameter turntable.** One of the advantages of the synchronously driven Zero 100 is

that it does not require a heavy turntable to act as a flywheel, as would an induction motor. Instead, there's a full-sized aluminum turntable, carefully balanced and matched to the kinetic energy of the Synchro-Lab Motor. The turntable mat is heavily ribbed for easy cleaning and safe support of the record through its full diameter. □

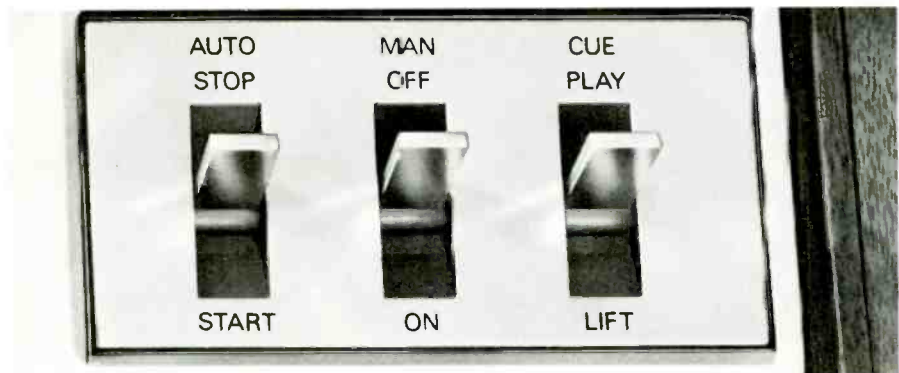
## Retained—Two point record support.

Garrard's exclusive record support system guarantees utmost safety and reliability. Records on the Zero 100 are handled automatically with the care and delicacy they require for long life and fine performance. The record stack is supported at the outer edge by a sturdy platform. The oversized clip at the top of the platform is easily grasped, quickly raised over the stack, where it acts as an effective stabilizer. Records are supported positively, and drop into place on a micro-cushion of air. □



## Retained — Unitized escutcheon with finger-tab, cue/pause control.

Putting the right controls, in the right form, in the right place (a concept known as "human engineering") is an important Garrard feature. The Zero 100 incorporates a handsome control panel with three customized finger-tab controls: one to run the machine on automatic; one for manual operation; and the third for viscous damped cue and pause control. □



The incomparable  
**ZERO 100**  
 and the entire  
 Garrard Series.

The Zero 100 is the newest model number to bear the proudest name in high fidelity record playing equipment. Garrard's reputation has been re-earned year after year for over half a century by pedigree performance. Now, once again, Garrard lives up to its reputation with an automatic unit advanced beyond any others now available in performance and convenience... yet it is offered at a realistic price.

Now, more than ever before, there's a Garrard Automatic Turntable for every component music system.



Zero 100  
 \$189.50

**Component Series**

Automatic turntable only



SL95B  
 \$139.50



SL72B  
 \$99.50



SL65B  
 \$74.50



SL55B  
 \$59.50



40B  
 \$44.50



30  
 \$39.50



SP20B  
 \$37.50

**Module Series**

Complete with cartridge, base and dust cover



SLX-3  
 \$99.50



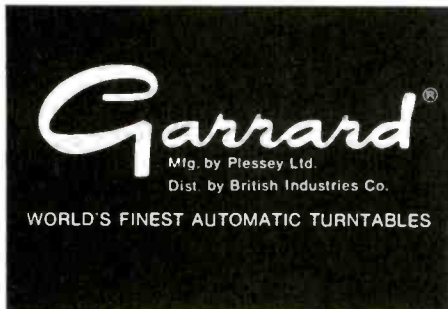
SLX-2  
 \$69.50



X-10  
 \$52.50



X-11 "Demi"  
 \$39.95



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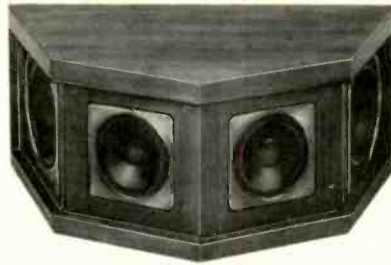
selected by a switch located, along with a level control (which has a range of about 10 dB), in the rear of the enclosure. The Microstatic's efficiency and power-handling capability are complementary to speaker systems with which it is intended to be used. The price of a Microstatic adapter has recently been reduced from \$77 to \$57. A pair would be needed for a stereo system.

● **Laboratory Measurements and Listening Tests.** Perhaps to a greater extent than most speakers, the Microstatic unit calls for a combination of objective and subjective evaluation procedures. On any multi-driver speaker system, frequency-response measurements in an anechoic environment inevitably show large irregularities arising from phase interference between the several drivers. A more meaningful measurement can be made in a reverberant test chamber, for this integrates the entire output (in all directions) of the speaker.

Our test room is neither anechoic nor reverberant, but acoustically resembles a slightly bright home listening room. The multiple microphone setup we use for speaker measurements is reasonably valid over most of the audio frequency range, but at the highest frequencies most of the pickup is through the closest microphone, which would, as noted, be most subject to interference effects from a multiple-driver system. In any event, the final response curve of the Microstatic assembly had an upward slope of about 6 dB per octave from 2,000 to approximately 13,000 Hz, with no irregularities exceeding  $\pm 3$  dB in that range. Rarely do we obtain a smoother curve than this. In the 7,000-Hz crossover switch position, output fell off below that frequency, but the highest frequencies were affected only slightly.

As would be expected from the configuration of the array, a horizontal polar-response measurement showed little variation in frequency response at any forward angle from the speaker. Tone-burst response was generally good, with no significant ringing except at 12,000 Hz, where the output of the speaker reached a maximum. The speaker impedance measured between 12 and 16 ohms over most of its working frequency range, increasing as it should to more than 50 ohms below the crossover point.

To check the performance of the Microstatic speaker with a typical companion unit, we paired with it a high-quality acoustic-suspension speaker system in the \$175 range. First, we measured response of the speaker system by itself, with its mid-range and tweeter-level controls set at maximum—the setting that our previous experience with the system has shown to be optimum. Above 3,000 Hz, we measured a gradual downward slope in the response, with the output at 13,000 Hz some 5 dB below the 3,000-Hz level. This, incidentally, is excellent frequency response by contemporary standards, especially in view of the system's smoothness and lack of small dips and peaks in the measured response curve. Adding the Microstatic—with its crossover set to the 3,500-Hz switch position and the level control set at maximum—flattened out the portion of the curve above 3,000 Hz without degrading the speaker's performance in any way that could be detected by ear. The combined output of the two units now had the same level at 13,000 Hz as at 3,000 Hz, and in fact measured  $\pm 2.5$  dB from 300 (our lower measurement limit in this test) to beyond 13,000 Hz. The specified control set-



The Microstatic's inner tweeters have 1 1/4-inch cones; The outer drivers are 1 3/4-inch units.

tings gave the flattest overall response curve. Using either the 7,000-Hz crossover switch position or a reduced level on the Microstatic lessened the improvement in the overall response.

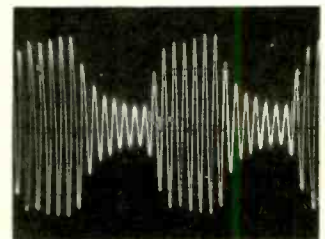
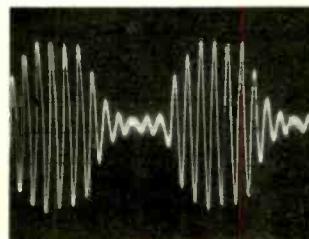
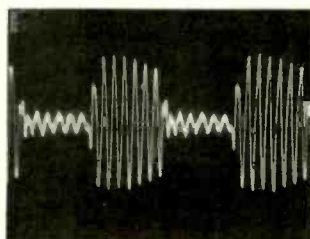
In addition to measurements, controlled listening tests were a vital part of our evaluation of the Microstatic unit. In our "simulated live-vs.-recorded" comparison tests, most speakers lacked highs (on wire brushes and other instruments with content in the uppermost octave). Adding the Microstatic made a noticeable improvement. With most program material in our particular slightly "hard" listening room, we found the upper mid-range a trifle too bright with the Microstatic level at maximum; the optimum setting was about 1/3 of the way down from maximum. Obviously, different rooms, different settings.

● **Comment.** During our listening tests we satisfied ourselves that the Microstatic unit can make an audible and measurable improvement in the high-frequency output and/or dispersion of almost every speaker we tried it with. The best of these required only a slight contribution from the Microstatic, while others benefited from its full output. In every case, however, there was a distinct improvement in the reproduction, particularly in the horizontal dispersion of the highest frequencies, which helped add a sense of "air" and eliminated any tendency toward one-spot stereo. Lest we might be misguided by a possible preference for exaggerated highs, we also used our "live-vs.-recorded" comparison technique for this evaluation. The results completely confirmed our subjective impressions. Even when a speaker had virtually perfect on-axis high-frequency response, at angles of 45 to 60 degrees off axis there was an audible loss of extreme high frequencies. With the Microstatic in use, most speakers we tried sounded exactly the same at any listening angle—which is as it should be. A user should be warned, however, that if there is a high-frequency peak or distortion in the program material, phono cartridge, or tape player that went unheard previously, the addition of the Microstatic will bring it through loud and clear. In other words, if you hear high-frequency distortion after a Microstatic is connected, it is most probably *not* the fault of the Microstatic.

The "\$57 question" (\$114 for a pair) is, of course, whether the improvement is worth the added cost. People have spent more to achieve less improvement than is provided by the Microstatic. This decision will have to be made by each prospective purchaser, based on his own listening judgment. If your hearing stops at 10,000 Hz, or if you don't like highs, the Microstatic is not for you. To our ears, the designers of the Microstatic have, with four little cone tweeters, captured much of the characteristic smooth-

(Continued on page 46)

Except for some slight ringing at 12,000 Hz (far right) the Microstatic's tone-burst response was good. Other frequencies shown are 4,000 (left) and 10,000 Hz (center).



ness and lack of coloration of a good electrostatic tweeter without a trace of harshness or accentuation of hiss levels. And unlike the situation with most electrostatics, there is a thoroughly dispersed sound pattern. As we understand it, this was their goal, and it has certainly been attained—at a price well below that of any comparable electrostatic speaker or tweeter. Unfortunately, after you have been

living with a Microstatic for a while, turning it off may make your system sound as if its built-in tweeter has blown out—the difference is that striking! So, if you borrow a pair of Microstatics from a friend or dealer “just to try them out,” you do so at your own risk. You may find that you can't give them up.

For more information, circle 157 on reader service card

## CONCORD MARK 20 RECEIVER



● CONCORD's new “Mark” stereo receiver line is headed by the Mark 20, which our tests revealed to be a very powerful and versatile unit. The FM tuner section of the Concord Mark 20 has an FET r.f. stage, ceramic i.f. filters, and an integrated circuit. The AM tuner is as basic as such a device can be, with a self-oscillating mixer, two i.f. stages, and a diode detector. However, it does have a “twin-T” 10-kHz notch filter to remove interstation whistles. Filters of a similar configuration are also used in the FM-multiplex section to remove 19-kHz and higher frequencies from the audio outputs.

The audio section of the Concord Mark 20 drives the speakers directly from the output transistors through 7.5-ampere protective fuses. The output transistors are electronically protected against overloads by a fast-acting circuit that reduces the drive signal under overload conditions. The chrome-edged black front panel has a slide-rule dial flanked by the tuning knob and a zero-center FM tuning meter (which reads relative signal strength for AM reception). Illuminated words above the dial identify the input-selector setting: AUX, PHONO, FM AUTO, FM MONO, AM. There is a rotary speaker selector (OFF, A, B, A+B), and six lever switches that control tape monitoring, stereo/mono mode, muting, AFC, high-cut filter, and loudness compensation.

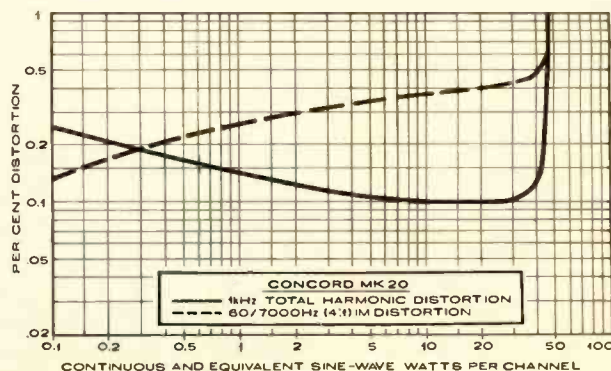
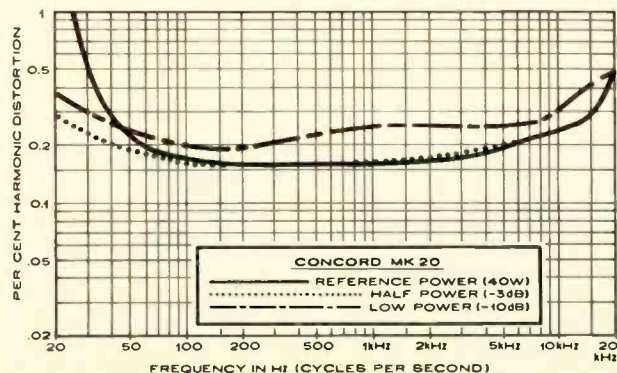
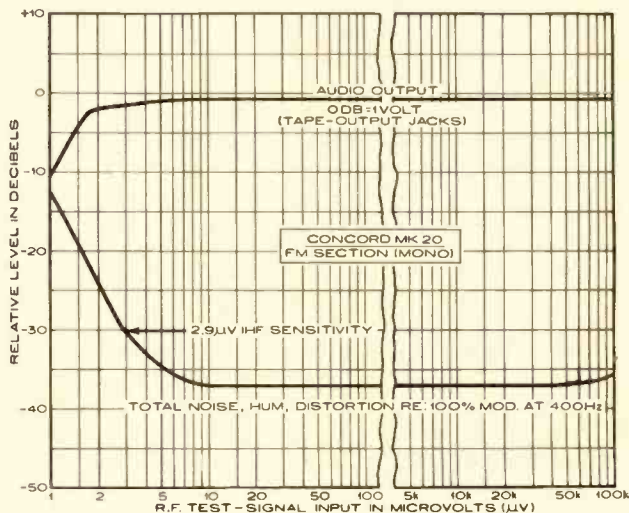
A group of four vertical slider potentiometers control bass, treble, balance, and volume. At the rear of the receiver are the speaker outputs, source inputs, antenna terminals, a pivoted ferrite-rod AM antenna, and two a.c. outlets (one of them switched). A DIN input/output jack parallels the tape input and output jacks. The Concord Mark 20 is supplied with an oiled walnut cabinet. It measures 17½

inches wide by 14 inches deep by 5⅞ inches high and weighs 26 pounds. The price is \$299.79.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The IHF FM sensitivity of the Concord Mark 20 measured 2.9 microvolts. Limiting was complete at 10 microvolts, and the distortion was 1.4 per cent at full modulation. The frequency response was ±3 dB from 30 to 14,000 Hz, and was down 4 dB at 15,000 Hz. The low-pass filters effectively removed all 19- and 38-kHz signals from the audio outputs.

The stereo-FM channel separation was exceptionally uniform across the audio range. It was typically 32 dB from 80 to 8,000 Hz, and always better than 30 dB over that range. Separation remained very good at the high and low frequencies; it was 24.5 dB at 30 Hz and 20.5 dB at 15,000 Hz. At 9,500 Hz there was nearly total mixing of the channels, which was evidently caused by interaction of the second harmonic of the modulation frequency with the 19-kHz multiplex pilot carrier. Since it occurred only over a very narrow band of frequencies, well above the range of musical fundamentals, the effect could not be heard on program material. The FM signal-to-noise ratio was 65 dB, and the capture ratio was 2.7 dB. The AM tuner produced

(Continued on page 48)



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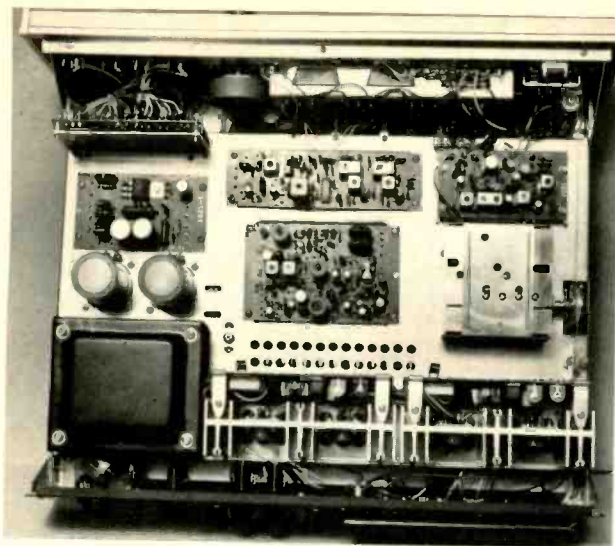
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Interior view of the Concord Mark 20 with front panel at top. Note line of heat sinks to the right of the power transformer.

satisfactory listening quality, but with the usual severe loss of high frequencies. The AM frequency response was down 6 dB at 22 and 2,200 Hz relative to the maximum output in the 100- to 500-Hz range.

With the tone controls centered, the audio frequency response of the Mark 20 dropped slightly at the extremes—about 3 dB at 20 and 20,000 Hz. The 6-dB-per-octave high-filter cut-off frequency was 3,000 Hz, and the loudness compensation boosted both low and high frequencies. RIAA phono equalization was very accurate—within  $\pm 0.5$  dB over its range. The tone controls had good frequency-response properties, with a sliding inflection point in the bass and a hinged characteristic in the treble. However, most of their effect took place near the

extremes of the slider controls' settings.

The power amplifiers delivered about 48 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz into 8 ohms before clipping. Into 4 ohms, the output was 58 watts; into 16 ohms it was 29.3 watts. Intermodulation distortion was under 0.5 per cent at all levels up to 40 watts. With 40 watts per channel selected as a reference power level, harmonic distortion was typically less than 0.2 per cent from 50 to 7,000 Hz between full and half power, and about 0.2 to 0.3 per cent at one-tenth power. At any power level, the 20,000-Hz distortion was under 0.5 per cent. Distortion at 20 Hz was about 0.3 to 0.4 per cent at half power or less, but at full power the distortion reached 1 per cent at 25 Hz. This effect, quite common in receivers, is caused by insufficient power-supply reserve. The 7.5-ampere speaker-line fuses, incidentally, are not intended to protect the speakers from excessive audio power, but to provide some measure of protection in the event of a short-circuited output transistor. The input level required for 10 watts output was 82 millivolts (AUX) and 1.1 millivolts (PHONO). Phono overload occurred at 56 millivolts, which is a safe level for most cartridges, and certainly for any delivering less than 5 to 7 millivolts at the standard recorded level of 3.54 centimeters per second used in our cartridge tests.

Hum and noise were 65.5 dB below 10 watts on any input, which is an inaudible level, though somewhat higher than we have measured on a number of other amplifiers and receivers. The noise was entirely power-supply hum occurring in the power amplifiers and therefore not affected by the volume-control setting.

● *Comment.* The Concord Mark 20 is an attractively packaged receiver with very complete control facilities. Its FM-tuner sensitivity is adequate for most locations, and it is one of the most powerful receivers in its price range. The wooden cabinet, included in its price, is an extra-cost option for most competitively priced units.

For more information, circle 158 on reader service card

## MIRACORD 770H AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE



● THE NEW 770H is Miracord's top model, and it has almost every feature ever offered on an automatic record player, plus a few new ones. Like the other Miracord automatic turntables, the 770H has light-touch pushbuttons to turn on the motor and set the arm indexing for 7-, 10-, or 12-inch records. A STOP button returns the pickup to its rest and shuts off the motor in both automatic and manual play modes; the same occurs automatically at the end of the final record in a stack. Manual operation of the Miracord entails lifting the arm from its rest (the finger lift is large and easy to hold), which starts the motor. The nonferrous cast platter, which is  $11\frac{7}{8}$  inches in diameter and weighs 6 pounds and 7 ounces, is driven by a husky outer-rotor hysteresis-synchronous motor at nominal speeds of  $33\frac{1}{3}$ , 45, and 78 rpm. A vernier adjustment of  $\pm 3$  per cent is pro-

vided for each speed. Interchangeable automatic and manual spindles are used; the latter rotates with the record. The automatic spindle must be removed before a stack of records can be taken off the platter.

Around the underside of the platter there are stroboscope markings, illuminated from below by a neon lamp and visible in a small mirror at the edge of the platter. Instead of the usual dots or lines, the Miracord stroboscope display is a series of numbers—33 or 45—that appear to stand still when the speed control is set correctly. The 78-rpm speed is correct when either of the others has been set. The arm, one of the longest used in an automatic turntable, has a stylus-force dial calibrated from 0 to 6 grams on its vertical pivot support. An anti-skating control has similar calibrations. A viscous-damped cueing device raises and lowers the arm smoothly and without any lateral position shift. The 770H has a removable cartridge slide with an externally accessible fore-aft adjustment of cartridge position and a tilting mount for adjusting vertical tracking angle. A lever on the front of the cartridge slide, with a scale calibrated from M (manual) to 8, is set for the number of records on the playing stack. A reference post on the motorboard provides an accurate guide for setting the cartridge for minimum tracking-angle error. Once the adjustment is made, the post is lowered and a soft brush is installed on it. The brush removes any accumulated dust from the stylus each time the arm returns to its rest.

(Continued on page 50)

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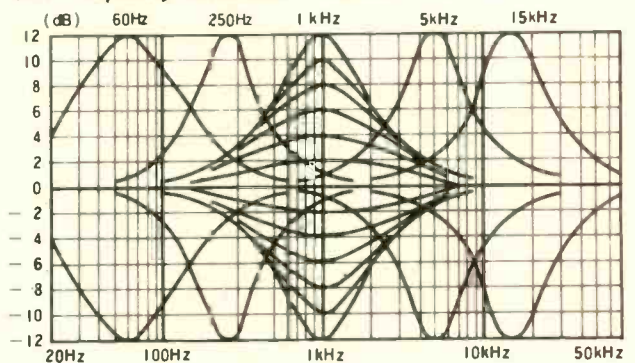
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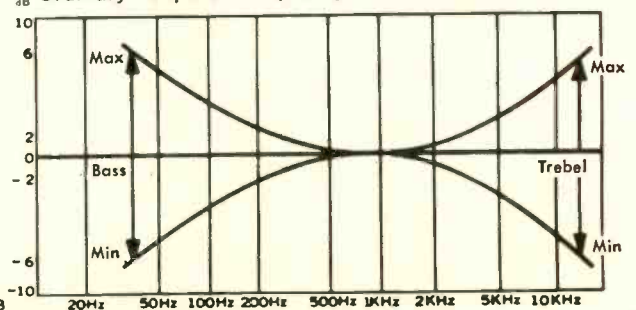
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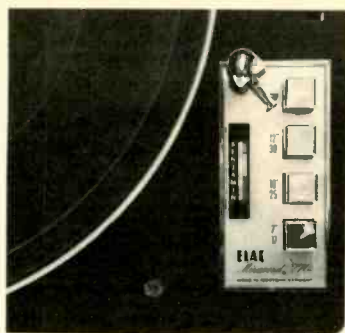
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The four pushbutton controls of the 770H are grouped compactly with the locking tone-arm rest and the stylus-timer gauge. The stylus brush is visible at bottom center.



arm rest has a positive locking lever.

The Miracord 770H has a unique timer that indicates the number of hours (up to 1,000) the turntable has been in use. This reminds the user to check the stylus for wear at regular intervals. The price of the Miracord 770H is \$225. Wooden base (\$15) and dust cover (\$14.95) are available.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Miracord 770H was tested with an Elac STS-444E cartridge, operating at a 1-gram tracking force. The actual force was about 10 per cent higher than the dial calibration when the arm was balanced according to instructions. When balanced so that it had an upward tilt of about 5 degrees at zero force, the dial was accurate at 1 gram and was within 0.1 gram of the other points on its scale. Raising the pickup  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch to stimulate a stack of records increased the force by about 0.2 gram at a 1-gram setting.

The lever that sets the cartridge's vertical-tracking angle would not hold its position, but tended to spring back when set near its upper limit. The indicated settings were also too high. The correct vertical angle was obtained at

the center of a stack of eight records with the lever set to number 4 or 5 rather than to 8.

The anti-skating calibration was correct, giving optimum compensation for the elliptical stylus of the STS-444E cartridge when set to match the tracking-force dial. The combination of a long tone arm and an accurately adjustable stylus overhang resulted in tracking-angle errors as low as we have ever measured—under 0.33 degree per inch of radius for radii between 2.5 and 6 inches.

The unweighted rumble was somewhat higher than we have measured on other Miracord units. Combined vertical and lateral rumble was  $-28.5$  dB; canceling out the vertical rumble improved the figure to  $-30.5$  dB. With CBS RRL weighting, the corresponding figures were  $-52.5$  dB and  $-55.5$  dB, both of which are typical of good-quality turntables. Wow and flutter were extremely low, 0.06 and 0.025 per cent, respectively, at all three speeds. The complete record-change cycle required 13 seconds—an average figure for automatic turntables. The range of speed adjustment was  $+1.8$ ,  $-3.6$  per cent and was totally unaffected by normal line-voltage variation. The motor started readily with line voltages as low as 80 volts, but the stroboscope neon lamp required about 108 volts to ignite.

● **Comment.** One cannot fault the basic performance of the Miracord 770H, whose turntable and arm are quite comparable to many top-quality single-play components as well as to the finest competitive automatic players. There was no audible rumble, even with considerable bass boost, and the turntable's smoothness and mechanical quietness were most impressive. The stylus timer is a most worthwhile feature, and we appreciated the continuously visible stroboscope markings, which are necessary on a turntable with adjustable speeds but are rarely provided.

For more information, circle 159 on reader service card

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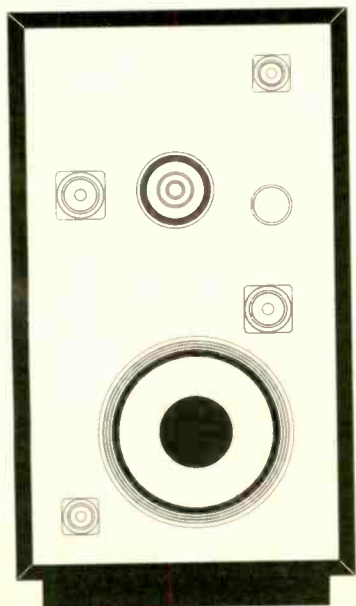
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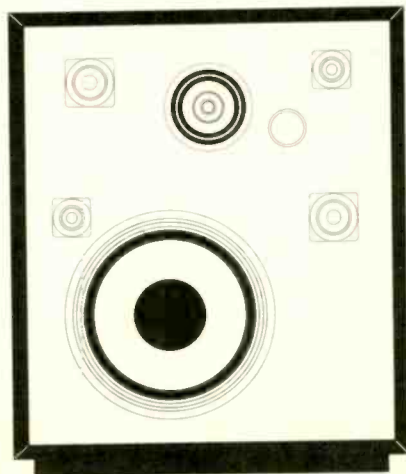
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(For more information, including detailed literature, see your audio dealer or write to Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N.Y. 10454. Canada: H. Roy Gray Co. Ltd., Markham, Ont. Overseas: Royal Sound Co., 409 N. Main St., Freeport, N.Y. 11520.)

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## Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1, in E Minor

**E**VEN when Frédéric Chopin was a very young child, the skill, delicacy, and good taste of his piano playing made him the darling of the Polish aristocracy. Their salons and ballrooms echoed to the compositions and improvisations of the young prodigy, and his progress was carefully nurtured in this protected atmosphere. But by the time he had reached his twentieth birthday, Chopin had decided to present himself as a pianist to the more impersonal scrutiny of the general public and the professional critics. He booked himself for two concerts in the National Theater of Warsaw on March 17 and 22, 1830, scheduling for each date a performance of his newly completed Concerto in F Minor for Piano and Orchestra. He was a spectacular success, the sold-out houses hailing his supremacy as an artist. Warsaw clamored for more of Chopin's concerts, and on October 11 he appeared before the public once again, this time bringing with him another new Piano Concerto, completed in the interim—the E Minor Concerto.

The quaint structure of the three concerts is evidence of the peculiar manner in which such events were undertaken in the nineteenth century. Each program began with an introductory number. Then Chopin played the first movement of one of the concertos. A solo number followed, and then the first half of the concert concluded with the slow movement and finale of the concerto. In the second half of the October 11 concert, a group of arias was sung by the soprano Constantia Gladkowska, with whom Chopin was in love at the time, and the evening concluded with Chopin again performing with the orchestra, this time his *Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs*. A few weeks later Chopin embarked on a concert tour that was to take him to Vienna and Italy. In the remaining nineteen years of his life he would never again set foot upon Polish soil.

The two Chopin piano concertos came to be published in reverse order of composition. The E Minor Concerto was published first, in 1833, with a dedication to Friedrich Kalkbrenner, a pianist and pedagogue whom Chopin had met in Paris two years earlier. Accordingly, it was assigned the number one. The F Minor Concerto, actually the first of Chopin's two, was not published until 1836, and thus the number two was assigned to it. The slow movement of this concerto, a rhapsodic and impassioned *Larghetto*, celebrates the love affair between Chopin

and Constantia. When it came to dedicating the concerto, however, Chopin inscribed it to the new lady in his life, Countess Delphine Potocka, who was a close friend for the rest of his days.

Each of the two Chopin concertos is represented in the current record catalog by more than a dozen performances—testimony to the hold this music has had over the years on both performers and public. Among the recordings of the E Minor Concerto, there is a special niche for Josef Hofmann's performance, the product of an off-the-air transcription in 1938. I have not heard the Archive of Piano Music release (X 923) of the performance, the sound of which has been subjected to artificial stereo enhancement, but the International Piano Library's mono version of the performance (IPL 502) reveals a cultivation and a dazzlingly varied tonal palette that fully substantiate Hofmann's reputation as one of the most extraordinary of all pianists. (Information on IPL's releases can be obtained by writing to International Piano Library, 215 West 91st Street, New York, N.Y. 10024).

**O**F the contemporary recordings of the E Minor Concerto, three possess outstanding qualities: Dinu Lipatti's (Seraphim 60007), Maurizio Pollini's (Seraphim S 60066), and Artur Schnabel's (RCA LSC 2575). Lipatti's derives from a broadcast performance of 1948, two and a half years before his tragically untimely death at the age of thirty-three. The sound, considering the source, is astonishingly good, and the performance has a sweep and breadth that really set it apart. The unidentified orchestra and conductor are expert collaborators. Given Seraphim's budget price, Lipatti's recording is not to be missed—and neither is the more recent Pollini recording, also on Seraphim, but in first-class early stereo sound. Pollini's approach combines fiery temperament with a sensitive response to the poetic atmosphere of the music, particularly the magical nocturnal portions of the slow movement. Finally, Schnabel's recording is a patrician and meticulously shaded account, with particularly sympathetic ensemble coordination between the piano soloist and his conductor, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski.

Of the two available tape versions, my nod would go to Martha Argerich's DGG reel (C 9383) despite some pulling about of the score indulged in by the conductor, Claudio Abbado.



Stereo Review presents the nineteenth article in the  
American Composers Series

# EDGARD VARÈSE

*"In 1919 he also began, at thirty-six, a wholly new composer's life. It was as if all Europe, its history and its training and its valued friendships among both classical and modernistic artists, were merely a prelude to America. His first piece composed in the new and now definitive residence he called, in the plural, Amériques, meaning, in both the historical and the personal sense, discoveries."*

—Virgil Thomson: *American Music Since 1910* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971)

By ERIC SALZMAN

**E**DGARD VARÈSE was born in Paris on December 22, 1883, and died in New York on November 6, 1965. The first part of his career is a footnote in the history of European late Romanticism; the second, an essential part of the history of music in the New World and new music everywhere. Long after the battles of Expressionism, neo-Classicism, serialism, and aleatory have ended, the music of Varèse continues to be a potent force. His influence is felt from Gilbert Amy to John Cage to Yannis Xenakis to Frank Zappa. He widened our notion of music to take in noise and the sounds of the human and natural worlds around us—never arbitrarily, but always with the highest artistic and expressive goals. He created a new kind of instrumental and percussion music that is as contemporary now as when it was written. He predicted the advent of electronic music, *musique concrète*, and multimedia, and, having worked much of his life toward achieving these new means, lived long enough to create the first masterpieces in the new music.

As is the case with many of his contemporaries, his mature output was small. Each work is a probe into the future: dense, intense, complete in imaginative conception, powerful yet controlled. He suffered immensely from his voluntary transplantation to this country—there has never been much of a place for powerful and original musical minds in established musical life here—but to the end *he considered himself an American composer*; the concept of New-World music had both literal and symbolic meaning for him.

Through all his triumphs and setbacks, Varèse remained an extraordinary presence in American musical life. From just after World War I until the middle of the Thirties, he spearheaded the performance of new music in this country. He was a central figure in the American experimental movements of the Twenties and was in the closest rapport with the leading intellectual and artistic currents of the day. Later, in tragic eclipse and neglect, he somehow remained a force, organizing a chorus of workingmen, encouraging a new generation of experimental composers, and continuing his search for the new means necessary to achieve his ideals. After his startling re-emergence, his influence spread from New York to Warsaw to Tokyo to California; indeed, the direct impact of his work and his ideals on far-out and electronic art, pop and non-pop, has not yet waned.

Varèse the man was every bit as imposing as his music. In his youth he was—if we can judge by the photographs—more than ordinarily handsome, with a burning, visionary intensity in his eyes. In his last years he was hardly less striking, with a great shock of white hair and bushy questioning eyebrows over a

massive, craggy face. People were always confusing him with one of his greatest supporters, Leopold Stokowski. But there was nothing of the noble, posed Stokowskian profile about Varèse's *musique concrète* features.

People said he was difficult, crotchety, and uncompromising when in fact he was only sure of himself and what he had to do. It is true that he had no patience with the small-minded and the mediocre and that he made enemies among that large and powerful tribe. He had a plainness of speech—no bull—that expressed itself in a strong, rough French and an accented English that had nothing in common with the usual conception of an elegant French accent. But he never ranted and he was never dogmatic. He was strong and full of a kind of peasant dignity—much more common among painters and sculptors (who work with their hands) than among composers (who are generally middle-class and intellectual). This earthy, proletarian quality—almost unknown in European music after Beethoven—was a quality that Varèse shared with the other pioneering American composers of the period. It was an essential part of his vitality and defined his anti-establishment position in the New World. In one way it was very American; in another, the expression of his deep roots in the Old World.

**V**ARÈSE was born in Paris, but he was brought up largely in Villars, a small village in Burgundy. He was the oldest of five children. His father, Henri Pie Jules Annibal Varèse, was from Piedmont—hence the Italian name. His mother, Blanche-Marie Cortot, was a cousin of the famous pianist Alfred Cortot. Varèse's father was away a great deal on business, and the child was sent to live with his mother's family in Villars. The Burgundian countryside and, above all, the great Romanesque church at nearby Tournus made a profound impression on the young Varèse. Years later he was to say that he wanted to write music with the power and strength of that Romanesque church. Varèse's grandfather Claude Cortot took the place of his absent father. "I inherited only one thing of value," he once said, "my Burgundian grandfather."

His relationship with his real father was nothing less than traumatic. In 1892, the elder Varèse moved his family to Turin, Italy, and his oldest son was put into the Polytechnical Institute to study engineering. Varese disliked Turin intensely, and like Berlioz before him and Boulez after him, he rejected a "scientific" career for an artistic one. Turin had concerts, an opera house, and a conservatory; the reluctant Polytechnic student became passionately involved in music. He taught himself the rudiments; later, the



A strikingly good-looking young Edgard Varèse at work in Paris (right) and at play in Berlin. Varèse was in Berlin in 1910 to hear the first performance of his orchestral tone poem *Bourgogne*, played there by the Blüthner Orchestra under Josef Stransky.

N.Y. Pub. Lab.

director of the Turin Conservatory, Giovanni Bolzani, gave him free private instruction. The first concert he ever attended included works by Franck, Dukas, Strauss, Wagner, and the *Afternoon of a Faun* of Debussy, then quite new and, to Varèse, overwhelming.

Varèse's mother died in 1900 or 1901. His father remarried, and the father-son enmity worsened. In 1903 he left his family and his engineering career and went to Paris to become a musician. He had no money and virtually no musical credentials at all. Yet, within hardly more than a decade, he had impressed the best musicians and critics of Europe—as a conductor and as the promising composer of unusual late-Romantic tone poems, all now lost or destroyed. Varèse's Old World career belongs to another era, the twilight of a golden age that was to be shattered by World War I.

In 1904, Varèse was admitted to the Schola Cantorum in Paris—heaven knows on what basis—where he studied conducting and composition with Vincent D'Indy and counterpoint with Albert Roussel, as well as medieval and Renaissance music. A year later he was admitted to Charles Widor's master class at the Paris Conservatoire. He did not take very kindly to his teachers and, later on, often spoke scornfully of them ("D'Indy's vanity would not permit the least bit of originality or independent thinking. I didn't want to become another D'Indy; one was quite enough."). Nevertheless, it was at the Schola that he made his first acquaintance with early music. And he was, by all accounts, a remarkable student with a particular facility in a discipline not considered important in his later music: traditional counterpoint.

At this time he frequented a circle of young avant-garde artists, musicians, and poets which included Picasso, Julio González, Modigliani, Erik Satie, Max Jacob, Guillaume Apollinaire, and others. By 1905 he had already composed the *Three Pieces for Orchestra*, *La Chanson des jeunes hommes*, and the

*Prélude à la fin d'un jour* after a poem of his friend Léon Deubel. A year later he wrote a *Rhapsodie romane* inspired by his beloved Burgundy; a piano version of it was performed in 1906. That same year he founded a chorus at the Université Populaire in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, an organization whose membership was drawn largely from the working-class slums of Paris. In 1907 he married a young actress, Suzanne Bing, later to become famous as the leading actress of the Vieux Colombier. That same year he received the Première Bourse (First Prize or Fellowship) of the City of Paris, awarded to him on the recommendation of Jules Massenet (!) and Widor. Nevertheless, Varèse was repelled by the mediocrity of French musical life, and, exactly as Boulez was to do half a century later, he exiled himself from France to Germany, taking up residence in Berlin, where he spent the greater part of the next six years.

The seminal figures in German musical life at this time were Richard Strauss and Ferruccio Busoni, and both befriended Varèse. Busoni's personality and thought were very influential on the young composer; indeed, Varèse's later work could almost be said to represent the working out of ideas that Busoni proposed but was incapable of realizing (the use of machines in music, the freedom from scale systems, and tempered tuning). Varèse's exile did not prevent him from revisiting France and making the acquaintance of Romain Rolland, Rodin, Debussy, and Ravel. Although his contacts with Debussy were mainly by mail, the two men were close, and the older composer's influence on the younger is palpable. Varèse's friendship with the writer Romain Rolland is an even more remarkable story. Rolland saw in Varèse the incarnation of Jean-Christophe, the hero of his famous and monumental novel about a composer, which was then in progress. Incredibly enough, Varèse, like Jean-Christophe, was working on a symphonic poem after Rabelais' *Gargantua*! There seems little doubt that, in the course of the

completion of the novel, Jean-Christophe came to resemble Varèse more and more.

Rolland was well connected in Germany and helped his friend to become acquainted with the conductor Karl Muck, with Richard Strauss, and with Strauss' librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Strauss helped Varèse get his first major performance: the orchestral fantasy *Bourgogne*—another echo of his beloved Burgundy—was performed in 1910 by the Blüthner Orchestra of Berlin under Josef Stransky. It provoked the first of many Varèsian scandals, but it also won him some adherents. Varèse's major early work was an opera with Hofmannsthal called *Oedipus and the Sphinx*. Another important composition, *Mehr Licht*, seems to have been transmuted into the work called *Les Cycles du Nord*, inspired by the phenomenon of the aurora borealis, a typically Varèsian interest. At this time, Varèse was in the closest touch with the fast-breaking developments in European art. He knew the futurists and was influenced by them (although he rejected their literalism and commonplaceness), and he was acquainted with the newest and most revolutionary works of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. He founded another chorus in Berlin, conducting early music and participating in several of Max Reinhardt's famous theater productions. He made his debut as a symphonic conductor with the Czech Philharmonic in Prague at the beginning of 1914.

**T**HE outbreak of World War I was a tremendous blow to a French composer just achieving major rec-

*Some idea of a typical Varèse premiere in the Twenties may be gleaned from this unusual published notice of a New York concert.*

[SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO MANUSCRIPTS NUMBER 5]  
They played a quartet by *Bela Bartok*; someone sang; Marie Miller and Charles Salzedo presented Mr. Salzedo's sonata for harp and piano; someone sang; and Leo Ornstein played beautifully his own sonata and something of Haydn as an encore; and then

## EDGAR VARESE

Conducted	It All
His	Happened
"HYPERPRISM"	At
(First Performance)	The
For	Klaw
Flute	Theatre
Clarinet	Sunday
2 Trumpets	Night
3 French Horns	March
2 Trombones	4, 1923

## AND PERCUSSION

Played by the Faculty and Pupils of the Daleroze School of Eurythmics  
at the International Composer's Guild

Just as we are going to press we thought we'd

## MENTION IT

He played it once: **W I L D E N T H U S I A S M**

A gentleman jumped up on the stage and said:

This is A Serious Work Those Who Don't Like It

## PLEASE GO

A gentleman in the front row orchestra gave him some **BACK TALK**

Some gentlemen in the **G A L L E R Y** SAID:

## GET OUT GET OUT

MR. VARESE began to repeat "Hyperprism" **BUT SOMEONE LAUGHED**

MR. VARESE TURNED AROUND AND GLARED while the orchestra stopped and waited

SILENCE HAVING BEEN RESTORED

MR. VARESE PERFORMED

## "HYPERPRISM" A SECOND TIME

ognition in the Germanic world. Varèse was visiting Paris at the outbreak of hostilities and served briefly in the French army before receiving a medical discharge. On December 8, 1915, he embarked for New York. The break had an extraordinary finality. His wife, Suzanne Bing, had already left him to pursue her career in the theater, and she took custody of their child. All the composer's manuscripts were lost or, as he was later to discover, burned in a Berlin warehouse fire during the war. Only *Bourgogne* survived—until 1962, when Varèse pulled it out of a desk drawer and destroyed it himself.

Varèse came to New York as poor, as unknown, and as devoid of provable accomplishment as when he had arrived in Paris twelve years earlier. But his almost incredible ability to inspire confidence soon won him a substantial place in New York artistic life. Above all he had a clear vision of what he wanted to accomplish: "I dream of instruments obedient to my thought and which, with their contribution of a whole new world of unsuspected sounds, will lend themselves to the exigencies of my inner rhythm." A little later he was quoted as saying: "What we want is an instrument that will give us a continuous sound at any pitch . . . not necessarily conforming to the traditional half tone . . . the composer and the electrician will have to labor together to get it . . . speed and synthesis are characteristics of our own epoch. We need twentieth-century instruments to realize them in music." He spoke again and again of "musical space as open rather than bounded," of "the liberation of sound," of "throwing open the whole world of sound to music." "I refuse to submit myself only to sounds that have already been heard," he told a New York *Telegraph* reporter in 1916. "What I am looking for are new technical mediums which can lend themselves to every expression of thought and keep up with thought." Significantly, Varèse's first work in the New World was *Amériques—Americas*, or new worlds of the mind and spirit.

On April 1, 1917, shortly before the United States entered the war, Varèse conducted a performance of the Berlioz Requiem at the Hippodrome before an audience of five thousand. Characteristically, the work was performed as a memorial for the dead of all nations. There was an orchestra of 150 musicians and a choir of three hundred. The performance made an enormous impression (links between Berlioz and Varèse are not hard to find), and Varèse could certainly have moved on to a substantial conducting career if he had been willing to compromise his musical views a little to suit the taste of the conservative musicians and wealthy patrons who flocked to this handsome and exotic foreigner. He actually

raised the money to found an orchestra ostensibly to be devoted to contemporary works. The New Symphony Orchestra, under Varèse's direction, made its debut on April 11 and 12, 1919, at Carnegie Hall in a program that included Debussy's *Gigues* and the Bartók *Deux Images*. The reaction was catastrophic; the board asked Varèse to change his announced programs; he refused and resigned. In 1921, with the composer-harpist Carlos Salzedo, he founded the International Composers' Guild, the first organization anywhere devoted entirely to new music. This organization and its successor, the Pan-American Association of Composers, gave the American or world premieres of works by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Webern, Berg, Hindemith, Honegger, Ives, Ruggles, Varèse himself, and many others. In the spirit of the day, the Guild published a manifesto which ended as follows: "The International Composers' Guild refuses to admit any limitations, either of volition or of action. The International Composers' Guild disapproves of all 'isms'; denies the existence of schools; recognizes only the individual."

The Guild was many times imitated, most notably by the International Society for Contemporary Music and the League of Composers. The latter was founded by dissidents who broke away from the Guild; Varèse recognized no "isms," but that did not mean that he was willing to compromise his programming principles.

The Guild was, in fact, a highly successful organization. Its concerts were well attended, and the audiences included the leading lights of New York intellectual and artistic life. New music was, it seems, very new and was taken quite seriously in those days. Varèse's *Offrandes*, *Hyperprism*, *Octandre*, and

*Intégrales*, all composed in the United States, were played at Guild concerts between 1922 and 1925. *Offrandes*, with its impressionistic flavor, was well received, but *Hyperprism* brought the audience to blows and Varèse to a new kind of fame. The music was violently attacked, but it also had its defenders, notably Lawrence Gilman of the New York *Herald Tribune* and Paul Rosenfeld, critic of *The Dial*, a leading literary periodical of the day. But the impact of the work was perhaps best summed up by Charles Martin Loeffler, a conservative composer and no friend of the far-out: "It would be the negation of all the centuries of musical progress if I were to call this music. . . . Nevertheless . . . this piece roused in me a sort of subconscious racial memory, something elemental that happened before the beginning of recorded time. It affected me as only music of the past has affected me." *Octandre* also provoked divided reactions. The critic of the *Christian Science Monitor* wrote that the work "is so personal and so powerful that it has enough in it to provide the foundation of a whole musical school." The critic of the New York *Post* said, "If Varèse's composition was the worst offender, there were others which ran it a close race for hideousness and insanity—songs by Carl Ruggles, Anton von Webern, and Alban Berg." Not such bad company! *Intégrales* was described as bellows and shrieks from a zoo, the din of passing trains, the hammering of a drunken woodpecker, a thunderbolt striking a tinsmith's factory. But on the other side were Paul Rosenfeld's comments about this work: "Varèse stems from the fat European soil. . . . It is the serious approach, the scientific curiosity . . . that strengthened and sent him onward. But his experience has been the New World in dream and in

*Varèse's pupils included André Jolivet and William Grant Still, both of whom compose today in idioms quite different from their teacher's, and Chou Wen-Chung, in whose strongly personal and individual music one can hear ramifications of the Varèse idea.*



French Embassy, Press Div.



Joseph Portanova Sculpt.



BMI Archives



contact. . . . Varèse never has imitated the sounds of the city. . . . He has come into relationship with the elements of American life and found corresponding rhythms within himself set free. Because of this spark of creativeness, it has been given him to hear the symphony of New York."

In late 1924, Leopold Stokowski conducted *Hyperprism* in Philadelphia and in New York. He conducted the premieres of *Octandre* in 1925, *Amériques* in 1926, and *Arcana* in 1927, the last two with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Academy of Music and Carnegie Hall. Reactions were equally vehement. One critic wrote: ". . . indescribable turmoil. Some men wildly waved their arms and one was seen to raise both hands high above his head with both thumbs turned down, the death sign of the Roman amphitheater. . . ." As always, Varèse had his defenders. W. P. Tryon, critic of the *Christian Science Monitor*, wrote about *Amériques*: "this work, dispassionately regarded, may be said to mark a date in the history of art . . . the most memorable night of modern music in New York, no doubt, since . . . *Sacre du Printemps*. . . ."

In 1927 and 1928, Varèse began to explore the possibilities of creating a new electronic instrument with the acoustical research director of Bell Laboratories and the French inventors René Bertrand and Maurice Martenot. Varèse was very explicit about what he had in mind: ". . . it goes without saying that these means should not lead to speculation as to how to reproduce already existing sounds, but, on the contrary, to ways of making possible the realization of new sounds in accordance with new conceptions . . . they will be able to reproduce all existing sounds and collaborate in the creation of new tim-

*Varèse with the American composer Mel Powell, then teaching at Yale and now Director of the California Institute of the Arts.*



Bettmann Archive

bres . . . taking the sounding elements as one mass, there are possibilities of subdivisions in relation to that mass; it can be divided into other masses, other volumes, other levels, all by means of loudspeakers arranged in different places, thus giving a sense of movement through space. . . ." The vision was remarkably complete years before it could be realized.

In 1928, Varèse returned to Paris, where he was to remain for four years planning out *Espace* and *L'Astronome*, two monumental unrealized conceptions, and composing the work that was to bring him more fame and notoriety than any other: *Ionisation*, for percussion ensemble. During this period, most of his earlier works were performed in France and elsewhere in Europe. The impact was extraordinary: ". . . a nightmare dreamed by giants . . ." was one reaction to *Arcana*; ". . . a gigantic step forward or else a return to the very origins of music . . ." was another; "music in the pure state, the noise of gravitating worlds, the synthesized projection of all the silences and songs of earth and sky . . . a conception of such vastness is not inhuman but extra-human . . ." was a third.

Many of these performances were directed by Nicolas Slonimsky under the auspices of the Pan-American Association; these programs introduced Ives and Ruggles to Europe as well. In 1933 at Carnegie Hall the Pan-American Association and Slonimsky gave the first performance of *Ionisation*; it was performed shortly thereafter also in Havana, San Francisco, and Paris. In the same year, Varèse, back in the United States, began work on a setting of a prayer from the *Legends of Guatemala* by Miguel Angel Asturias. For Varèse, the title *Ecuatorial* suggested the strength and intensity of pre-Columbian art. Even as he went forward in his musical explorations, he also returned to sources, to the most basic, elemental springs of musical expression. *Ecuatorial* is scored for bass voice (or chorus of basses), brass, keyboard, percussion, and two electronic instruments built for Varese by the inventor Leon Theremin (a later revision substituted two *ondes Martenots* for the Theremins). The first performance took place at Town Hall in New York under Association auspices with Nicolas Slonimsky conducting.

**B**UT Varèse's star was beginning to wane. From a position right at the heart of American artistic and creative life, he was shunted aside to a periphery reserved for eccentrics and oddball radicals. After *Ionisation* and *Ecuatorial* there was the brief, exquisite *Density 21.5*—commissioned by Georges Barrère for his new platinum flute and still Varèse's most performed and recorded work—and then a long silence. New trends of conservatism, populism, and

# EDGARD VARESE

## Idol of my youth

A reminiscence  
and appreciation

By Frank Zappa

I HAVE been asked to write about Edgard Varèse. I am in no way qualified to. I can't even pronounce his name right. The only reason I have agreed to is because I love his music very much, and if by some chance this article can influence more people to hear his works, it will have been worthwhile.

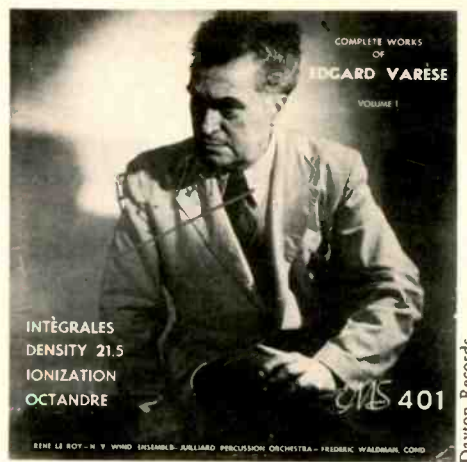
I was about thirteen when I read an article in *Look* about Sam Goody's Record Store in New York. My memory is not too clear on the details, but I recall it was praising the store's exceptional record merchandising ability. One example of brilliant salesmanship described how, through some mysterious trickery, the store actually managed to sell an album called "Ionization" (the real name of the album was "The Complete Works of Edgard Varèse, Volume One"). The article described the record as a weird jumble of drums and other unpleasant sounds.

I dashed off to my local record store and asked for it. Nobody ever heard of it. I told the guy in the store what it was like. He turned away, repulsed, and mumbled solemnly, "I probably wouldn't stock it anyway . . . nobody here in San Diego would buy it."

I didn't give up. I was so hot to get that record I couldn't even believe it. In those days I was a rhythm-and-blues fanatic. I saved any money I could get (sometimes as much as \$2 a week) so that every Friday and Saturday I could rummage through piles of old records at the Juke Box Used Record Dump (or whatever they called it) in the Maryland Hotel or the dusty corners of little record stores where they'd keep the crappy records nobody wanted to buy.

One day I was passing a hi-fi store in La Mesa. A little sign in the window announced a sale on 45's. After shuffling through their singles rack and finding a couple of Joe Houston records, I walked toward the cash

register. On my way, I happened to glance into the LP bin. Sitting in the front, just a little bent at the corners, was a strange-looking black-and-white album cover. On it there was a picture of a man with gray frizzy hair. He



looked like a mad scientist. I thought it was great that somebody had finally made a record of a mad scientist. I picked it up. I nearly (this is true, ladies and gentlemen) peed in my pants . . . THERE IT WAS! EMS 401, *The Complete Works of Edgard Varèse Volume 1* . . . *Intégrales, Density 21.5, Ionization, Octandre* . . . *Rene Le Roy, the N. Y. Wind Ensemble, the Juilliard Percussion Orchestra, Frederic Waldman Conducting* . . . *liner notes by Sidney Finkelstein!* WOW!

I ran over to the singles box and stuffed the Joe Houston records back in it. I fumbled around in my pocket to see how much money I had (about \$3.80). I knew I had to have a lot of money to buy an album. Only old people had enough money to buy albums. I'd never bought an album before. I sneaked over to the guy at the cash register and asked him how much EMS 401 cost. "That gray one in the box? \$5.95."

I had searched for that album for over a year, and now . . . disaster. I told the guy I only had \$3.80. He scratched his neck. "We use that record to demonstrate the hi-fi's with, but nobody ever buys one when we use it . . . you can have it for \$3.80 if you want it that bad."

I couldn't imagine what he meant by "demonstrating hi-fi's with it." I'd never heard a hi-fi. I only knew that old people bought them. I had a genuine lo-fi . . . it was a little box about 4 inches deep with imitation wrought-iron legs at each corner (sort of brass-plated) which elevated it from the table top because the speaker was in the bottom. My mother kept it near the ironing board. She used to listen to a 78 of *The Little Shoemaker* on it. I took off the 78 of *The Little Shoemaker* and, carefully moving the speed lever to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  (it had never been there before), turned the volume all the way up and placed the all-purpose Osmium-tip needle in the lead-in spiral to *Ionization*. I have a nice Catholic mother who likes Roller Derby. Edgard Varèse does not get her off, even to this very day. I was forbidden to play that record in the living room ever again.

In order to listen to The Album, I had to stay in my room. I would sit there every night and play it two or

three times and read the liner notes over and over. I didn't understand them at all. I didn't know what *timbre* was. I never heard of *polyphony*. I just liked the music because it sounded good to me. I would force anybody who came over to listen to it. (I had heard someplace that in radio stations the guys would make chalk marks on records so they could find an exact spot, so I did the same thing to EMS 401 . . . marked all the hot items so my friends wouldn't get bored in the quiet parts.)

I went to the library and tried to find a book about Mr. Varèse. There wasn't any. The librarian told me he probably wasn't a Major Composer. She suggested I look in books about new or unpopular composers. I found a book that had a little blurb in it (with a picture of Mr. Varèse as a young man, staring into the camera



very seriously) saying that he would be just as happy growing grapes as being a composer.

On my fifteenth birthday my mother said she'd give me \$5. I told her I would rather make a long-distance phone call. I figured Mr. Varèse lived in New York because the record was made in New York (and because he was so weird, he would live in Greenwich Village). I got New York Information, and sure enough, he was in the phone book.

His wife answered. She was very nice and told me he was in Europe and to call back in a few weeks. I did. I don't remember what I said to him exactly, but it was something like: "I really dig your music." He told me he was working on a new piece called *Deserts*. This thrilled me quite a bit since I was living in Lancaster, California then. When you're fifteen and living in the Mojave Desert and find out that the world's greatest composer, somewhere in a secret Greenwich Village laboratory, is working on a song about your "home town" you can get pretty excited. It seemed a great tragedy that nobody in Palmdale or Rosamond would care if they ever heard it. I still think *Deserts* is about

Lancaster, even if the liner notes on the Columbia LP say it's something more philosophical.

All through high school I searched for information about Varèse and his music. One of the most exciting discoveries was in the school library in Lancaster. I found an orchestration book that had score examples in the back, and included was an excerpt from *Offrandes* with a lot of harp notes (and you know how groovy harp notes look). I remember fetishizing the book for several weeks.

When I was eighteen I got a chance to go to the East Coast to visit my Aunt Mary in Baltimore. I had been composing for about four years then but had not heard any of it played. Aunt Mary was going to introduce me to some friend of hers (an Italian gentleman) who was connected with the symphony there. I had planned on making a side trip to mysterious Greenwich Village. During my birthday telephone conversation, Mr. Varèse had casually mentioned the possibility of a visit if I was ever in the area. I wrote him a letter when I got to Baltimore, just to let him know I was in the area.

I waited. My aunt introduced me to the symphony guy. She said, "This is Frankie. He writes orchestra music." The guy said, "Really? Tell me, sonny boy, what's the lowest note on a bassoon?" I said, "B flat . . . and also it says in the book you can get 'em up to a C or something in the treble clef." He said, "Really? You know about violin harmonics?" I said, "What's that?" He said, "See me again in a few years."

I waited some more. The letter came. I couldn't believe it. A real handwritten letter from Edgard Varèse! I still have it in a little frame. In very tiny scientific-looking script it says:

VII 12th/57

Dear Mr. Zappa

I am sorry not to be able to grant your request. I am leaving for Europe next week and will be gone until next spring. I am hoping however to see you on my return. With best wishes.

Sincerely

Edgard Varèse

I never got to meet Mr. Varèse. But I kept looking for records of his music. When he got to be about eighty I guess a few companies gave in and recorded some of his stuff. Sort of a *gesture*, I imagine. I always wondered who bought them besides me. It was about seven years from the time I first heard his music till I met someone else who even knew he existed. That person was a film student at USC. He had the Columbia LP with *Poème électronique* on it. He thought it would make groovy sound effects.

I can't give you any structural insights or academic suppositions about how his music works or why I think it sounds so good. His music is completely unique. If you haven't heard it yet, go hear it. If you've already heard it and think it might make groovy sound effects, listen again. I would recommend the Chicago Symphony recording of *Arcana* on RCA (at full volume) or the Utah Symphony recording of *Amériques* on Vanguard. Also, there is a biography by Fernand Oulette, and miniature scores are available for most of his works, published by G. Ricordi.

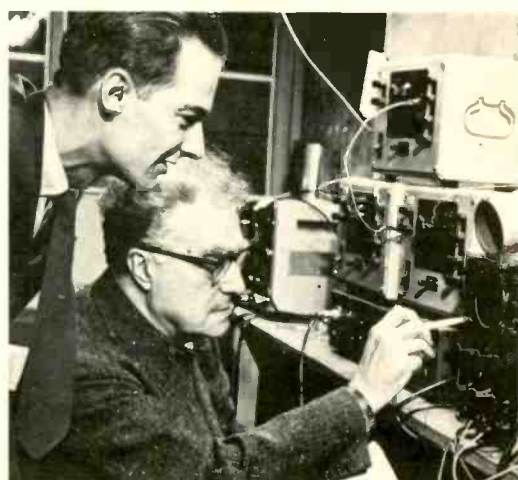
nationalism were on the upsurge, and economic crisis, political upheavals, and, finally, war served to accelerate them. From a larger point of view we can see that many different and apparently opposing trends—neo-Classicism, serialism, *Gebrauchsmusik*, socialist realism, the WPA, populism, nationalism, Stalinism, fascism—all tended to alter the course of art away from avant-garde experimentation. Many composers managed a transition; those who, like Varèse, refused to compromise were to slide into near oblivion.

But it is too easy to attribute Varèse's long silence merely to such forces. In fact, he never ceased planning new works and searching for the new means to realize them. As early as 1928 he conceived of a dramatic work whose implications are precisely those of the film *2001*. Varèse's sketch for *L'Astronome* is set in the year 2000—only one year ahead of Arthur C. Clarke and Stanley Kubrick! An astronomer has received extraterrestrial signals and dares to answer

*Two views of Varèse in his studio (right and below left) show him at work with traditional and not-so-traditional instruments. Below right, in the Philips studio at Eindhoven, Holland, he prepares Poème électronique for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair.*



Wide World



them. At the end, just as in *2001*, the space explorer is taken up by the extraterrestrials: "Spotlights are turned into the auditorium, blinding the spectators . . . universal and petrified silence. . . ." Varèse gave this sketch first to Robert Desnos and Alejo Carpentier, later to his friend Antonin Artaud. But the musical means for the realization of such a conception were not yet in existence. Varèse doggedly kept on. He applied four or five times for a Guggenheim fellowship to try to realize "an instrument for the producing of new sounds" and was invariably turned down. He envisioned a music laboratory where sound and the means to produce it in all forms would be studied and demonstrated; the laboratory was also to include as complete a collection of rec-

ords as possible, including examples of the music of "all races, all cultures, all periods, and all tendencies." Needless to say, nothing ever came of it.

Between 1936 and 1940, Varèse traveled, lectured, and taught in the American West, visiting Hollywood sound studios in the course of his seemingly endless, fruitless quest. Another large-scale, never-to-be-realized project was germinating in Varèse's mind. *Espace* was to be a multilingual work with "voices in the sky, as though magic, invisible hands turning on and off the knobs of fantastic radios, filling all space, criss-crossing, overlapping, penetrating each other, splitting up, superimposing, repulsing each other, colliding, crashing." He imagined a work being performed and broadcast simulta-

neously in different parts of the world with each choir singing in its own language. The conception passed through several phases; at one point Malraux was to write the text. The newspapers picked it up, and it was dubbed the "Red Symphony" or "Symphony of the Masses." The audiences were to be surrounded by sound with loudspeakers both broadcasting from afar and spinning sound around the auditorium. Microtones and specially invented "electrical" instruments were to be used. The orchestral writing was to be built "on the shifting play of planes, volumes, masses in space." The chorus, further, was to be used "to the full extent of its possibilities: singing, humming, yelling, chanting, mumbling, hammered declamation, etc. Theme: TODAY . . . marching humanity."

But it was not to be. In 1940, Varèse returned permanently to New York and remained there in isolation for the entire duration of the war. His only musical activity was choral conducting, his repertoire almost entirely early music. However, in 1947 he gave the first and, to date, only performance of his *Étude pour Espace*, the only surviving fragment of that monumental project (although it is said that *Déserts* and the *Poème électronique* contain ideas originally intended for *Espace*). This remarkable and little-known sketch has multilingual texts assembled by Varèse himself and set for chorus, two pianos, and percussion.

There have been composers who lived to a ripe creative old age and others whose work was neglected during their lifetimes and rescued later by posterity. But the resurgence of Varèse is a remarkable phenomenon, perhaps unique in the history of music. In 1948, Varèse was invited to teach at a Columbia University summer session; the following year he was

*Mr. and Mrs. Edgard Varèse together in the garden at the rear of their house on Sullivan St. in New York's Greenwich Village.*



invited to lecture at the Summer New Music Courses at Darmstadt, the incubator of the postwar European avant-garde. That same year Frederic Waldman conducted *Hyperprism* at a concert at the Museum of Modern Art in memory of Paul Rosenfeld. A year later Waldman recorded *Octandre*, *Intégrales*, *Ionisation*, and *Density 21.5* for E.M.S. Records as the first volume in a projected "complete works." *Ionisation* and *Octandre* had earlier been recorded on 78's, but it was this new LP record that finally made Varèse's music accessible on a wide scale.

**I**N 1949-1950, Varèse once again began creative work in earnest, writing the instrumental parts for a work that was to combine human performers with the new electronic medium. The invention of magnetic tape and advances in the capabilities of high-quality electronic equipment had at last made it possible for visions to become realities. After Varèse had made several fruitless approaches to some of the big electronic and high-fidelity firms, the tide finally began flowing back his way. An anonymous donor gave him a tape recorder—one of the big, early Ampexes—and he immediately began collecting and mixing sounds for the tape interpolations in the new work. He no longer wished to speak of music in the old sense. "But that's not music," wailed the horrified little old lady in tennis shoes. "Okay, it isn't music," Varèse would agree, "it's *organized sound*."

In 1954, Pierre Schaeffer, one of the founders of *musique concrète*, invited Varèse to work at the studios of French Radio—an act of generosity and an appropriate bit of historical justice—enabling him to complete the tape portions of the new piece with adequate equipment. The work, *Déserts*, was scored for woodwinds, brass, piano, percussion, and tape. It was first performed in Paris by the Orchestra of the French Radio under Hermann Scherchen, and simultaneously broadcast in stereo. Ironically, the location was the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées where, forty years before, Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* had had its premiere, and the new *scandale* was hardly less sensational. Indeed, instead of 1,500 people, there were perhaps 1,500,000 in on the later event! Whether because of the demonstration or in spite of it, *Déserts* was shortly heard all over Europe and the United States. Varèse, his music, and his ideas were again center stage, and a whole younger generation of composers came under his influence.

Varèse not only anticipated the development of tape and electronic music, but also what we would call today multimedia. In his original conception of *Déserts* there was to be a film accompanying the music—a visual interpretation of the conception: deserts of the sea, of the earth, of outer space, of the human

mind. In 1955-1956, Varèse created the electronically "organized sound" for the *Good Friday Procession in Verges* sequence in a film about Joan Miró by their mutual friend Thomas Bouchard. This little-known work is hauntingly beautiful with regard to both the visual images of a flickering candlelight procession and its curiously moving interplay of Gregorian intonation and noise.

In 1956 the Philips Company of Holland commissioned the architect Le Corbusier to design a pavilion for the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels. Le Corbusier conceived the notion of an "electronic poem" and insisted—over severe objections from Philips—that Varèse be his collaborator. With some reluctance, Philips turned over its facilities at Eindhoven, Holland, to Varèse. The original form of the work was scored for four hundred loudspeakers which covered the inside of the structure; while Le Corbusier's "light show" of visual imagery was projected across the irregular, flowing interior surfaces, the complex of electronically organized and manipulated sound was moved across these same surfaces by an elaborate distribution system. The vision of forty years was—for a while, at least—a reality. Unfortunately, this remarkable structure was torn down and the work survives only in the two-channel version which, along with the final revised version of *Déserts*, was achieved later at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in New York.

Varèse also made a definitive revision of *Arcana*, which was performed by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in 1958; *Déserts* was performed by the same forces at Philharmonic Hall several years later. Recordings of virtually all the extant works began to appear, notably two Columbia discs conducted by Robert Craft and the larger orchestral works conducted by Abravanel on Vanguard.

The history of Varèse's final composition is a little obscure. Like most of his later works, it seems to have undergone several transformations. Originally called *Nuit*, it later turned into a setting of Henri Michaux's *Dans la nuit*, and then was apparently abandoned. In 1961, Robert Craft conducted the premiere of a major new Varèse work for soprano, chorus, and orchestra entitled *Nocturnal* with a text taken from the *House of Incest* by Anaïs Nin (daughter of the composer Joaquin Nin and a well-known literary figure in her own right) But Varèse never considered the work complete and a final version was realized from his sketches only after his death by his pupil Chou Wen-Chung.

Varèse died on November 6, 1965 in New York. It is one of the fine ironies that the world was at the time preparing to pay him homage on his eightieth

birthday when, because of a widely perpetuated error in his birthdate, he had already been an octogenarian for two years. The concerts became memorial tributes.

VARÈSE'S music has more links with the past than might at first seem apparent. Besides the Renaissance and medieval music he knew and loved so well, non-Western musics of Africa, South America, and Asia had an influence on him. All his early music is lost except for a published song or two, and it is idle to speculate how great the influence of Berlioz, Busoni, and Strauss must have been on his early development. The impact of Debussy is notable, most obviously in *Offrandes* but, in a subtler way, in the later works as well. Debussy was the first Western composer to work outside the Italian-German contrapuntal-tonal tradition, the first to create free-floating aggregates of tone, and the first to elevate color and texture to a position of importance equal to the other musical elements. Another important source for Varèse is Stravinsky and, most particularly, *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Stravinsky's abstracted, cubist struc-

#### EDGARD VARÈSE: A DISCOGRAPHY

##### Published and Recorded Works

- Amériques* (1918-1922). Vanguard S 274.  
*Offrandes* (1921). Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6362.  
*Hyperprism* (1922). Angel S 36786; Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6146.  
*Octandre* (1923). Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6146.  
*Intégrales* (1924). Angel S 36786; Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6146.  
*Arcana* (1925-1927). RCA LSC 2914.  
*Ionisation* (1930-1931). Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6146.  
*Ecuatorial* (1933-1934). Vanguard Cardinal VCS 10047.  
*Density 21.5* (1936). Angel S 36786; Candide 31028; Columbia MS 6146.  
*Étude pour Espace* (1947). No recording.  
*Déserts* (1949-1954). Angel S 36786; Columbia MS 6362.  
*Good Friday Procession in Verges* (1956). No recording.  
*Poème électronique* (1957-1958). Columbia MS 6146.  
*Nocturnal* (1960-1961). Vanguard Cardinal VCS 10047.

##### Recordings and Performers

- ANGEL S 36786: Michel Debost (flute); Paris Instrumental Ensemble for Contemporary Music, Konstantin Simonovitch cond.
- CANDIDE 31028: Helmut Reissberger (flute); "Die Reihe" Ensemble, Friedrich Cerha cond.
- COLUMBIA MS 6146 and 6362: Dona Precht (soprano); unidentified flute soloist; instrumental ensembles; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Robert Craft cond.
- RCA LSC 2914: Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Jean Martinon cond.
- VANGUARD S 274 and VANGUARD CARDINAL VCS 10047: Ariel Bybee (soprano); bass ensemble of the University-Civic Chorale, Salt Lake City; Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel cond.

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*A concert planned to honor Varèse's eightieth birthday became instead a memorial tribute. Varèse had actually turned eighty two years before, but a widely held error regarding the date of his birth delayed the tribute until it was too late.*

tures, his blocked-out levels, planes, and volumes, had a direct effect on Varèse, most noticeably in the larger orchestral works. Then, too, in spite of his opposition to twelve-tone dogma, Varèse was certainly influenced by Schoenberg, particularly in his use of the total chromatic resources.

Be all this as it may, Varèse was one of the most original creative figures in the history of Western music and probably owed less to tradition than any composer who preceded him—and most that followed. His approach to sound was at once purer and less dogmatic than Webern's. He worked not with isolated tones, but with blocks of sound defined by timbre (a concept which, in Varèse's music, includes harmony and intensity of sound) and rhythm (including articulation and melody). In his chamber-ensemble works of the Twenties, melodic structures are often reduced to one or two notes set in a pattern of rhythmic accents and dynamic variation, a tendency that culminated in *Ionisation*, where the rhythms are the "melodies." In the orchestral works, sonorous masses are brought into play—volumes and textures of tremendous density and intensity. There is nothing like "development" in the traditional sense; no narratives, no stories to tell. The music is static, if you will, but only in the sense that architecture is static. The best analogues of Varèse's music are all architectural, sculptural, or advanced geometrical: juxtaposed masses or volumes of sound perceived spatially. Time is measured not by traveling from one place to another, but by the slow revolution of solid masses in space, "viewed" from every side. Varèse thought of musical space as a continuum not always necessarily broken up into fixed scales. Thus

he used clusters and aggregates of notes, changing textures, articulations and intensities, a huge variety of percussive (that is, indeterminate pitch) sounds, the infamous siren (which makes pitches slide on a continuum), the Theremin and the *ondes Martenot*, and eventually, of course, modern tape and electronic techniques.

All of these principles, applied first in instrumental and later in vocal and tape music, have had a tremendous effect on the course of musical history. Any sound—literally—could now be raw material for creative art—but note: raw material. The entire spectrum of sound materials was now available through electronic recording or sound synthesis. Physical space could now become a conscious dimension of creative musical expression. Varèse saw clearly the new synthesis of auditory and visual imagery that we now call multimedia. His later works—beginning as far back as *Ecuatorial*—involve some combination of the human voice and/or electronics. From the period of the conception of *L'Astronome*, series of intensely dramatic juxtapositions begin to enter the music; there is a sense of man's aloneness in the universe but also of his power and dignity. For Varèse the machine was a means, not an end, for he was an artist, not a technician. He wanted to dominate the technology to realize a vision, a vision that was in fact as wide as the range of human experience.

Varèse was not, strictly speaking, a teacher, and he had few students and no "school." André Jolivet, his one European pupil, seems to have shown almost no real understanding of Varèsian ideals at all. A strange case is that of the black composer William Grant Still, who, after working with Varèse and writ-

ing a number of works in an advanced idiom, reverted completely to a lighter folksy style. The most important of Varèse's pupils is the Chinese-American composer Chou Wen-Chung, who is also his literary and musical executor.

Varèse left his mark on a great deal of American music in the Twenties and Thirties, most notably on that of Ruggles, Dane Rudhyar, and others. I can hear the Varèse influence quite clearly in Aaron Copland's 1930 Piano Variations; this remarkable work is certainly closer to Varèse than to the European serialists. There is an influence of Varèse on Stefan Wolpe, himself a seminal influence in postwar American music. Ralph Shapey, who as a conductor has been one of Varèse's best interpreters, is perhaps the composer most directly in the Varèse line. Varèse certainly influenced Elliott Carter and, it is said, the early work of Milton Babbitt. These composers have helped shape one whole facet of contemporary American music, and this aspect of Varèse's legacy is still alive in the work of younger composers such as Charles Wuorinen. On the other side of the fence, the New York Action School (John Cage, Morton Feldman, Earle Brown) admired the non-process, the "it-ness" of Varèse's work. For them, Varèse was the composer who first proposed the sound "object"—coming from nowhere, going nowhere—as a subject for admiration in its own right. And so Varèse's influence is a link between two apparently opposing camps.

Varèse had a particularly strong impact in Europe outside the German sphere of influence, especially in Eastern Europe where he was one of the first Western avant-gardists to be widely performed. The European "cluster and density" composers—Yannis Xenakis, György Ligeti, Krzysztof Penderecki—all stem quite directly from Varèse. Xenakis was Le Corbusier's assistant on the Philips pavilion and was the person actually responsible for the structure. With Xenakis—architect, mathematician, and computer expert turned composer—the connections between the new architecture, technology, and musical thought become quite explicit. Ligeti and Penderecki are more intuitive composers, but their principles of texture and block-like construction are clearly

#### AN EDGARD VARÈSE SAMPLER

THROUGH the kind cooperation of Columbia Records, STEREO REVIEW is able to offer its readers a seven-inch, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm disc containing three complete compositions of Edgard Varèse: *Ionisation*, *Hyperprism*, and *Offrandes No. 1*. The selections are performed by Robert Craft, leading members of the Columbia Symphony Orchestra. To obtain your copy, send 25¢ to M. Littman, STEREO REVIEW, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

Varèsian. Indeed, the entire development of European music away from expressionist serialism—the evolution of tape music, the growth of multimedia and new music theater as well as far-out pop—owes a great deal to the vision, if not the specific example, of Varèse. Salvatore Martirano's *L's G A* would be inconceivable without the example of Varèse. Pop composer Frank Zappa has often talked about the influence of Varèse on his music, thus helping to make Varèse's name known even in rock circles.

I MYSELF had the privilege of knowing Varèse well in his last years, and although I never in any sense studied with him, I could hardly have failed to come under his influence. The old house on Sullivan Street where Varèse had lived since 1925 was always open to young people and new ideas. Varèse's second wife, Louise McCutcheon Norton, an American and a well-known translator from the French, was (and is) the mistress of this remarkable household where one might meet Marcel Duchamp or John Cage or Mme. Malraux or Elliott Carter or Joan Miró or Pierre Boulez or St. John Perse or the head of Bell Labs or some unknown young composer. The basement studio, with its incredible collection of charts, scores, gongs, tape recorders, instruments, and works of art, was like one of his compositions: an apparently overwhelming disarray, yet everything in its place and with a meaning. In that disarray were the tools of the musical technology, and yet everything was personal, an extension of the composer himself. If we had any real sense of our past—not the Williamsburg self-deception, but our *real* pioneering past—that studio would be preserved exactly the way it stands (it is, at the present writing, still intact) as a museum and memorial.

As in his music, so in his life: the thing was not squeezed to fit some preconception of form, but form was the thing itself grown organically—like a crystal, Varèse would say, or like a living organism. He spoke of "the liberation of sound" and of a musical space that was open, not bounded. He saw himself only as representative of his time. "An artist only reflects his time," he would say, "he is never ahead of his time; the public and the critics are behind it. I don't write 'experimental music'; my experiments are left behind in the laboratory; it is for the audience, when they hear it performed, to make the experiment of confronting a new work."

Varèse's best eulogy was the one offered by Pierre Boulez: "Your legend is now part of our times; now we can erase that circle of chalk and water, those magic or ambiguous words 'experimental,' 'precursor,' 'pioneer' . . . Farewell, Varèse, farewell! Your time is finished and now it begins."



# RECORD DEFECTS

A recording engineer tells where and why they occur and what can be done about them

By **JOHN EARGLE**

Chief Engineer, Mercury Record Corporation

**I**S IT TRUE, as many seem to feel, that as recording equipment gets better, records themselves get worse? This is debatable, but since it is a view that has lately been expressed forcefully and repeatedly both in public and in private, it certainly deserves some investigation.

As with practically any other manufactured product these days, the quality level of phonograph records is determined on the one hand by the economics of running a record plant profitably and on the other by an estimation of what minimum the consumer expects for his money. It goes without saying that these interests do not always coincide.

As is almost common knowledge by now, classical records account in the United States for only about 4 per cent of total disc sales. One might imagine, therefore, that complaints about record quality would originate mostly from consumers of popular music, who buy 96 per cent of the records sold. One would be wrong: there is a saying in the record industry that "4 per cent of our product produces 96 per cent of our headaches." And even though only a small part of that 4 per cent minority complains, it is a vociferous minority.

The record-making process being the very complicated operation it is, it will simplify matters if the "complaint department" is arbitrarily divided, for the purposes of this discussion, along a line determined by its two principal sources: (1) certain aesthetic and practical decisions made during the actual recording and subsequent remixing, and (2) faults that arise somewhere in the many steps of the lacquer-cutting and mechanical duplication processes.

The recording of performances of classical music today is done using sophisticated multi-track tape recorders. Four tracks is the minimum for stereo, and eight tracks would be a practical choice if there were any concern for the eventual release of a quadrasonic version. A knowledgeable engineer uses his skill in the manipulation of the multi-tracks for subtle highlighting of certain sections of the orchestra and cer-

tain passages of music as well as for picking up the hall acoustics (reverberation) of the recording location. The reasons for recording on, say, eight tracks rather than four are more economic than musical. The pressures of modern recording, the time and the costs involved, dictate that many decisions about final balances between the recorded tracks of the tape be left for later, less harried remix sessions. Along with any necessary tape editing to remove wrong notes, the niceties of musical balance can then be worked out, usually to the satisfaction of both producer and performers.

We have come a long way from the days when microphones were simply placed before an orchestra, turned on, and the orchestra played. Modern recordings are undoubtedly the better for the many technical, mechanical, and even artistic discoveries made since those simpler times. Quite aside from the mere documentation of an event, if the intention is to produce a valid artistic experience, it is in my view no more appropriate to record an orchestra with a single pair of untended microphones than it would be to film a TV play with a fixed camera located somewhere over "Row M." For the purposes of either medium, turntable or TV screen, home reproduction has its own aesthetic demands and constraints, and workable artistic values have happily been arrived at empirically for both. The most discerning record listener is hardly ever aware of the splicing and subtle manipulations of balance which take place in a modern classical recording, though he may well make conscious note of panning, dissolves, and cuts in a TV program.

**A** well-made classical recording today is something of a synthesis between the new no-holds-barred freedom of popular recording and the old hands-off approach of early classical recording. When the recording engineer and producer finish a session these days, what they have is not a finished product, but the raw material for one. The master tape—of how-

ever many channels—will be edited and remixed down to the two stereo channels. If all has gone well in the studio there will be ample latitude and material to shape the final recording both technically and aesthetically—and it is just here that possible trouble with the finished product can begin.

Only a few years ago, the remixing of a multi-track master tape down to two-track form meant a struggle with hiss and noise at one end of the dynamic range and with distortion at the other. Today, the existence of the Dolby noise-reduction system has given recording engineers the means of making virtually flawless tape transfers, a giant step in the right direction. But before the remix session begins, the master tape must be edited: wrong notes are replaced with right ones from other "takes," and the best segments or movements from a number of takes are sometimes combined to put together a kind of idealized performance. Both producer and performer collaborate in this—the better performers know that their job is not finished the moment the mikes are turned off, and their artistic judgment is sometimes called upon even as late as the cutting process.

Once the remix down to two channels is under way, the engineer and producer, who are still working with tape at this point, must begin to keep in mind the special characteristics of the disc medium (there will be trouble if they don't). For example, musical climaxes which will fall in the inner grooves make a greater demand on the disc medium than passages of equivalent loudness at the outer grooves. To prevent distortion from occurring during these peaks, the dynamic range of certain recordings may have to be compressed. (This is frequently done when a recording contains only a few *really* loud passages; thus, a signal-to-noise ratio improvement is achieved with an insignificant sacrifice of dynamic range.) Again, where the record sides promise to be long, a bass cut may be necessary to restrain overgenerous excursions of the cutting stylus to limit the space each groove takes up. Most important of all, the final determinations of the relative levels of the tracks are made at this point. Purists may be upset, but, like the editing that has gone before, adjustments in dynamic level are finely calculated to escape the notice of even the most critical listener. The occasional lapses in taste that do occur from time to time (such as outsize woodwind solos or ultra-close percussive detail) should not be the cause of a general condemnation of these techniques. It has been demonstrated frequently enough that tapes that have not been so conditioned to the mechanical demands of the disc result in inferior records, noisier and more susceptible to distortion than those made from a tape properly processed with regard for the limita-

tions of the disc medium as well as the imperatives of sound musical judgment.

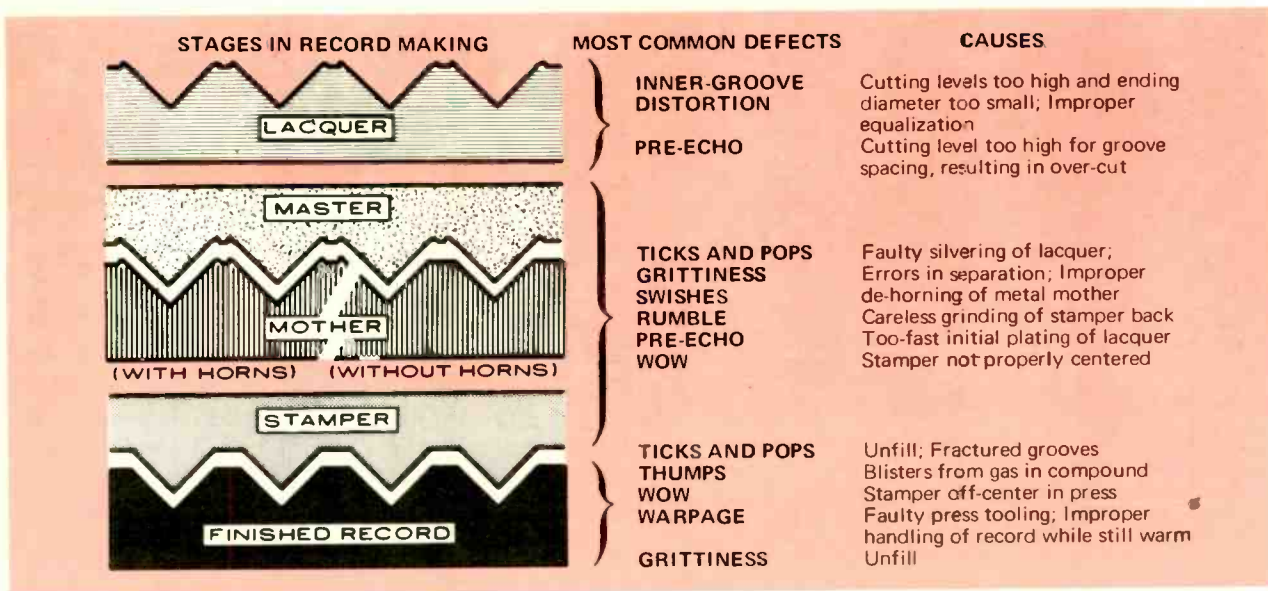
If the original multi-track recording has the necessary flexibility, and if the remix operation has made proper use of it, then there should be little more to be done in the way of signal "conditioning." One thing that must still be taken into account, however, is inner-groove distortion, which arises simply because of the physical compression of the signal resulting from the slower speed of the disc at the small inner diameters (relative to the speed at larger outer diameters). The net result is a tendency toward loss of high frequencies and an increase in distortion. One countermeasure that has been tried is to "pre-distort" the signal to take into account the shape of the playback stylus and other causes of tracing error. This so-called "tracing simulation" (used by RCA, Teldec, Japanese Victor, and Japanese Columbia) as well as elliptical playback styli have tended to reduce problems in the inner grooves, but there remain significant playback differences between the inner and outer grooves.

ONE way to avoid the problem entirely, of course, is to end the musical groove area at a fairly large diameter. This can easily be done when the musical selection is a suitably short one, but it is surprising how many recording companies succumb to the temptation to "fill up the side," even when unnecessary. It is true that some record-pressing plants experience difficulties in record molding when sides ending at disparate diameters are coupled together, but basically the practice of filling up the side seems to have been dictated over the years by marketing people, who believe that the public will feel it is getting short measure if a record looks "short." They are probably right.

Another way of dealing with the inner grooves is to employ some kind of "diameter compensation." This is an old practice frowned on in many quarters, but it does have its uses. The technique involves boosting the high frequencies as the diameter decreases—and running the risk of an audible increase in distortion. Empiricism is the rule here: some musical material lends itself to a progressive boost of highs as the diameter decreases, and other material tends to distort uncomfortably. The engineer must decide when an increase in distortion is less objectionable than a decrease in high frequencies.

The transfer of sound from tape to lacquer (the prototype disc of which the finished records are copies) inevitably results in some losses, and these may be conveniently classified in three categories:

a. cutting losses, caused by elasticity of the lacquer material (which may "spring back" to a certain extent after the



cutter has passed) and by various necessary compromises in the shape of the cutting stylus;

b. tracing losses, resulting from the differences in shape between the cutting and the playback styli;

c. translation losses, caused by deformation of the lacquer (or the vinyl in the finished disc) under the force of the stylus.

Needless to say, there is constant research going on in all three of these areas, the fruits of which result from time to time in minor or major improvements in the playback quality of discs.

Decisions regarding the level (or "loudness") of a record are also made just prior to the cutting of the master lacquer disc. The setting of this level is a trade-off between noise that will result if the level is too low and distortion and possible groove-skipping if it is too high. Again, the decision is an empirical one, but there has been a general trend in recent years toward higher levels which have been made possible by better cutting heads, better phono cartridges, and elliptical styli.

One very noticeable fault that can be caused by too high a level is *groove echo* (or pre-echo), which is frequently encountered at the beginning of a record: the opening chord is faintly heard one revolution before it is actually sounded. When it is introduced during the cutting process, groove echo has been transferred through the lacquer material to the preceding groove by the vibration of the cutting stylus. The most direct cure is to increase the space between grooves (Figure 1)—but this reduces playing time.

Assuming that a master tape has been properly conditioned, it is not difficult to maintain quality control over the lacquer-cutting process. The only real variables are the lacquer blanks and the sapphire cutting styli, and problems are rarely encountered

with either of these. Test cuts are made (and played back) to make sure that a given stylus cuts well with the batch of lacquer material being used at the time. When cutting problems do occur, they usually have to do with an increase in the visual "graininess" of the cut (which raises the hiss-noise level) and excessive formation of "horns" (small ridges of lacquer material thrown up by the electrically heated cutting stylus at the groove edges). These can cause difficulties in the subsequent steps of record production.

UP to this point, every step has been a one-of-a-kind operation; there has therefore been no concern for statistical quality variation since each operation was individually monitored. Now, however, as the master lacquer goes to the pressing plant, the emphasis shifts to statistical quality control and the demands of economic mass production. The total cost of materials in a phonograph record is about six cents, but the average manufacturing cost of a commercial disc is about 25 to 30 cents. It is the aim of any well-run record plant to reduce this cost wherever possible, consistent with the quality to be maintained.

When the master lacquer arrives at the plant, it is carefully unpacked and visually inspected—for signs of physical damage in shipment and for possible "bleed-out" of oils in the lacquer material that might have been caused by exposure to high temperatures in shipment. If the master is okay, it is gently cleaned with a mild detergent and distilled water in preparation for the making of mold copies that will eventually produce the actual vinyl discs. A *sensitizing bath* then makes the lacquer surface more receptive to the *silvering process* (a solution sprayed onto the lacquer surface results in a deposit of metallic silver). Then the silvered lacquer is immersed in an electrolytic

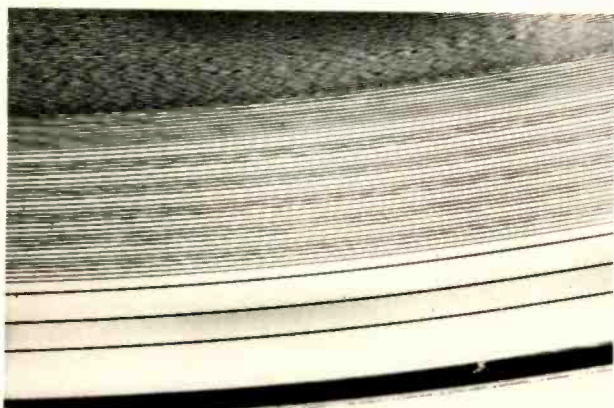


Fig. 1. The most direct means of avoiding groove echo is to introduce adequate spaces between the grooves. The first minute or so of this disc has loud chords interspersed with long pauses. The widely spaced grooves insure that the pauses will be truly silent. More normal spacing is used after the opening passage.

plating bath that builds up a coating of metallic nickel on top of the silver. If the plating process is too rapid, stresses can be set up in the nickel crystals closest to the silvered surface, deforming the soft lacquer material and giving rise to *groove-echo*, which has tried to make its appearance previously during the cutting of the lacquer.

The lacquer is next separated from the metal built up on its surface, and extreme care must be taken that no silver is left behind on the lacquer. The separated nickel build-up, now referred to as the *metal master*, is prepared for another metal-plating process. Its surface is chemically treated so that a second nickel deposit can be electroplated on it and then easily stripped away. Note that the metal master is a *negative*—it has ridges where the master had grooves. The second metal part, known as the *metal mother*, is a *positive*, and it can actually be played.

The metal mother is carefully inspected microscopically, and it is then played by the most experienced quality testers in the plant. Now, for the first time, all the previous manufacturing steps can be given an *audio check*. Many of the ticks and pops heard in finished records are the result of some problem in the silvering, plating, stripping, and replating processes. A great part of the integrity of the final disc therefore depends on the standards imposed on the testers who judge the metal mothers. In addition to ticks and pops, there are other noises—such as gritting and swishing sounds that can result from improper cleaning of the lacquer, faulty silvering of the lacquer, or improper separation of the various parts.

The metal mother can often be “repaired” if need be: some ticks and pops are the result of faulty separation of the metal master and mother, and this often leaves portions of the master imbedded in the grooves of the metal mother. When this happens, an

experienced inspector can often use a fine abrasive powder and a sharp plastic tool to remove some of the debris. Where there is a special concern for quiet pressings, many companies subject the metal mother to a “dehorning” process. This removes from the metal mother the little ridges at the top edge of each groove wall which have been carried over from the cutting of the original lacquer, but it leaves the playing portions of the grooves untouched. These horns complicate the production process and are totally unnecessary to the proper performance of the disc. Dehorning is a difficult operation, and many companies do not do it routinely. It is easy to tell when it has been done, however: a record made from de-horned mothers will not show scuff marks when the playing area is lightly rubbed with a cloth, whereas a pressing with horns will scuff very easily.

After dehorning, the metal mother is prepared for the next step in the process; it resembles the previous one, except that now a *negative stamper* will be produced, the part that will actually be used to mold one side of the vinyl discs. The stamper resembles the metal master from which the mother was made, except that it may not have horns; many stampers may be “grown” from a single metal mother. Stampers are visually inspected for defects in separation; if they pass, they are then readied for the record presses. The center of the stamper is carefully determined and punched out to accommodate the tooling of the record press. Carelessness here can result in off-center discs with a characteristic once-around “wow” in pitch.

Another machining operation performed on the stamper is the grinding down of the back to insure a snug fit in the press. If the grinding process is done too quickly, some irregularities may remain on the

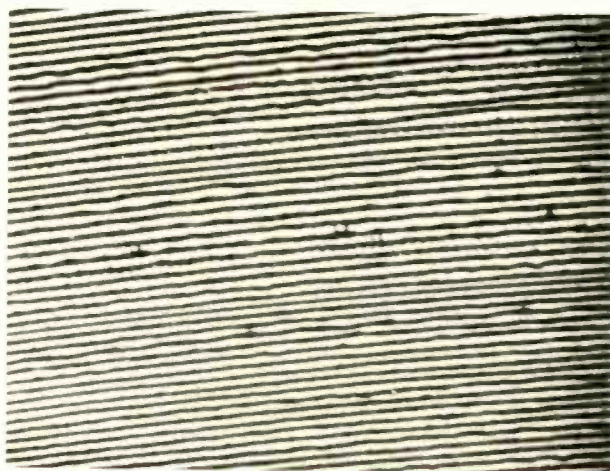


Fig. 2. Unfill (right) has a gray, patchy appearance when light reflects off it at the proper angle. In the detail photo above, unfill appears as small black vertical strokes. These discrete breaks in the groove walls will result in a gritty sound quality.

stamper back or even be produced by the grinding. Since the layer of nickel is actually quite thin and the molding pressures are high, these will print right through onto the vinyl and cause "orange-peel" or "mold-grain" effects which result in *rumble*. The low-frequency noise called *lead-in roar*, heard at the very beginning of the record, arises during the mechanical crimping of the stamper to form the familiar "groove-guard" bead of plastic at the outer edge of the disc.

When the stampers have been mounted on the steel molds of a large record press, we are ready for the actual record-molding process. The press can produce pressures of perhaps 2,000 pounds per square inch. If there are irregularities worn in the surface of the press mold facing the back of the stamper (it is only 10 to 11 thousandths of an inch thick), then these too can be reproduced on the finished record and cause low-frequency noise. The press molds have channels on the inside to permit the flow of both steam and water so that the vinyl compound can be compression-molded under heat and then cooled with water when molding is complete. The compound itself is usually a mixture of polyvinyl chloride with coloring matter and a "stabilizer" that inhibits chemical breakdown of the vinyl under the heat it must withstand (above 325° F). All of the ingredients of the compound have been thoroughly blended before reaching the press floor, and the care with which this is done is an important determinant of the final product's basic noise level.

Today, few record companies with an eye for quality use bulk-increasing additives (called "compound fillers") for any of their records, but a few discs are always scrapped before they leave the plant, and their material is usually recycled for use in less crit-

ical (pop) pressings. Since recycling the compound material risks contaminating the mix with dirt and debris (paper labels, for example), only virgin vinyl is used in making the more critical classical discs. Contaminated vinyl would result in an increase in the steady noise level of the disc as well as a larger number of ticks and pops.

**T**HE complicated molding process begins when the steam-heated jaws of the press close on a lump (or "biscuit") of vinyl compound, forcing it to flow outward and fill the intricate interstice between the two stampers. Proper flow of vinyl into the microscopic ridges and valleys of the stamper depends on control of temperature, pressure, the viscosity of the vinyl, and the length of the pressing cycle. If all factors are not right, *unfill* (Figure 2) may result. This usually shows up visually as patches of grey, most often at the outer diameters of the disc; when the disc is played, a gritty sound is heard as the stylus passes over the area. Another molding defect commonly encountered is *fractured grooves*, or "stitching" (Figure 3), as the English call it. This defect is associated with the separation of the disc from the stampers after molding has been completed. It apparently results from a pulling away of portions of the newly molded disc by the groove detail of the stamper. It is called stitching because of its appearance, and often occurs where there are extreme low-frequency undulations of the groove, often quite visible to the naked eye. The fractures in the groove wall take on a glistening appearance of fine silver-thread stitching along the groove. The defect produces a particularly annoying "splattering" or "ripping" sound, often just prior to a loud passage on the record. Its cure usually entails a thorough re-examination of the

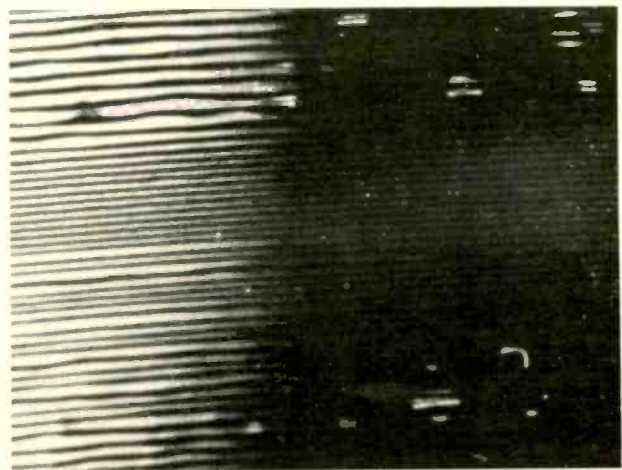


Fig. 3. Fractured grooves are sometimes called "stitching," for obvious reasons. On the directly lit portion of the disc above, the defect shows up as shadowy blemishes running along the groove, and these play back with a particularly annoying ripping sound.

pressing cycle and the mechanical alignment of the press itself.

When the pressing cycle is carefully controlled, the molding defects that remain are relatively few in number. They are simply the result of random minute defects that inevitably creep into the mass production of any molded product. (It is sobering to reflect that an item manufactured at twenty-five cents contains precise and significant detail as small as a few millionths of an inch!) Depending upon the outlook of the quality-control people, a molding process considered to be "under control" in one plant may be far out of control in another, and this is one reason why the average output of a given plant or record company may be consistently better than that of another.

Besides ticks, pops, and gritty sound quality, there are a number of defects which can result from faulty molding. *Warpage* is perhaps the worst of these, and it often results from discrepancies between the inner and outer dimensions of stampers and press molds. When freshly molded records are stacked on a spindle next to the press, they are still warm, and an inner-outer-diameter dimensional discrepancy will be cumulative in the stack. The records higher up on the spindle may exhibit a condition called *dish warpage*; such records may not work properly on a record changer and may also slip and produce wow during playback.

Most record plants still have manual presses, and their operators remove the newly molded discs by hand to place them on the machine that trims off the sharp overflow of vinyl from the rim. A careless operator can twist the edge of the still-warm disc when removing it from the press, and this causes permanent *pinch warpage* at the rim—a condition encountered all too often in the finished product. A pinch-warped disc is particularly annoying since the first inch or so of the record will not track properly and the arm may bounce off the record, though the disc may be perfect in every other respect.

The problem of an *off-center hole* must be faced again in the molding operation as it was in the matrix tooling operation. Owing to the operating stresses, the press tooling can loosen and permit the stamper to move off center.

*Blisters* in records are the result of the expansion of gases trapped in the compound. The frequency of their occurrence will vary from one plant to another, depending on how the compound is blended and extruded. A small blister will cause no more than a barely perceptible once-around thump, but a ruptured blister can even break a playback stylus. The worst cases are almost always caught during visual inspection.

The laws of nature being what they are, everything wears out in time, so the question "naturally" arises as to how long a stamper can be used before it must be replaced. This depends first on what quality level is being maintained in the plant and second on the program material's capacity to mask minor defects. The first record pressed from a new set of stampers is carefully played all the way through in order to check the quality of that set of stampers. As the pressing gets under way, every fiftieth or hundredth record (depending on the plant and the program material at hand) will receive a particularly careful visual inspection and also be given an audio spot-check. At greater intervals another sample of the record will be played all the way through. Each plant has found its own favorite sampling schedule for maintaining desired quality. When a stamper-caused defect is found, the inspector backtracks through the spindle of records to the point where the defect first appeared. The records pressed after this point will be scrapped and the offending stamper replaced. Stamper life varies widely; for critical classical discs it may be in the range of 500 to 1,500 pressings. For pop pressings it might be three times these figures.

THE hazardous journey of this small package of sound from microphone to turntable is not yet over, for there remain many possibilities for damage in sleeving, album insertion, warehousing, and shipping operations—but that is another story, and one, moreover, much easier to understand. In-plant, manufacturing-process defects, however, still draw the most fire from quality-conscious buyers. Quality-control experts have known for some time that a dollar spent for better engineering is worth many dollars spent in inspection and possible reworking. If a record plant's rate of rejection is too high, it is more profitable in the long run to re-engineer the manufacturing processes than to suffer with the rejects. Moreover, quality cannot be "inspected" into a product; it must be *built* into it.

Continuing improvements in record playback equipment have no doubt made the critical consumer far more aware of record quality than he has ever been before. One of the prices he pays for this awareness is the nuisance of exchanging records, often more than once, until he gets one he is satisfied with. But even though the critical listener has always been a very small minority, he has always been heard by the industry, and if he doesn't lose his voice he always will be. At the risk of being perhaps too aptly metaphorical, we might say that "The wheel that squeaks the loudest / Is the one that gets the grease."



Gimme an L  
gimme an I  
gimme an L  
and a Y

# LILY TOMLIN

By PAUL KRESH

THE SCENE is a \$100-a-folding-chair benefit called "Village Lights '71," produced by Marc Merson and Hal Rein at the New York University Loeb Student Center in Greenwich Village in behalf of the Village Community School. The auditorium is already packed to capacity—and no wonder. The master of ceremonies is Tony Randall. The musical director for the evening is Joe Raposo, who makes all those enchanting songs happen on *Sesame Street*. Among the guest stars this Sunday evening are Alan Arkin, Novella Nelson, Jerry Orbach, and Gene Wilder, all singing, telling stories, and showing selected short subjects starring themselves on a screen that obligingly raises and lowers itself at the proper intervals. These are hard acts to follow, and the girl who follows them is none other than Lily Tomlin of *Laugh-In*, whose new record, "This Is a Recording," has just been released by Polydor and is already splashed over the record-store ads in the Sunday New York *Times*' entertainment section.

Miss Tomlin comes on stage, looking not at all like any of the alter egos she portrays on *Laugh-In*, but fetching, willowy, surprisingly tiny and vulnerable-looking in her own shaggy-bang hairdo, apricot-colored sweater with sub-miniature microphone pinned to the collar, multicolored floor-length skirt, and shoes not in the least resembling the heavy high-strap platforms she sports on *Laugh-In* as Ernestine, the 1940's company girl from Bell Telephone.

Miss Tomlin offers a peanut-butter commercial in her own brand of word-trampling double-talk, a portrait of a 1950's tough-talking teenager at a neighborhood dance, and—completely convincing even without benefit of switchboard, makeup, long pink skirt, or period pompadour—Ernestine herself threatening Gore "Veedle" about his unpaid phone bill. Then she exits to the laughter and thunderous applause of an audience gone mad with adora-

tion. Just as the "New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Orchestra" (with a mute Woody Allen, of all people, among the players as the group's clarinetist) is setting up for the evening's finale, I am beckoned by Miss Tomlin's manager into the lounge.

Which Lily Tomlin am I going to meet? Will it be Ernestine, snorting and smirking and making vague blackmail threats based on her IBM file at the phone company? Will it be Mrs. Earbore, the Tasteful Lady, who spreads her legs shamelessly as she rises after giving her opinion of the scene preceding hers? Will it be the Fast Talker, whose words bash fatally into one another like cars in a parkway pileup? Will it be Suzie Sorority of the Silent Majority? Lula the Party Lady? The Cheerleader? Or, most terrifying of all, Edith Ann, age five-and-a-half, with that appalling smear of candy all over her big mouth?

THE real Miss Tomlin is all but also none of these, a rather demure and melting young lady with an air of almost apologetic uncertainty and the most sparkling, wide-awake brown eyes in the world. She's in New York for the first of a series of gruelling stand-up appearances in night-clubs across the country, to start in a few days at the Bitter End on Bleecker Street. She seems rather anxious about it all, and grips my arm while she talks to me like a lost out-of-towner on a subway platform seeking directions from a native she hopes will be friendly. Yet Lily Tomlin is no stranger to New York, nor to live appearances in night clubs. She made her first New York debut as a comic back in 1965 at the Cafe Au Go Go in the same neighborhood as the Bitter End. She used to be part of the smart review in that fashionable night club with the confusing name of Upstairs at the Downstairs (later she moved to the Downstairs at the Upstairs, if you're still with me). She tries out

many of her routines at the Ice House in Pasadena, a night club where "This Is a Recording" was taped.

"We recorded it three different times with about two hundred people at each recording session," she tells me breathlessly, veering dangerously close to the trip-hammer style of the Fast Talker who tends to set my teeth on edge when she turns up on *Laugh-In*. "We had about forty real phone operators at each session I mean we wound up using most of the third day that was the day they all sat down front or near the front and that's why they did so much talking you can hear I mean on the recording, responding and commenting on the phone situation and all. Repairmen too."

I try to sort this out and to learn something at the same time about Miss Tomlin's background. Life started in Detroit with parents Guy and Lillie Mae Tomlin, who came north from Kentucky. A melting-pot neighborhood. First public appearance: magic show at age ten. Wayne State University. Inspired to create monologues by listening to old Ruth Draper records. Appearances in Detroit coffee houses. Studies in New York under Paul Curtis of the American Mime Theatre. A role in an off-Broadway mime show. Then the Au Go Go and the Upstairs, Downstairs routine. Then the Merv Griffin Show, the Garry Moore Show, and a quick-folding TV review called *Music Scene*. Then *Laugh-In*: exact date of the first appearance, December 29, 1969. Turns down offer to do fat-paying commercial for Ma Bell. Gets "Cracked Belle Award" from telephone operators, and honorary membership in their union. Next the record, which Polydor released on Alexander Graham Bell's birthday, not expecting much by way of sales (they're rejoicing already at how wrong they turned out to be). And now the tour.

I am determined to find out as much as possible from Miss Tomlin about the real-life sources of Ernestine and her off-camera friend Phoenicia. Did she have real people in mind?

"Not that I know of. She came just from living in New York you see it was a good target for comment. Her life that is Ernestine herself after she started to evolve for example her hairdo, and when I saw how sensual she was and how she got so turned on and everything—quite pretty and sort of looked like Loretta Young. And when she was around eighteen or nineteen, say, she went on to the big city and started working at the phone company, and after all those years at the switchboard well, everything has just turned in on her. That's all that ever happened to her. She just turned out to be, that's all, and so did Phoenicia."

Ernestine, Lily Tomlin believes, touches herself a lot, as when she keeps adjusting her brassiere strap, because "lonely people" tend to develop that sort of mannerism.

Was Miss Tomlin ever afraid she might wake up as one of the so very realistic characters she portrays and never be able to snap out of it? She clutches my arm again, in evident alarm at such a thought, and assures me such a thing is not likely to happen. Her brow furrows a bit as she finds herself, perhaps, speculating on such a schizoid development in her life. To get her mind off it, I try to plug in on Ernestine again. Has there ever been any kickback from the White House over those sharp-tongued phone calls to "Mr. Milhous"? In reply, Miss Tomlin describes a party given by Barbara Walters of the *Today* show.

"Senator McGovern was there and Mrs. Laird, Sargent Shriver, and Nancy Dickerson, I had never been to a party with these kinds of people, I was flabbergasted, someone like Mrs. Laird whose husband is the Defense Secretary,

right? Well, a lot of newscasters and broadcasters were there and they couldn't understand how I could get away with calling him Mr. Milhous, if they just so much as call him Nixon and drop the Mister they get thousands of letters about being disrespectful to the office of the Presidency. That's the only thing I ever heard about Milhous."

Is Ernestine still her most popular self? "No, I've sort of replaced her with the kid, with Edith Ann." Miss Tomlin is shocked at the suggestion I then make that some viewers might regard Edith Ann, with her spiteful tongue and smeary mouth, as a somewhat repulsive little creature. "Edith Ann? Most people love her! You mean there are people who are offended by her? They're backward, that's all. They must be afraid of children. They probably want her to look like Shirley Temple!"

A while later, Miss Tomlin, still outraged by Edith Ann's detractors, returns to the child's defense. "Not like Edith! I can't get over that! Well, they didn't like her on *Laugh-In* at first either. They thought she was weird. They didn't like her to have a dirty mouth. Children aren't all beautiful you know! They have little stringy hair, lots of them. They've got four teeth missing in front. I wish I could show her with all four missing. She has a dirty mouth. That's how she is."

I nod away. I'm trying meanwhile to steer the subject around to Miss Tomlin's writers, of whom seven, including herself, are listed on her record.

"In the beginning I used to write everything myself. Now I can afford to ask my friends to write for me, and I have a lot of smart friends. But a sketch is written and then I work it and rework it. With the record, I had the chance to work everything out at the Ice House before audiences. Most of what was used was from the third time we taped the show."

FOR her forthcoming night club appearances, Miss Tomlin informs me, she is working out some brand new characters, but doesn't dare talk about them while they're still gestating in her mind for fear they might evaporate. Then suddenly she reverts once more to my earlier question about Edith Ann's possible offensiveness, and those bright brown eyes are ablaze like Ernestine's switchboard at the thought. "Not like her! How could they not like her? I mean, that's how she is. I can't change her just to please them."

Hastily the interviewer interjects a diversionary question about Suzie Sorority of the Silent Majority, an anemic type who can scarcely find the energy to put up a pale palm and say "Hi" to the *Laugh-In* audience on Monday evenings. "I don't like her," Lily Tomlin says flatly. "There's nowhere to go with her. I can't build her up, there's nothing there. She's hollow."

I get the feeling Edith Ann wouldn't like Suzie much either. And neither would Ernestine, and certainly not the hypermanic Cheerleader, nor Lula the Party Lady, although perhaps the Tasteful Lady would. I've met most of them now, and when the real Miss Tomlin, a composite who is more than the sum of her parts, bids me goodbye with a final, friendly squeeze on my lucky left arm, I do what all us "lonely people" do: I touch myself, right there on the arm. I have just spent an hour with the most alive, least hollow, friendliest girl in New York City. The lights are still on in the lounge of the Loeb Student Center, but it seems as though they have all suddenly gone off. In New York, along with Ernestine's telephone service, they sometimes do.



# STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



## CLASSICAL

### BEVERLY SILLS' REMARKABLE MANON BROUGHT TO DISCS

*ABC's new version is the first stereo recording of Massenet's durable favorite*

**M**ASSENET'S *Manon* is an utterly French opera. So are *Carmen* and *Faust*, of course, but their Spanish and German settings somehow work to make them less vulnerable to non-Gallic treatments. *Manon* is quite another case, and even the most ardent partisans of opera in English would think twice before tampering with it. This special quality of the opera has perhaps contributed to its limited number of recorded versions, and it is significant to note that all three of the complete recordings so far issued have been French productions built around the performers of the Opéra-Comique, a house in which *Manon* is well on its way to its 3,000th performance.

A new recording of *Manon*, the first in stereo, now breaks the traditional French monopoly. It is on an American label, but it was recorded in London with an English orchestra and chorus led by Julius Rudel, who is Viennese by birth, American by adoption and personality, and international in the range of his sympathies. The cast is likewise international, the four principal roles simply having been filled by those singers best qualified to undertake them anywhere in the world today.

The *Manon* of Beverly Sills is, of course, an amply documented stage triumph that deserves to be perpetuated on discs. It is an intense portrayal, successfully combining the emotional qualities of both child and siren. Miss Sills' care-

fully thought-out and entirely convincing characterization rises to its highest dramatic point in the prayer at the opening of the St. Sulpice scene. Though there are a few moments of uneasy vocalism (in "*Je suis encore toute étourdie*" and most of the Cours-la-Reine scene, where the tone is tremulous and intonation uncertain), "*Voyons, Manon*" is lovely and secure, and the entire St. Sulpice episode is near-perfection. I find the totality of the performance admirably individual, but for me it does not equal the magic of Victoria de los Angeles' *Manon* (Seraphim 6057).

In the first act, Nicolai Gedda renders "*Nous vivrons à Paris*" with a seductive charm and some lovely *diminuendi*. The aria in the St. Sulpice scene is not always under full control, but he is very effective in

the duet that follows it and in most of the last two acts as well. He is not up to the level of his own best work, but this Des Grieux is still well ahead of any other possibility known to me. Gérard Souzay could have been the perfect Lescaut ten years ago; he is today still an impressive one, superb in enunciation, rather brusque in demeanor. Gabriel Bacquier creates a commanding characterization as the Count, though the role's unusual *tessitura* taxes him somewhat vocally.

The Ambrosian Opera Chorus performs effectively, if not perhaps with that final touch of French authenticity. There can be no carping whatever about the supporting singers, however, all of whom display individ-



BEVERLY SILLS  
*Among the "singers best qualified"*

ual gifts as well as a true ensemble spirit. The brief spoken passages, which interlace the action whenever Massenet had the inspiration to employ them, are delivered with a natural and highly atmospheric quality.

Rudel's tempo choices are excellent throughout, his pacing brisk, incisive, but never hurried. This is a "modern" *Manon*, not too sentimental, perhaps even quite dry-eyed, responding more to the music's passion than to its lyricism. It is admirable in its discipline and controlled intensity. Though one may miss the easy-going elegance of Pierre Monteux in the Seraphim recording, this is nonetheless an outstanding musical achievement by a man who seldom gets the recognition he deserves.

The opera is given complete. The second half of the final side is devoted to the *Fabliau*, a florid number Massenet composed as an alternate for the *Gavotte*. It is performed by Miss Sills with the proper flourish. Technically, this new set simply obliterates all competition. The many colorful elements of the opera are carefully blended, orchestral details emerge with clarity, and yet the singing is never slighted. Producer Michael Williamson has done an outstanding job. The packaging is also excellent, with interesting illustrations, and there are informative notes by Herbert Weinstock. *George Jellinek*

MASSENET: *Manon*. Beverly Sills (soprano), *Manon*; Nicolai Gedda (tenor), *Chevalier des Grieux*; Gérard Souzay (baritone), *Lescaut*; Gabriel Bacquier (bass), *Le Comte des Grieux*; Nico Castel (tenor), *Guillot*; Michel Trempont (baritone), *De Bretigny*; Patricia Kern (mezzo-soprano), *Rosette*; Michele Raynaud (soprano), *Poussette*; Helia T'Hezan (soprano), *Javotte*. Ambrosian Opera Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Julius Rudel cond. ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS 20007/4 four discs \$23.94.

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## PIERRE BOULEZ'S *PLI SELON PLI*

*The Columbia recording reveals an intensely poetic contemporary musical work*

COLUMBIA's new recording of Pierre Boulez's *Pli Selon Pli* reminds me that this work, in its relatively short lifetime (it made its first appearance in 1960), has already outlived all those apologetics about "avant-garde" and "new music" and can be listened to simply as one of the major creative statements in contemporary European art. In spite of all the talk about the internationalism and the Germanicism of European music in the Fifties and Sixties, this

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PIERRE BOULEZ: an accent that could only be French

music rings out in a distinctive accent that could only be French. It grows out of Boulez's deep admiration for and understanding of the work of the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (of which it is a musical reinterpretation rather than a "setting" in the conventional sense). Its musical ancestry can be traced to Debussy and Messiaen as much as to Schoenberg and Webern. Its curious combination of layers of delicate percussion sound and highly lyrical but disjunct singing, of forms that literally unfold in layers of timbre ("*pli selon pli*" or "fold on fold"), of severity and intellectual control on the one hand and improvisatory freedom and sensuousness on the other, is all typical of Boulez's contribution to contemporary French culture and his very distinct place in European music.

In spite of the mystique that surrounds some of this music, nothing more is demanded of the listener than a willingness to concentrate, to really listen. Total involvement is made easier by the crystalline brilliance, beauty, and controlled lyricism of the performance and recording. This music remains suspended between a concept of shifting timbres—its heritage from Debussy—and its utter clarity of thought—which comes partly from Webern and serialism but is also typically French (and typically Boulez). Others may stumble over this seeming paradox,

but for Boulez there is no contradiction; indeed, the tension that arises out of the expression of ideas and their sensuous realization helps generate the inner energies that bridge the hour-long span of the work so successfully.

*Pli Selon Pli* is contemporary musical poetry of the highest and most intense kind and should be missed by no one interested in the inner life of our time. It took almost a decade to reach its new life in recorded form, but, given the extraordinary quality of the result, it was well worth waiting for. *Eric Salzman*

**BOULEZ:** *Pli Selon Pli*. Halina Lukomska (soprano); Maria Bergmann (piano); Paul Stingl (guitar); Hugo D'Alton (mandolin); B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA M 30296 \$5.98.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### BARBRA STREISAND BRANCHES OUT

*Her latest album for Columbia is devoted to the songs of all the young troubadours*

ONE OF my chief gripes about the record business is the way major recording companies force musical material onto the charts of artists who have no feeling or regard for it. As a rule, it simply doesn't work. Carmen McRae, Mel Tormé, Chris Connor, and Peggy Lee are only a few of the great talents who have been done in by material that is several light years above, beneath, or beyond their range and ability. But now comes Barbra Streisand, already the exception to many rules, to break this one too. As her latest Columbia release, "Stoney End," reveals, Barbra's branching out. She has found a new highway of current rock and folk material to travel, and the trip is sublime: "Stoney End" is a lovely, listenable, often exciting album that does absolutely everybody justice.

Barbra addresses herself to the work of Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell, Nilsson, and Randy Newman (among others) with both passion and respect, breathing a different kind of life into it without compromising her own taste or her dignity as a performer. True, there are no Harold Arlens or even a Lenny Bernstein here, but the gentle innocence Barbra brings to (for example) Joni Mitchell's *I Don't Know Where I Stand* raises that young lady's song to a polished level she has never been able to reach with it herself.

Barbra has always been a stern perfectionist, of course, as hard on herself as on any of those who

work with her, and she has not shunned her musical responsibilities here. Her musical-comedy fans may not appreciate the new horizons she has discovered, but they can hardly accuse her of recording rock songs just to make a quick buck. She invests so much energy, discovers so many subtle and fragrant details, and displays so many lyrical attitudes in this program that almost every song sounds better than it ever has before. Listen for the details and you will see why this is true: her outbursts of melodic high octane on Laura Nyro's *Stoney End*; the way her breathtaking laughter catches in her throat at the end of a rapturous *Time and Love*, captured for posterity because a mike was left open in the studio; the romantic way she wraps herself around the words "Nothing turns the day on, really gets it goin'" in *Just a Little Lovin'*.

All the fire, all the guts, all the splendor that is Barbra at her best are showered on these songs, and the strings and the horns and the beautifully modulated vocal group behind her embellish them in arrangements that glow with life. It is an experience that proves once again that good music can shine anytime, anywhere—if it finds its way into the right hands. *Rex Reed*

**BARBRA STREISAND:** *Stoney End*. Barbra Streisand (vocals); Gene Page, Perry Botkin, Jr., and Claus Oger-

BARBRA STREISAND: a lovely, listenable collection



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man arrs. *I Don't Know Where I Stand; Hands Off the Man; Stoney End; Maybe; Free the People; I'll Be Home; Time and Love; If You Could Read My Mind; Let Me Go; Just a Little Lovin'*. COLUMBIA KC 30378 \$5.98, © CA 30378 \$6.98, © CT 30378 \$6.98.

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## A HOT LINE TO ERNESTINE

*Polydor successfully translates Ma Bell's demon troubleshooter from TV to turntable*

**M**ONDAYS stopped being blue around our house the first time Lily Tomlin jiggled the plug in her switchboard, crossed her legs, adjusted the strap of her brassiere, and smirked into her mouthpiece, "A gracious good afternoon! This is Miss Tomlin of the telephone company. Have I reached the party to whom I am speaking?"

This momentous debut took place on the Rowan and Martin TV show *Laugh-In*, and since then, Miss Tomlin (or Ernestine, as we have come to know her) has brightened our Mondays intermittently with calls to Gore Vidal ("When may we expect payment, Mr. Veedle?"), the President of the United States ("Mr. Milhous"), and even the wife of the Attorney General, badgering them, with many a porcine snort, about their phone bills and their "violations of company policy."

Miss Tomlin plays many other roles on *Laugh-In*, including those of a smudge-faced brat in a rocking chair and the reedy-voiced "Miss Susan Sorority of the Silent Majority," but it is as Ernestine that she is most likely to go down in entertainment history, dialing doggedly over again when customers cut her off, boldly brandishing the power of monopoly with veiled threats of curtailed service, responding indomitably to obscene phone calls, and gossiping between-times with her friend Phoenicia, a girl I have never seen but can, thanks to Ernestine's own uncanny reality, vividly imagine.

Such an act deserves its own album, and we have it here, prepared with the aid of seven writers and "recorded live at the Ice House, Pasadena" before what sounds like a convention of wickedly appreciative telephone-company employees. Miss Tomlin explains how Mr. Bell invented the telephone shortly after flying his kite to discover electricity, discusses that overdue bill with Mr. Veedle, breaks up a marriage with her unsolicited counsel to a customer, calls Joan Crawford to request the return of a dime lost in a Pepsi-Cola machine, and chats with Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. "Jedgar" Hoover, whom she accuses

Polydor



LILY TOMLIN: at least five ringy-dingy's

of tampering with his instrument, and Vito, the burly phone repairman and installer, who reports on the dreadful decor of a house in which he is investigating a complaint.

But Ernestine really comes into her own during a telephone strike, when she singlehandedly takes over all duties, placing local and long-distance calls, giving out the time and the weather, curtly referring customers to their directories for numbers, and even reading inspirational messages for "Dial-a-Prayer." It is a heroic achievement, and if you can't see the smirk you can certainly hear the snort. Some of the bands are filler, as in many another comedy disc, but "This Is a Recording" contains more chuckles per micro-groove than most. Gracing the cover is a full-color picture of Ernestine at her switchboard—period hair-style, pink skirt, open toes, and all—tugging at her brassiere strap and smirking that smirk for Mr. Milhous at the other end.

*Paul Kresh*

**LILY TOMLIN:** *This Is a Recording.* Lily Tomlin (co-mediante). *Alexander Graham Bell; Mr. Veedle; The Marriage Counselor; Joan Crawford; Obscene Phone Call; The Repairman; The Bordello; Strike; Peeved;* and eight others. POLYDOR 24-4055 \$5.98, © 4055 \$6.98, © CF 4055 \$6.98.

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*... unquestionably one of  
the best preamplifiers  
we have measured.*

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*... accurate reproduction of  
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## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ALFONSO X, EL SABIO:** *Las Cantigas de Santa Maria (selections)*. Capilla Musical y Escolania de Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caidos; Atrium Musicae; Jens Uwe Eggers and Laurentino Sáenz de Buruaga (tenors); José Luis Ochoa de Olza (baritone), director. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY OR 302 \$2.89 (plus 60¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: Exceptional  
Recording: Superior

Alfonso the Wise, King of Spain from 1252 until his death in 1294, was an extremely enlightened ruler who established schools of law and astronomy and also wrote entirely himself, or had written for him in part, a series of four hundred *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. This collection, some of which is fragmentary, consists of songs of praise (they are, in effect, troubador songs in honor of the Virgin Mary) and of miraculous events dealing with Mary. A few of these have appeared from time to time on records, either in vocal or instrumental form; the largest collection is a group of twelve performed mainly as instrumentals by the New York Pro Musica on Decca DL 79416. The present recording, a commendably scholarly undertaking (Spanish musicology has not always been so good in this respect), includes the prologue plus twenty-three *cantigas*. Not only in terms of quantity, however, is this Musical Heritage release preferable to the Decca. This presentation features exquisite singing, both by soloists and choirs (including one of children), as well as splendid, vivacious instrumental playing on instruments proper to the period. The style is very Spanish indeed (unlike the Pro Musica, whose Spanish pronunciation leaves something to be desired), but, more than that, the performances have a great deal of atmosphere to them. One might comment that some of the *cantigas* are a little solemn in tempo (a Solesmes chant style does pervade a few of these selections), and I wished on occasion for more rhythmic flexibility in the instrumental playing. On the whole, though, this is a project of great imagination, superbly presented and recorded. I.K.

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BACH:** *Cantata No. 51, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"; Cantata No. 199, "Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut."* Elly Ameling (soprano); Maurice André (trumpet, in No. 51); German Bach Soloists, Helmut Winschermann cond. PHILIPS 6500 014 \$5.98.

Performance: Outstanding  
Recording: Superior

The jubilation of the well-known Cantata No. 51, whose outer movements are really a con-

Philippe



ELLY AMELING

*Exquisite performances of Bach cantatas*

certo for trumpet and soprano, contrasts most effectively with the far less familiar Cantata 199, "My heart is bathed in blood," a meditative, sighing work, for the most part, which only sheds its spiritual lamentation in its jig-like finale. There is some feeling that this latter cantata, which actually dates from the Weimar years (about 1714), may have been adapted by Bach from a work by Christoph Graupner (1683-1760). If so, Bach has done his usual miraculous reworking, for this is a marvelous piece, and one aria, "Tief gebückt" ("Deeply bowed"), can rank among the greatest of the cantata arias.

I think anyone's enthusiasm for this cantata, as well as for "Jauchzet Gott," is likely to be increased by the simply exquisite performance given them by Elly Ameling and the German Bach Soloists here. I would place these among the ten or so finest recordings of Bach cantatas I know of. Miss Ameling is simply superb here;

her feeling for the religious sentiment could not be greater, and her lovely voice copes magnificently with the taxing technical demands of "Jauchzet Gott," as well as with the more intimate sections of both works. She is beautifully supported by a most sensitive accompaniment (the phrasing of the strings, for instance, in "Tief gebückt"); Maurice André, the trumpeter in Number 51, also deserves high praise. Finally, the recorded sound, which is absolutely natural and ungingmicky, is extraordinarily transparent, and even the harpsichord continuo emerges in ideal perspective. Texts and translations are included. Don't miss this one. I. K.

**BACH, J.S.:** *Suites for Orchestra (complete), BWV 1066-1069*. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer cond. ANGEL SB 3763 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: Literal  
Recording: Very good

Otto Klemperer recorded the four Bach suites once before, in the mid-Fifties, and this stereo remake is very much like that older set. The conductor takes a modified Romantic approach to Bach: the scores are performed quite literally, without any double-dotting of the opening sections, without any ornaments or the like—totally without the scholarly apparatus that one hears in the best of the Baroque-style performances, such as that of the Concentus Musicus of Vienna. The orchestra, to be sure, is not overlarge, and there is a harpsichord, though it is restricted to block chords and very much in the background. Klemperer's tempos are generally deliberate—and on occasion even distressingly slow, so that dances never really bounce as they ought to (compare, for instance, Raymond Leppard's Suites for Philips). There are many merits to the performance, however. The conductor does make his instrumentalists phrase with unusual care; there is not as much long-line phrasing in these performances as one might expect. And overtures do have a sense of grandeur to them, as well as enormous solidity; such a movement as the famous *Air* from the Third Suite is played with wonderful dignity. It may not always be good Bach, but it very often is extremely good music. The recording is not the last word in clarity but is more than adequate otherwise. I.K.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Piano Sonata No. 29, in B-flat Major, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier")*. Christoph Eschenbach (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 080 \$5.98.

Performance: Dull  
Recording: Passable; bad surfaces

Very sad, indeed. One expects to hear great things from young performers whose names

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have been thrust to the fore with an air of distinction. But this is, without any exception that I can recall, the dullest clean performance of the "Hammerklavier" Sonata I have sat through in all my life. The notes are in order, and no vulgarities or stupidities have been perpetrated by the pianist. (I could say something else about the recording engineers with regard to the piano's high notes. And about whoever is responsible for the disc's cobblestone surface.) But, beyond any of this, one might ask—how can *anyone* make Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" into a dull piece?  
L.T.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BELLINI: *Il Pirata*.** Piero Cappuccilli (baritone), Ernesto; Montserrat Caballé (soprano), Imogene; Bernabé Martí (tenor), Gualtiero; Ruggero Raimondi (bass), Goffredo; Giuseppe Baratti (tenor), Itulbo; Flora Raffanelli (mezzo-soprano), Adele. Chorus and Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana, Rome, Gianandrea Gavazzeni cond. ANGEL SCL 3772 three discs \$17.94.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Good

In Vincenzo Bellini's short life he composed only ten operas, so to divide his achievements into "early" and "late" works makes little sense. *Il Pirata* (1827) was his third opera, and it illustrates Bellini's art at something very close to its peak. It is a thoughtfully fashioned, effective work, not particularly distinguished in its melodic inspiration, but revealing flashes of dramatic fire not always to be found in Bellini's later and better-known operas. It opens with an effective depiction of a tempest at sea that foreshadows the opening of Verdi's *Otello*; its ensemble writing is above the ordinary, and the orchestra is unusually active for the period. It goes without saying that *Il Pirata* calls for spectacular singing as well. Rubini and Tamburini sang the rival lovers at the Milan premiere; subsequent revivals attracted the likes of Schröder-Devrient, Grisi, and Mario.

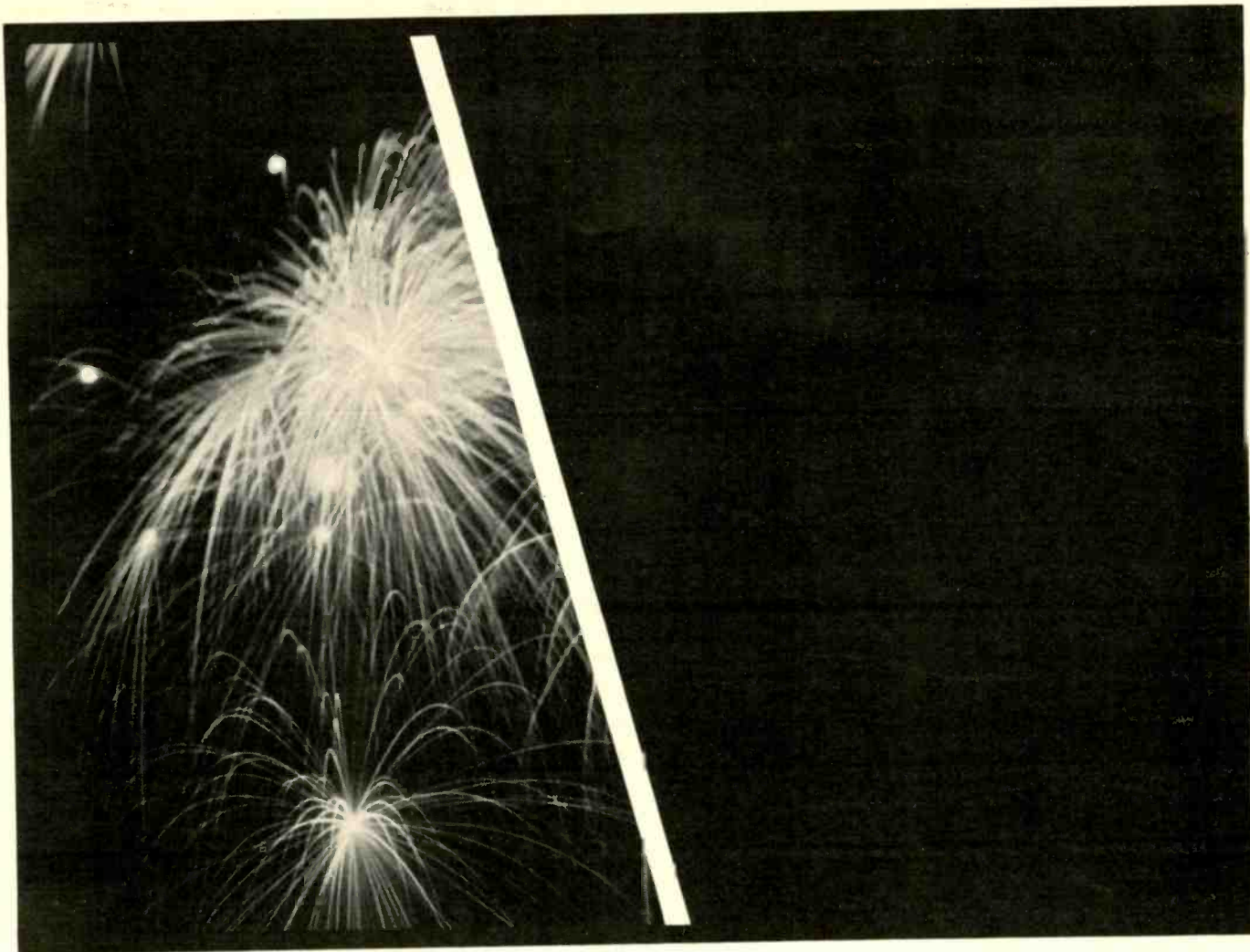
This first recording of *Il Pirata* follows several staged and concert revivals during the last two decades, involving first Lucy Kelston, then Maria Callas (who recorded the opera's final scene), and, finally, Montserrat Caballé. It represents a decided gain in our growing exploration of pre-Verdi operatic literature, similar to the rediscovery of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* and *Anna Bolena* and Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*. On initial hearing, however, I must rank *Il Pirata* slightly below the level of these three.

The cast is dominated by Montserrat Caballé, who regales us here with one of her most consistently beautiful recorded performances. She offers singing that is tonally immaculate, enriched by phrasing of remarkable plasticity and a firm command of the role's florid requirements, without resorting to excessive ornamentation of the kind that obscures the composer's line. To the final scene, with its poignant *cantabile*, "*Col sorriso d'innocenza*," she brings the appropriate melting tone and delicate phrasing, and equally effective vocal fireworks follow in the *cabaletta*.

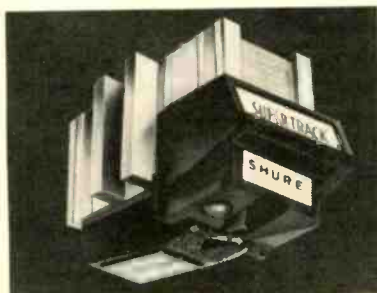
Without access to the vocal score, I am unable to determine how much of the "Rubini text" is retained in Bernabé Martí's performance. The role of Gualtiero is high-lying, elaborate, and very demanding, and the Spanish tenor deserves praise for his vigorous and musicianly singing and good intonation. His

(Continued on page 86)





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voice, however, is steely and without much sensuous appeal. Piero Cappuccilli does his best to lift the role of Ernesto above that of a stock villain: he offers an intelligent characterization and singing that is always sonorous and effective but tonally far from irresistible. His best moments come in the passionate duet with Caballé in Act Two. What little Ruggero Raimondi has to do in the role of Goffredo he does with distinction.

Conductor Gavazzeni says in the accompanying notes that this is not an integral edition of the opera and, recognizing his eminence as a Bellini-Donizetti scholar, I am inclined to go along with his preference for a judiciously edited score. Surely what he offers is a fast-moving sequence free of padding and repetitiousness. It is vigorously paced, with much attention devoted to the music's drama, but without slighting the singers, whose part in the totality is all-important.

G.J.

**BERG: Violin Concerto. MARTINON: Violin Concerto No. 2, Op. 51.** Henryk Szeryng (violin); Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 033 \$6.98.

Performance: Very good  
Recording: Superb

Now that we have almost a half-century of perspective from which to view the Second Viennese School, I think few would argue that Alban Berg was innately the most gifted of its three leading composers—Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. And for anyone willing to dispute that assessment, I would offer in evidence, as Exhibit A, Berg's Violin Concerto. Written in what was, for this composer, a very short time—between April and August, 1935—it displays his powers operating at their most mature, yet with a spontaneity unequalled since the completion of *Wozzeck* in 1921. The correspondences, cross-references, numerology, and imitative devices that were so much a part of Berg's composing method are all to be found in the concerto—and, of course, a tone row as well. But when the music begins—when "the curtain goes up," to echo Berg's dictum about his intentions *vis-à-vis* the elaborate scheme of *Wozzeck*—the listener is barely aware of the composer's means. He is carried along by the work's thematic and textural richness, the lucidity of its formal progression, and its expressive power.

DGG's new collaboration in this concerto by Henryk Szeryng and Rafael Kubelik just misses being outstanding. Its effectiveness is diminished, I think, by what seems to be a certain insensitivity by the violinist to the dynamic contrasts that Berg carefully specified for the solo instrument in his score. Can this be partly the fault of the recording? Though the balances between soloist and orchestra are admirable in the end result, the violin seems to have been very closely miked, for Szeryng's breathing is sometimes audible. Perhaps this recording technique obscured the differences between *pianissimo* and *piano*, between *mezzo-forte* and *forte*. In every other way, the engineers did a superb job, and the Bavarian orchestra—particularly the horn section—sounds as if it could stand comparison chair for chair with its more renowned Prussian counterpart, the Berlin Philharmonic. Yet I find this work more persuasively set forth by the team of Arthur Grumiaux and Igor Markevitch (Philips 900194). Szeryng plays the solo line with a good deal of understanding, but does not match Grumiaux's refinement of tone and affecting phrasing.

We in America know Jean Martinon best as the former conductor of the Chicago Symphony. He is also a prolific composer, and his second violin concerto, which backs up the Berg piece here, is dedicated to Szeryng. The violinist plays it as every composer must dream that a work of his will be played by a performer on whom he chooses to bestow a dedication: with beautiful tone, unassailable technique, and instinctive musicality. Martinon's concerto is very attractive, and well conceived for the instrument. Though it was written in the early Sixties, it is reminiscent of styles that were current in France after World War I; it sounds a little like Stravinsky, Ernest Bloch, and Martinon's teacher Albert Roussel in spots, but it always has a character of its own. The first-movement material is really memorable, and its development is consistently interesting; less remarkable though the other two movements are, they are always skillful and diverting. It is a work I will listen to often; it does not possess the intensity and the clarity of expressive purpose of the Berg, but I can't think of another violin concerto by any composer that does. Again, the recording is excellent, and the record surfaces are pristine.

Robert S. Clark

**BOCCHERINI: Quintets for Guitar and Strings: No. 4, in D Major (Op. 50, No. 1, G. 448); No. 7, in E Minor (Op. 50, No. 3, G. 451); No. 9, in C Major, "La Ritirata di Madrid" (Op. 50, No. 2, G. 453).** Narciso Yepes (guitar); Melos Quartet of Stuttgart; Lucero Tena (castanets, in No. 4). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530069 \$5.98.

Performance: Lyrical  
Recording: Very good

Of the nine quintets for guitar and strings which Boccherini arranged from others of his works, only three are published: two exist only in manuscript and four of the set are lost. There is even some doubt about whether or not the composer made the transcriptions himself, although the Gérard thematic catalog should lay most of the doubts to rest by concluding that they are indeed authentic. These three, for some curious reason labeled Op. 50 (the original Op. 50 are string quintets), have been recorded before, notably by the Tátrai Quartet and guitarist László Szendrey Karper on Qualiton LPX 11344/45, a most flavorful and atmospheric performance. Two of quintets have characteristically Spanish movements: the D Major has as its finale a delightful fandango (the same piece that Julian Bream transcribed for guitar and harpsichord so effectively for RCA LSC 3027), and the C Major has as its finale a programmatic military retreat in Madrid. All three quintets are highly melodious.

The present performances are very good indeed, and the ensemble is excellent, but I miss the perkiness of the Hungarian interpretation. The Germans seem a bit too placid and less atmospheric than their counterparts. Yepes plays well, but one senses that the guitar part is underplayed. For some reason, incidentally, the castanet effects in the fandango, which Boccherini presumably meant to have produced by striking the body of the stringed instrument(s), are actually played here on castanets. It is effective—but so is the original. The sonics are clean and a bit dry but otherwise satisfactory.

I.K.

**BOULEZ: Pli Selon Pli** (see Best of the Month, page 78)

(Continued on page 88)

STEREO REVIEW

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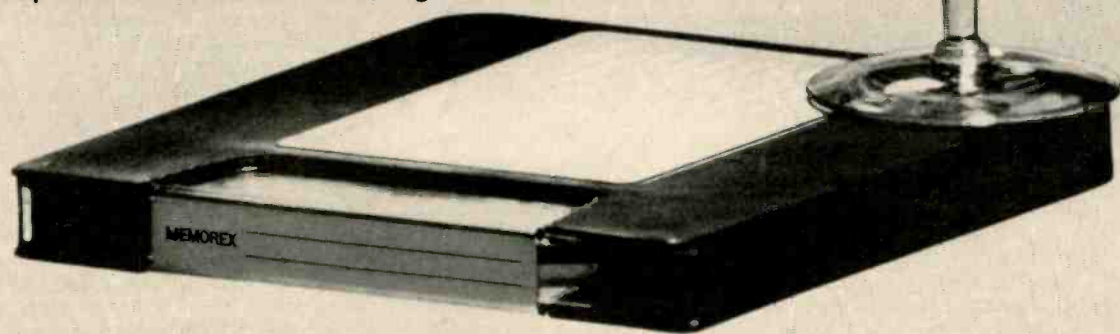
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#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BRITTEN:** *The Poet's Echo* (*Echo; My Heart; Angel; The Nightingale and the Rose; Epigram; Lines written during a Sleepless Night*). **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Why?* Op. 6, No. 5; *Mid the Noisy Stir of the Ball*, Op. 38, No. 3; *Over the Golden Cornfields*, Op. 57, No. 2; *Serenade*, Op. 63, No. 6; *Night*, Op. 73, No. 2; *Why?* Op. 28, No. 3. Galina Vishnevskaya (soprano); Mstislav Rostropovich (piano). LONDON OS 26141 \$5.98.

Performance: Effective  
Recording: Excellent

Setting the poetry of Alexander Pushkin to music has not been news since the time of Glinka (where would Russian opera be without Pushkin?), but when the composer is not Russian, yet writes music for the Russian text, that is indeed a novelty. In the present instance, the versatility and skill of Benjamin Britten and his access to such remarkable intermediaries as Galina Vishnevskaya and Mstislav Rostropovich are happy auguries for the enterprise. *The Poet's Echo* is a cycle of six poems built around the theme of the kind of loneliness familiar to poets. The settings are passionate, and display Britten's mastery of effective vocal writing. Compared with the soaring Romantic Tchaikovsky songs on the other side, Britten's music sounds austere. But these songs grow on the listener, particularly as he discovers the ingenuity of the piano-voice interplay.

The Tchaikovsky group mixes familiar songs with rarely-heard ones. (I do not remember encountering *Serenade* and the Opus 28 *Why?* on records before.) Vishnevskaya sings both Tchaikovsky and Britten with evident commitment. She is a compelling interpreter who brings insight and imagination to her work. There are many effective touches: allowing the considerable vibrato to leave the voice in *Why?* (Op. 6) to underline the feeling of dejection, singing *Mid the Noisy Stir of a Ball* with a low-key, reflective *mezza-voce*, practically tossing away the *Serenade*, etc. These are the ways of a major artist. Vocally, she is in good form, but some high notes are strident and effortful. Rostropovich's piano accompaniments sound absolutely ideal to me, as does the recorded sound. Texts, translations, and notes are provided. G.J.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**CHOPIN:** *Sonata No. 2, in B-flat Minor, Op. 35* ("Funeral March"); *Sonata No. 3, in B Minor, Op. 58*. Antonio Barbosa (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2026 \$5.98.

Performance: Satisfying  
Recording: Excellent

To make your recording debut with a coupling of the second and third Chopin sonatas is to provoke comparisons on the highest level, but Antonio Barbosa, a twenty-seven-year-old pianist from Brazil, shows himself more than able to withstand them. These are readings of immense technical accomplishment and—more impressive still—of astonishing maturity. Barbosa is an artist who can do full justice to the incidental beauties of Chopin's line and texture without impeding the overall progress of the music. At any age, that is a rare gift, and in so young a pianist it portends great things.

This is the sixth version of this coupling to enter the current catalog. With Barbosa's musicianship backed by Connoisseur Society's typically excellent piano recording, it becomes my

clear first choice in the field. Certainly there are effects that are more successfully brought off in Rubinstein's recently reissued disc (the nearest rival, in my judgment). But from the very start, with his firm shaping of the rhythm in the B-flat Minor Sonata's introduction, Barbosa proclaims himself an interpreter worthy to be taken on his own terms. And his conception of the celebrated slow movement makes it much more truly a funeral march than Rubinstein's thoughtful but rather sluggish rendering.

Again, when separate versions of the two works are taken into account, Barbosa's Opus 35 seems to me easily preferable to the over-rated so-called "classic" recording by Rachmaninoff, which is not so much a performance as an imaginative essay on what the sonata might have been like if Rachmaninoff, not Chopin, had written it; and his noble statement of the first movement of Op. 58 does not pale even when heard in direct juxtaposition to the

Christian Steiner



ANTONIO BARBOSA  
*A pianist of astonishing maturity*

great Josef Hofmann's performance of that movement on RCA Victrola.

I wish Barbosa were not so disdainful of repeats. Yet even though he leaves most of them out, this is still one of the finest debut recordings, and for that matter one of the finest piano records, I have encountered in quite a while. B.J.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**COPLAND:** *Billy the Kid—Ballet Suite; Rodeo: Four Dance Episodes*. London Symphony Orchestra, Aaron Copland cond. COLUMBIA M 30114 \$5.98.

Performance: Crisp  
Recording: Crystal clear

The pairing of Aaron Copland's two zestful cowboy ballet scores is a natural, and the composer himself has followed the examples of Leonard Bernstein, Morton Gould, Maurice Abravanel, and Donald Johanos in this respect. But whereas Bernstein and Gould seek to make the most of the coloristic and rhythmic aspects of the music, composer-interpreter Copland, like composer-interpreter Stravinsky, makes a decided effort to put everything into perspective. The tenderly lyrical elements of the music under Copland's baton assume a special importance, and the texture of the score is

revealed thoroughly by means of linear clarity and rhythmic articulation.

This is Copland's second recording of *Billy the Kid*, my favorite of the Copland ballets along with *Appalachian Spring*. The orchestral playing is more assured and the recorded sound somewhat deeper in stereo perspective than the 1958 Everest release, also with the London Symphony. If you like your Copland "hot," Bernstein is your man; if you prefer him cool and in crystal-clear sonic and aesthetic perspective, the composer himself is for you. D.H.

**COPLAND:** *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. **IVES:** *Sonata No. 2, for Violin and Piano*. **MAURY:** *Sonata in Memory of the Korean War Dead*. Myron Sandler (violin); Lowndes Maury (piano). CRYSTAL S631 \$5.98.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Good

These are good performances by a pair of capable West-Coast musicians. The Copland, one of that composer's "gift to be simple" pieces, was written to reach past the modern-music public to a wider audience; it is curious that it never in fact achieved the popularity, even among violinists, that it clearly merits. The Ives Sonata, one of his typical combinations of the rich and complex with the simple and appealing, is better known but not as much as it might be. The pianist's own Sonata is a medley of a bit of this and a bit of that and not much of anything, really. The recording is on the dark and resonant side, short on highs. The review copy had a low but persistent level of crackle. E.S.

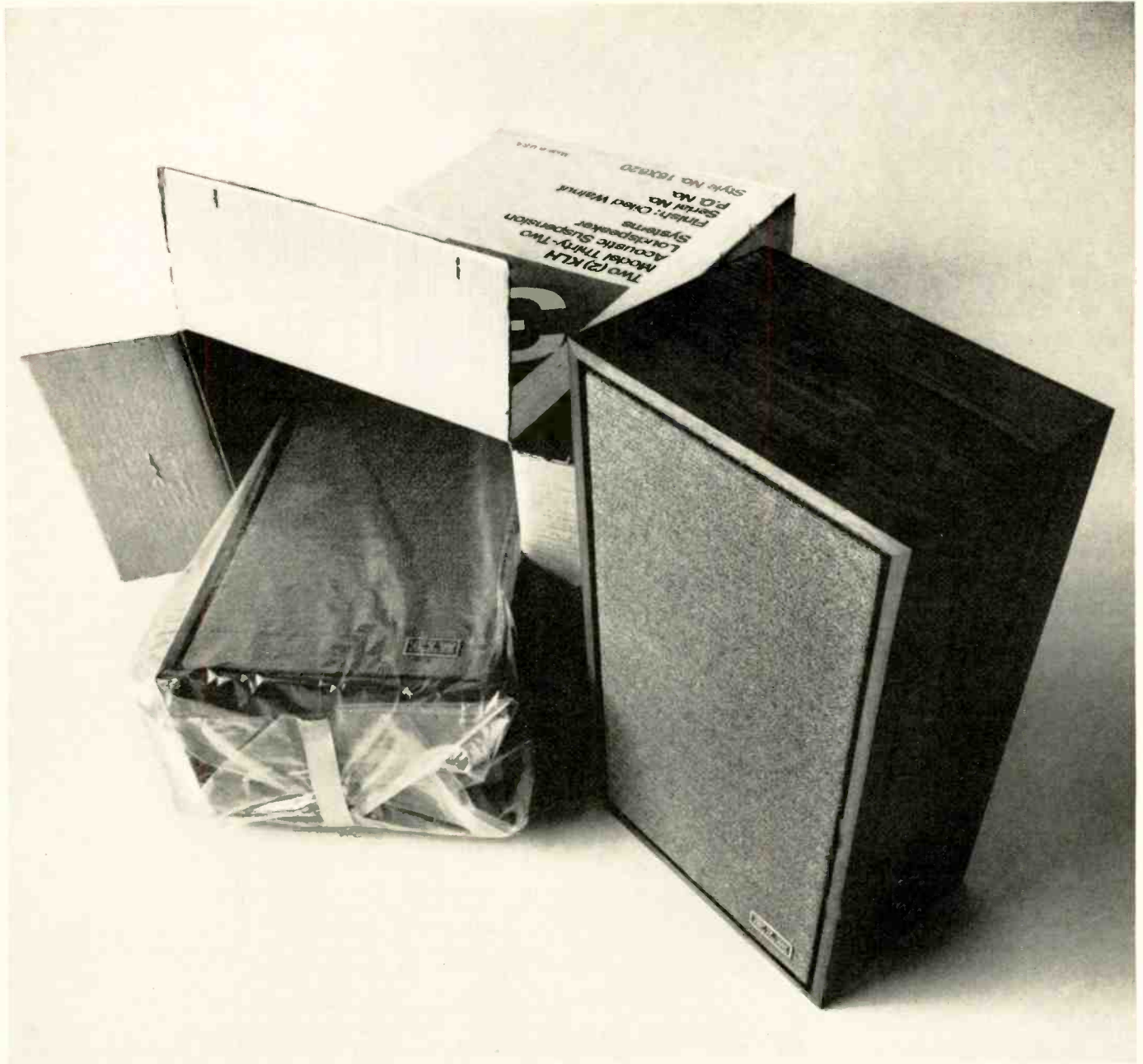
**DELIUS:** *Appalachia; Brigg Fair*. Alun Jenkins (baritone) and Ambrosian Singers (in *Appalachia*); Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli cond. ANGEL S 36756 \$5.98.

Performance: Idiomatic  
Recording: Excellent

Frederick Delius is pre-eminently the composer for those whose perception of music is centered in harmony and instrumental coloring. His part-writing is quite without the muscularity that distinguishes true counterpoint from mere descanting, and his formal thought is likewise devoid of distinction, but of vaguely gorgeous late-Romantic chromatic effulgence there is no end.

This record offers two works—both, in spite of previous recordings, otherwise unavailable at present—that cast a slightly oblique light on Delius' style. *Appalachia* and *Brigg Fair* are subtitled, respectively, "Variations on an Old Slave Song" and "An English Rhapsody," and the use of folk material in both of them confronts the composer with the necessity of fusing his customary flowing idiom with an alien diatonic language. I find the result unconvincing. But I know that for every hundred listeners who find the sound of a limpid tune like that of *No Trouble in that Land Where I'm Bound hard* to reconcile with the prevailing chromatic perfumery, there will be another hundred to revel in the combination. If you like Delius, you will almost certainly enjoy these works. They are ravishingly scored and, within Delian terms of reference, well enough constructed, though again I find Delius' conviction that a languid little cadence-phrase will sound better at the second and even better than that at the third hearing rather tiresome.

These are, sadly, Sir John Barbirolli's last recordings. His ability to communicate Delius' (Continued on page 90)



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peculiar kind of enchantment, already documented on some earlier discs, is again fully in evidence. Barbirolli's own Hallé Orchestra, too, shows its familiar qualities, with the eloquence of the woodwinds and the nobility of the principal trumpet more than outweighing a certain lack of body in the strings. The recording is rich and clear, and there are copious and perceptive notes by John Coveney. *BJ.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HANDEL:** *Concerti Grossi, Op. 3 (complete); Concerto in C Major, from "Alexander's Feast."* Collegium Aureum. RCA VICTROLA VICS 6036 two discs \$5.96.

Performance: Among the best  
Recording: Excellent

Among the relatively few chamber orchestras that specialize in Baroque repertoire and use instruments of that time or reproductions, the Collegium Aureum has established itself as one of the finest, an ensemble that can stand right alongside the Concentus Musicus of Vienna and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. As may be heard in this fine set of the Op. 3 Concerti Grossi (which includes the two quite different versions of No. 4, as well as the *Alexander's Feast* concerto for a filler), these performances are extremely lively, energetic, and exceptionally stylish. And no wonder, for they feature some of the best German players one can hear in this music, musicians such as the flutist and recorder player Hans-Martin Linde and the oboist Helmut Hucke. There is only one shortcoming here, and that a minor one: a tendency to play everything at a fairly loud dynamic level. The group seems to avoid a true piano. For more dynamic shading, just as imaginative and stylish an approach, and perhaps even an added measure of zip, I continue to prefer the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields' version on Argo 5400, though that single-disc performance contains only one of the two No. 4 concertos and is done with modern instruments. Of the versions with original instruments, this one, it seems to me, is a bit more vital than the August Wenzinger recording. In any case, I doubt that you will find the Collegium Aureum performances disappointing. Sonic reproduction is first-rate. *I.K.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HANDEL:** *Israel in Egypt.* Heather Harper and Patricia Clark (sopranos); Paul Esswood (countertenor); Alexander Young (tenor); Michael Rippon and Christopher Keyte (basses); Leeds Festival Chorus; English Chamber Orchestra, Charles Mackerras cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533056/57 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: Excellent  
Recording: Good

This is by a comfortable margin the best version yet recorded of one of Handel's most popular and dignified oratorios. Charles Mackerras combines the virtues of exciting musicianship and sound scholarship in just about ideal proportion (certainly more so than any of his three competitors on disc, Abravanel, Waldman, and Boepple), and he encompasses the full range of Handel's expression from its gentler manifestations to the noble rhetoric of the many big choruses.

The unusually high proportion of choral numbers is the source both of the work's dignity and, at least among choral societies, of its

90

DGG



CHARLES MACKERRAS  
*Musicianship and scholarship in Handel*

popularity. The chorus of the Leeds Festival in northern England here shows itself to be an excellent body, providing ample weight in slow chordal music, and also capable of the brilliant articulation necessitated by the fast tempos Mackerras sets in sections like "He gave them hailstones for rain."

The demands on the soloists are correspondingly lighter than in most Handel oratorios, but the team assembled for this recording is good enough to make a strong impression nevertheless. The virtues of Heather Harper and Alexander Young are familiar, and the less well-known Paul Esswood (who was the countertenor in Mackerras' *Messiah* recording) fully matches their quality.

Mackerras' solution to the abruptness of the opening—*Israel in Egypt* has no overture of its own—is as much a makeshift as was Handel's own idea of prefacing it with an adaptation of a funeral anthem composed earlier for another purpose. Mackerras instead begins with the overture from *Solomon*, and it makes a rather more appropriate effect than the anthem does.

If it were not for the less than ideal recording quality, the results of the conductor's

ANTAL DORATI

*Fine start on the complete Haydn symphonies*



BBC

efforts would make an even greater impact. But the DGG engineers have produced a sound in which the excessively churchy resonance of the quiet passages is curiously offset by a certain hardness in *fortissimo*. The orchestra, however, comes over well (particularly the attractively pungent oboes), the antiphonal effects are clearly rendered, and the acoustic is by no means bad enough to negate the attractions of an otherwise magnificent piece of work. *BJ.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HAYDN:** *Symphonies: No. 65, in A Major; No. 66, in B-flat Major; No. 67, in F Major; No. 68, in B-flat Major; No. 69, in C Major ("Laudon"); No. 70, in D Major; No. 71, in B-flat Major; No. 72, in D Major.* Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati cond. LONDON STS 15135/6/7/8 four discs \$11.92.

Performance: Stylish  
Recording: Good

Since the advent of LP, there have been two major attempts at an integral recording of the Haydn symphonies. The first, by the Haydn Society in the early 1950's, failed for lack of funds; the second, by the Library of Recorded Masterpieces, ended with the sudden death of LRM's founder-conductor Max Goberman (a few discs of the series have been issued on the Odyssey label). In both enterprises, the redoubtable and indefatigable Haydn scholar H. C. Robbins Landon played a major role, particularly in preparation of the performing materials from original (or the closest thing to original) sources. Robbins Landon also has a hand in the newest, and what bids fair to become the most successful, effort to surmount this Himalaya among musical projects, this time with Antal Dorati conducting the Philharmonia Hungarica. Simultaneously, the mail-order Musical Heritage Society label is engaged in the same task with Ernst Maerzendorfer as conductor (see review in the May issue). So, with two teams going at it for all they're worth, it looks as though the Haydn symphonies are finally going to be recorded, one and all.

This first Dorati package, comprising eight symphonies—Nos. 65, 66, 68, 69, 71, and 72 being the first recordings available through over-the-counter retail channels—is a beauty. But first, let's get some chronology straight. In his lively and informative notes, Robbins Landon places the Symphony No. 72, with its flashy horn and other solo writing, in the period 1763-65, when the band at Esterháza was enlarged to include four horns (the Symphonies Nos. 13 and 31 date from the same period). Number 65 dates from the early 1770's, which saw the creation of the Op. 17 and Op. 20 string quartets, and the rest of the works here come from the late 1770's, at a time when Haydn was occupied with composition for the Esterháza theater.

Taking these eight symphonies in chronological order, Number 72 is vastly entertaining, designed as it was to show off the newly enlarged orchestra. The first movement is a kind of *intrada*, with the four horns at stage center much of the time. The slow movement features the solo violin and flute. Horns and the wind ensemble are featured in the minuet, and the theme-and-variations finale is a veritable "concerto for orchestra," complete to double-bass solo. Number 65 is highlighted for me by its spirited first movement and a wonderfully atmospheric trio midway through the minuet. Number 66 is one of the more "detached"

STEREO REVIEW

and less interesting of this series. Number 67, whose first twentieth-century performance I heard in the Alfred Einstein edition under Fritz Stiedry in New York during the 1939-1940 season (it was subsequently recorded by Victor, together with Symphony No. 80), is one of the most original and moving of the lot. The exceptionally lovely and elaborate slow movement concludes with a most effective *col legno* passage for strings; the minuet has some fascinating writing for two solo violins, one of them serving as a *scordatura* drone in the best Hungarian rustic manner. Number 68 gets its first authentic performance since Haydn's own day in this recording. A high point is the elaborate, aria-like slow movement.

Trumpet and drums come to the fore in the Symphony No. 69, dedicated to the Austrian Field-Marshal Laudon. It is understandably "other-directed" music, and, for my taste, not terribly interesting. But with the Symphony No. 70, we're back to top-drawer Haydn once more (there have understandably been three previous recordings, among which the Vanguard and Lyricord are still available). The opening movement gets things off to a brilliant start; but the heart of the music is to be found in the remarkable canonic slow movement and powerful fugal finale. In No. 71, we return to the more modest scoring of the works immediately preceding the "Laudon" Symphony. The finale is sheer delight in its contrast of purely symphonic and folk-like elements.

This first installment of the Dorati Haydn series is a splendid success, marked by fine orchestral playing, beautiful recorded sound, and musical authenticity. Installment two of the series has already been released in England

at this writing, and is eagerly anticipated by this reviewer. The budget price and H. C. Robbins Landon's fine annotations ornament the project as a whole; no Haydn fancier should pass it up, and those who aren't are likely to become Haydn buffs after hearing this initial package. *D.H.*

**HOFFMEISTER:** *Duo for Violin and Viola* (see MOZART: *Duos*)

**IVES:** *Sonata No. 2, for Violin and Piano* (see COPLAND: *Sonata*)

**IVES:** *Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano; Set for String Quartet, Bass, and Piano; In Re Con Moto Et Al; Largo (Violin, Clarinet, Piano); Largo Risoluto No. 1; Hallowe'en; Largo Risoluto No. 2 (String Quartet and Piano); Largo (Violin and Piano)*. Paul Zukofsky (violin); Robert Sylvester (cello); Gilbert Kalish (piano); Charles Russo (clarinet); Alvin Brehm (bass); the New York String Quartet. COLUMBIA M 30230 \$5.98.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Fair

Charles Ives fans will have a picnic with this new album of his chamber music, which includes such goodies as the Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, with its "joke" Scherzo; a hootchy-kootchy dance for string quartet; and various and sundry other gags and sobrieties. The playing, by first-rate executants throughout, is mostly fine, although in some instances (such as the aforementioned Trio), one has a disturbing sense that the musicians have not lived with the music long enough to bring off

every nuance. The interpretations sound a bit casual and off-the-cuff. The recording itself is often shriller than one might wish, with miking so close that what seems to be Paul Zukofsky's breathing is audible. The record surfaces, for stretches on both sides, are exceedingly rough. These things notwithstanding, it's good to have this music in the catalog at last. *L.T.*

**JOACHIM:** *Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 11 ("In the Hungarian Style")*. Charles Treger (violin); Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester cond. LOUISVILLE LS 705 \$5.98.

Performance: Virtuoso  
Recording: Could be better

Fiddlers, rejoice: the much-heralded "Romantic revival" will not pass you by! After all, if pianists can have their Moscheles, Henselt, and Arensky, why should we be denied the violin's counterparts of these bygone dazzlers?

The Joachim Concerto is an admirable choice to start what one may hope will develop into a series. It enjoyed great popularity in its day, and no less an expert than Carl Flesch regarded the work as "the most outstanding creation that a violinist has ever written for his instrument." In his earlier years, Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) was a diligent composer, but later his interest turned from composition to performing other composers' works. His intimate friendship with Brahms is a matter of record: it was Joachim who introduced Brahms' Violin Concerto in 1879, after having contributed some technical assistance to its creation. The exact date of the composition of Joachim's own Violin Concerto (subtitled "in the Hungarian style") is not given in *Grove's*, and

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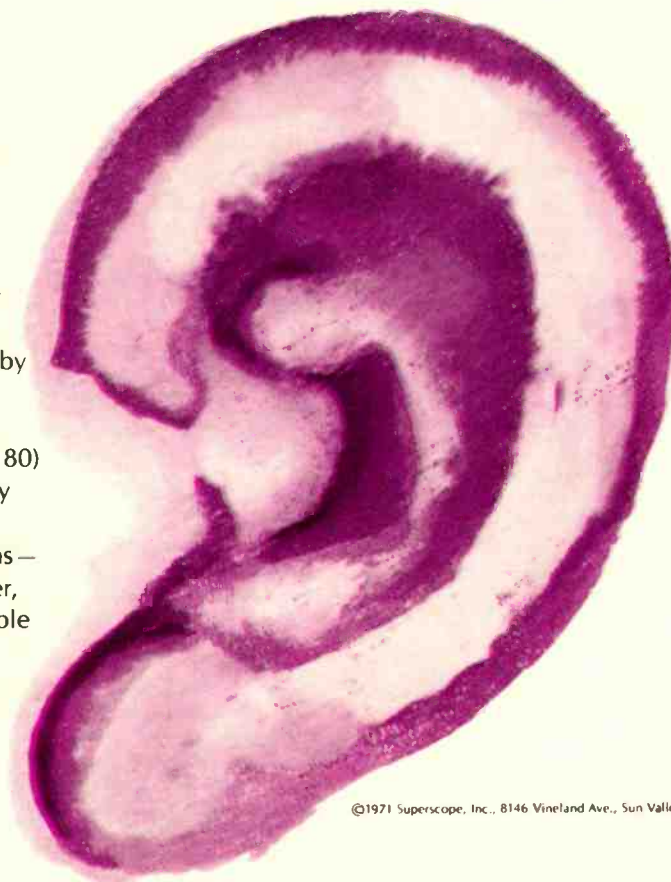
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it is unfortunate that the Louisville annotator also omits this vital information. In all likelihood it considerably antedates the Brahms Concerto, originating in the period which brought forth similar virtuoso works from Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski.

The first and third movements of the Joachim Concerto are replete with difficulties: treacherous double and triple stops in the former, virtually nonstop activity at lightning speed in the latter. The second movement, a calm *Romanze*, is all lyricism. But this is no concerto *against* the violin, as Brahms' was dubbed: conceived lovingly by a master of the instrument, it is difficult but distinctly playable. Hungarian melodies and rhythms dominate all three movements, and the influence of the Liszt of the Hungarian Rhapsodies is undeniable. It is a work of generous proportions: forty minutes in overall length, with a four-minute orchestral statement preceding the soloist's first entry, and a mighty cadenza in the final movement. (Could anything else be expected of Joachim, the cadenza specialist?) To say that it is a skillfully wrought work is obviously an understatement. On the other hand, Carl Flesch's appraisal above is an exaggeration he would undoubtedly modify today. But it is good to have this Concerto on records: violinists should be attracted to it, and fanciers of violin playing will find it an enjoyable alternative to the familiar Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, and Bruch pieces.

Charles Treger meets the technical challenges with fearless aplomb. His playing is smooth, pure in tone, and elegant in phrasing, but somewhat lacking in the kind of vibrancy and fiery abandon that would breathe excitement into a work of this nature. He is handicapped to some extent by an orchestral accompaniment that seems matter-of-fact, and even more by a sonic reproduction that is bland, limited in dynamic range, and wanting in immediacy and definition of orchestral detail. G.J.

**LADERMAN:** *From the Psalms; Songs for Eve.* Judith Raskin (soprano); Ryan Edwards (piano). DESTO DC7105 \$5.98.

Performance: Excellent  
Recording: Excellent

Ezra Laderman is one of the United States' solid craftsman-composers, and this recording of large-scale vocal works sung by Judith Raskin attests to the continued expansion of his personal idiom within self-determined tonal boundaries. In these works, the composer moves very close to expressionism. The songs are dramatic, dark in coloration, and vigorously propulsive. Miss Raskin gives them impassioned performances, and pianist Ryan Edwards provides a strong, sure hand for the accompaniments. L.T.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**LISZT:** *Mephisto Waltzes, Nos. 1 and 3; Funérailles; Étude d'exécution transcendante d'après Paganini No. 2; Czárdás macabre; En rêve (Nocturne); Trauervorspiel und Trauermarsch.* John Ogdon (piano). SERAPHIM S 60170 \$2.98.

Performance: Wow!  
Recording: Excellent

The superb performances of the *Czárdás macabre*, *En rêve*, the *Trauervorspiel und Trauermarsch*, and the *Third Mephisto Waltz* included in this attractive Liszt collection—which is only intermittently connected with the Satan-

ism insisted upon by the Tiner-note—were available a few years ago on one side of an imported Odeon disc. Its other and weaker half, which comprised the *Simon Boccanegra* fantasy and a surprisingly poor performance of the *Don Giovanni* fantasy, has already been released on Seraphim together with some interesting Busoni pieces (\$ 60088).

The new Liszt performances added to complete the present disc are worthy of their company. That is to say, they represent Liszt-playing as musical and spectacular as any you are likely to encounter. The *Funérailles* need not fear comparison with Horowitz' celebrated mono recording, than which it is even more passionate and thrilling. Anyone attracted by Liszt at his most vehement should enjoy this well-engineered record—the only momentary oasis of (albeit troubled) quiet is the nocturne *En rêve*, which was written a few months before Liszt's death. It is played with an exquisite delicacy no less impressive than the prevailing fireworks. B.J.



JOSEPH JOACHIM (1831-1907)  
*The Romantic revival comes to the violin*

**MARTINON:** *Violin Concerto No. 2* (see BERG)

**MASSENET:** *Manon* (see Best of the Month, page 77)

**MAURY:** *Sonata in Memory of the Korean War Dead* (see COPLAND: *Sonata*)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MOSZKOWSKI:** *Fifteen Virtuoso Études, Op. 72 (complete); Siciliano, Op. 42, No. 2; Valse Brillante in A-flat Major; Étincelles, Op. 36, No. 6; En Automne, Op. 36, No. 4; Guitarre, Op. 45, No. 2.* Ilana Vered (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2023 \$5.98.

Performance: Impressive  
Recording: Superior

Ever since I heard the Horowitz recordings of two of the Op. 72 *Études* and *Étincelles* (*Sparks*), I have had a small passion for Moritz Moszkowski, a typical nineteenth-century pianist-composer who is now apparently being unearthed by the "Romantic Revival." A concerto and a side's worth of piano pieces turned up recently on the Candide label, and now here is another formidable sampling, with the fifteen *Études* of Op. 72 as the major offering. Mosz-

kowski was born in 1854, studied in Dresden and Berlin (under Theodor Kullak, among others), and, in addition to concertizing on the Continent, was much admired as a teacher. At the end of the century, he retired to Paris and finally died there in 1925, virtually a pauper. His composing style, at least in the bulk of his large piano output, was heavily influenced by Chopin. Much of his music is certainly of the drawing-room variety, but what he wrote invariably *sounds* on the piano, and though the pieces may be slight salon works, they do entertain at least this listener.

Ilana Vered, an Israeli pianist, does extremely well with this repertoire—she invests the music with color and with an appropriate romantic freedom. Her tone is lovely and round, and her technique is fully up to the brilliance of the most demanding *études*. She does not have Horowitz's electrifying personality, but she does serve Moszkowski well in these performances. The recording, as always from Connoisseur Society, is splendid, very full, and clean. The notes by Faubion Bowers are colorful and entertaining, but I must take exception to his statement that "Moszkowski once actually shook Chopin's hand. . . ." Chopin had been dead five years when Moszkowski was born! I.K.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MOZART:** *Duos for Violin and Viola: in B-flat Major (K. 424); in G Major (K. 423).* **HOFFMEISTER:** *Duo in G Major.* Arthur Grumiaux (violin), Arrigo Pelliccia (viola). PHILIPS 839 747 \$5.98.

Performance: Stunning  
Recording: Splendid

Here's an absolute delight. Not only are the two duos by Mozart *divertissements* of the highest order, but the Duo in G by Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Mozart's principal publisher, can stand beside them without one blush of embarrassment. The music of both composers is full of operatic songfulness and bravura in these pieces, and the performers allow this to be heard with utter naturalness and *joie de vivre*. Though there's a plenitude of Mozart in the catalog, it lists only one other recording of the duos. Hoffmeister isn't there at all. So—enjoy! L.T.

**MOZART:** *Piano Sonata in B-flat Major (K. 281); Six Variations in F Major on "Salve tu, Domine" from the opera "I filosofi immaginari" by Giovanni Paisiello (K. 398); Fantasy for Piano in D Minor (K. 397); Piano Sonata in A Minor (K. 310).* Emil Gilels (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 061 \$6.98.

Performances: Good  
Recording: Fair

The performances on this disc were recorded during a concert by the Russian pianist at the Salzburg Mozarteum on January 28, 1970. The piano playing is impeccable but not interpretively extraordinary. Gilels' Mozart is elegant, but not especially expressive or profound. The piano sound is not really very pleasant, and, given the crystalline sparseness of Mozart's keyboard style, all the coughs come through with uncommon clarity. E.S.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**PISTON:** *Symphony No. 2.* **SCHUMAN:** (Continued on page 94)



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**Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.** Paul Zukofsky (violin, in Schuman); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 103 \$6.98.

Performance: Splendid  
Recording: Splendid

Young assistant conductors in this country must harbor mixed and complex feelings toward the music directors under whom they serve. On the one hand, they surely feel gratitude for being chosen for such a prestigious post. On the other, they certainly know that it has become a convention for young assistants to spring to stardom on a night when the regular conductor unexpectedly takes ill and they must step in on short notice. It's a stupid, careless way to "discover" the talent of a new conductor and give him the chance he deserves. But it happened so with Leonard Bernstein, and more recently it occurred with twenty-six-year-old Michael Tilson Thomas, when William Steinberg had to take an extended rest and gave the young Californian both that glamorous first night and a whole string of later Boston Symphony concerts to conduct.

The ability to step in for a single night doesn't tell the whole story about a conductor's technique and musicianship. The longer test does, however, and Michael Tilson Thomas has certainly demonstrated that his is one of the most remarkable conducting talents to be found anywhere among the young. Now he proves it in yet another dimension, with this Deutsche Grammophon recording of two important and seldom-heard American works. (I find it fascinating that it should be a German company rather than one of the major Americans that could find reasons to record these two grossly neglected pieces. Think about it!)

William Schuman's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* is a magnificent work, with some of the most compelling and deeply affecting music, particularly in its slow, philosophical sections, that I have heard in any contemporary piece, by a composer of whatever nationality. It is a big opus, a half-hour long, and aims for the broadest possible statement. This it makes. Here and there, for some reason always in fast sections, the rhetoric becomes just a little off-hand (it may be that the performance emphasizes this impression—it's hard to tell with an unfamiliar work). But these very few lapses from *noblesse* are less important, to my thinking, than the truly moving and original ideas everywhere else in evidence. In my view, this work is a masterpiece. Regular STEREO REVIEW readers will know that I don't use that word very often.

Walter Piston's *Second Symphony* is also a work that has a right to the most respectful and enthusiastic reception on the basis of its great and appealing qualities—and I do not deny the fact that it occasionally falls below its own peaks. Piston is one of the few American composers who have been able to make a satisfying and natural amalgamation of "popular" and "serious" ideas. The two kinds of *esprit* live comfortably together in this symphony by virtue of Piston's astonishing craftsmanship, which knits everything into a vital, flowing whole. The "popular" rhythms and melodies don't leap out of the context and point to themselves. They exist as a genuine part of the context, and simply add a glow of good humor and amiability to the music.

Thomas conducts both of these impressive works with utter ease and conviction. Judging by these and other performances I've heard, his aim is to reveal the *composer's* ideas—not

his own personality or eccentricities (if he has any). The result is a beautifully non-slick kind of music-making and a refined, sentient command of the orchestra. Young Paul Zukofsky's performance of the Schuman solo-violin part is first-rate, too. His tone, as always, is a bit wiry, but his technique is spectacularly agile, and in this performance he finds access to more than his usual warmth. L.T.

**PROKOFIEV: Piano Concerto No. 5, in G Major, Op. 55.** Sviatoslav Richter (piano); National Symphony Orchestra of Warsaw, Witold Rowicki cond. *Visions fugitives, Op. 22, Nos. 3, 6, 9; Sonata No. 8, Op. 84.* Sviatoslav Richter (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2538 073 \$5.98.

Performance: Under par  
Recording: Mediocre

This disc is made up entirely of performances by Richter which have been (and are) available DGG/Fowler



MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS  
*Refined conducting in Schuman and Piston*

in other couplings on the same label. Not having heard the other pressings, I can't compare them with this one. I hope they are better. Here, the disc surfaces are poor, dynamic levels are badly matched from piece to piece, and the concerto can only be termed a dismal recording from every point of view, including that of interpretation and performance. L.T.

**PROKOFIEV: Symphony No. 3, in C Minor, Op. 44; Symphony No. 1, in D Major, Op. 25 ("Classical").** London Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado cond. LONDON CS 6679 \$5.98.

Performance: Excellent  
Recording: Excellent

This is a fascinating disc, partly because of Claudio Abbado, and partly because of the music. Prokofiev's *Third Symphony*, though it has been recorded a few times, is *never* heard in concert performance. It has languished, at least in this country, as a non-typical, non-sure-fire part of the composer's orchestral catalog. I'm understating when I say that the work deserves far more consideration.

Abbado is an apt conductor for both of these symphonies. Despite a certain lack of precision (or was it rehearsal time?), his conducting can contribute the sweetness of spirit so desirable

in the "Classical" *Symphony*. The *Third* is something else again. Not at all a neat, crisp kind of piece, it is full of chances taken by the composer, a real witch's brew of sensations and mighty strivings. Abbado's Italian sensuousness matches the slightly unkempt but compellingly colorful music. He's a warm musician, and this is a warm—perhaps a better word would be *hot*—score. The two get on splendidly together. L.T.

**SCHUMAN: Concerto for Violin (See PISTON)**

**SCRIABIN: Sonata No. 7, in F-sharp Major, Op. 64 ("The White Mass"); Poème Satanique, in C Major, Op. 36; Masque, Op. 63, No. 1; Etrangeté, Op. 63, No. 2; Sonata No. 9, in F Major, Op. 68 ("The Black Mass"); Poème Tragique, in B-flat Major, Op. 34; Guirlandes, Op. 73, No. 1; Flammes Sombres, Op. 73, No. 2; Poème, Op. 71, No. 1 ("Fantastique"); Poème, Op. 71, No. 2 ("En Révant"); Album Leaf, in E-flat Major, Op. 45, No. 1.** Hilde Somer (piano). MERCURY SR 90525 \$5.98.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Good

Hilde Somer gives interesting and oddly irritating performances on this all- *Scriabin* disc. She's a splendid musician, no mistake about that. And yet, a strange rhythmic irregularity afflicts her finger work, so that, what with  *Scriabin's* innate and complex hysteria, the performer's matching intensity, and the fact that one can almost never hear a group of notes played with enough evenness so that they fall into a discernible pattern, the listener is left floating in a space even more nervously disquieting than  *Scriabin* himself (probably) intended. Despite the somewhat greater intensity of Somer's readings of the "White Mass" and "Black Mass" Sonatas, my preference is still for the kind of playing done by Ruth Laredo in her Connoisseur Society recording of these pieces some months back. With the exception of the two sonatas, however, repertoire differs on the two albums.  *Scriabin* devotees may wish to have both. Despite my rhythmic caveat (and a few transient "blips" in the recorded sound), Somer's is not one to be taken lightly. L.T.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SHOSTAKOVICH: Concertos: No. 1, in C Major, Op. 35; No. 2, in F Major, Op. 101.** Dmitri Shostakovich (piano). French National Radio Orchestra, André Cluytens cond. *Danses fantastiques, Op. 1.* Dimitri Shostakovich (piano). SERAPHIM 60161 \$2.98.

Performance: Brilliant  
Recording: Excellent

This is a reissue of the 1958 Pathé-Marconi recording on which Dmitri Shostakovich appeared as piano soloist in his own *First* and *Second Piano Concertos*. The performances are, therefore, indisputably authentic. They are also brilliant. Shostakovich is a first-rate pianist and, particularly in the magnificent *Concerto No. 2*, he often sounds positively virtuosic. Like most composers, he's interested quite as much in clarity of idea as in polish, and the raw energy of the *Concerto No. 1* comes forth with astonishing straightforwardness. Vulgar the piece most certainly is. It sounds like the work of a young musician who is going to get the crowd on his side if he has to stick out his

(Continued on page 96)

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tongue and wiggle his ears to do it. This concerto is brash, but it's certainly honest. L.T.

**SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 12, in D Minor, Op. 112*** ("1917: In Memory of Lenin"). Leningrad Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Mravinsky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40128 \$5.98.

Performance: Rough  
Recording: Russian

The Shostakovich Twelfth may not be the worst piece of music ever written by a reputable composer, but it is a leading contender for the honor. The first movement surely provides us with a case history of the final fall of a great tradition; it is, without question, the most inept and bombastic sonata-allegro I have heard in some time, and, to help matters along, it is badly orchestrated and not very well played or recorded. The last movement has a remarkable feature: an attractive and imaginative theme. Unfortunately, the composer is unable to think of anything to do with it. The coda to this movement—supposed to represent something like the New Dawn of Mankind—suggests little hope for the race. One might describe this work as the pompous symphonic bureaucratization of socialist idealism. Poor Lenin; he deserved better than this fatuous fusillade. E.S.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**STRAUSS: *Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40***. John Georgiadis (solo violin); London Symphony Orchestra, Sir John Barbiroli cond. ANGEL S 36764 \$5.98.

Performance: Impressive  
Recording: Excellent

I suppose it would seem far-fetched to call Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* a proto-Nazi work, yet to me it always seems to portray quite faithfully that German middle-class smugness, self-righteousness, and pseudo-moral superiority—the beer bourgeois as Nietzschean Superman—which led Germany down the primrose path of destiny. The late John Barbiroli, I must admit, puts quite a different cast on the work. He humanizes it, enriches it, takes the pomposity out and makes it more musical. He achieves the needed scope by letting the music unfold naturally; the apparently slow tempos have an incredible sense of rightness and permit the excellent orchestral soloists to speak their pieces appropriately and with expressive individuality. The balance of forces, both in terms of orchestral color and the interplay of sections, is just about perfect. This is enhanced too by the rich tonal beauty and clarity of the recording.

The recording, one of Barbiroli's last, has been issued as a memorial to the conductor. No better tribute could be imagined. E.S.

**STRAUSS, R.: *Sinfonia Domestica, Op. 53***. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Strauss cond. TURNABOUT Ⓜ TV 4363 \$2.98.

Performance: Highly idiomatic  
Recording: 1944 "location"

Besides being the most lionized German composer of his day, Richard Strauss was, for more than half a century, a conductor of special eminence, especially noted for his readings of Mozart, Wagner, and (of course) his own works. Those who have been at the record collecting game long enough will remember the special felicities of phrasing and rhetoric that he brought to his 78-rpm recording of *Till Eulenspiegel* (Polydor/Brunswick) and to *Don Qui-*

*xote* in the two recordings he made of that work. The same qualities of wit and tenderness inform this 1944 concert performance of the *Sinfonia Domestica*, issued in 1952 on Vox and now resurrected on the inexpensive Turnabout label. The *Domestica* is no favorite of mine, either musically or aesthetically, but the high-powered virtuoso readings by Szell, Reiner, and—most lately—Zubin Mehta can hold my interest in the way a circus acrobat would. But with the composer himself in as good conductorial form as here, and even with the deficiencies of the 1944 recorded sound, the *Domestica* assumes for me some interest and meaning on a purely human level. It is plain to these ears that Strauss does not take himself too seriously, and seeks rather to bring out the colorful, easy-going atmosphere of much of the music rather than its virtuosic elements. The "night music" in particular comes off to lovely effect here.



Richard Strauss conducting; oil (1937) by W. Viktor Kraus

Never having heard the original tapes from which the Turnabout issue was processed, I would still guess that a fair amount of artificial reverberation has been added to the original, though in generally tasteful fashion. The full orchestral climaxes sound fairly congested, but much of the time, when the music keeps to a *mezzo-forte* dynamic, the string sound especially is quite good for its age and circumstances. In short, this is one of the better documentations of Richard Strauss as conductor. Now how about a reissue of the 1941 *Don Quixote*? D.H.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in B-flat Minor, Op. 23***. Alexis Weissenberg (piano); Orchestre de Paris, Herbert von Karajan cond. ANGEL S 36755 \$5.98.

Performance: Broad-gauge  
Recording: Slightly over-reverberant

**TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in B-flat Minor, Op. 23***. Ivan Davis (piano); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Henry Lewis cond. LONDON SPC 21056 \$5.98.

Performance: Hard-hitting  
Recording: Favors soloist

There are well over two dozen recordings of the Tchaikovsky First Piano Concerto currently available. I had the 1958 Cliburn-Kondrashin and the 1962 Entremont-Bernstein readings to stack up against the two latest under consideration here. Alexis Weissenberg and Herbert von Karajan choose the broad-gauge Cliburn approach, and what with high-powered and somewhat over-reverberant sonics, the whole thing seems rather larger than life. Weissenberg's piano playing is first-class, the piano-orchestra balance is good enough, and the lyrical values of the concerto are well realized. But the acoustic ambiance of the recording tends to dilute the rhythmic impact of the climactic outbursts in the end movements.

The Davis-Lewis team takes a straightforward virtuosic line, which works well in the end movements; but somehow the slow movement, and even its dazzling middle section, never really takes wing as it does in both the

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Cliburn and Entremont performances, different as they are from one another. The Phase Four recording struck me as having a distinct dual perspective, with the orchestral texture perfectly clear and audible but placed quite far back of the soloist. Davis is right up there front and center, and displays unerring pianistic marksmanship, if not always the poetic sensibility that the music demands.

The model for poetic sensibility is still Van Cliburn. Though his 1958 performance is a trifle small-scaled, it is superbly proportioned and remains a pleasure—the slow movement is sheer magic. For the razzle-dazzle approach in both interpretation and recorded sound, the Entremont-Bernstein still comes out on top. D.H.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: *Six Songs*** (see BRIT-TEN: *The Poet's Echo*)

#### COLLECTIONS

**SAMUEL BARON: *Plays New Music for Flute***. William Sydeman: *Duo for Flute and Piano*. Stefan Wolpe: *Piece in Two Parts for Flute and Piano*. Ezra Laderman: *Sonata for*  
(Continued on page 98)

STEREO REVIEW



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*Flute and Piano.* Easley Blackwood: *Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord.* Samuel Baron (flute); Carol Baron (piano, in Laderman); Samuel Sanders (piano, in Sydeman); Easley Blackwood (harpsichord). DESTO DC 7104 \$4.98.

Performance: Excellent  
Recording: Good

Samuel Baron is one of the best and best-known of that generation of chamber-music musicians and soloists who have done so much to establish American pre-eminence in chamber and wind performance. Baron is, quite simply, a master and, if the music here is not always quite as first-class as the playing, there is nevertheless a great deal of interest to it.

The most important piece is certainly the Wolpe. Stefan Wolpe, a major influence on the post-war avant-garde, especially in this country, is still little recognized (compared with, say, his contemporary Messiaen). His *Piece in Two Parts* for flute and piano is one of the best products of "post-serialism"—that period in the early Sixties when composers were beginning to work themselves out of the strait-laced serial bond. In fact, this is a highly organized and elaborated piece of music, but it is as dependent on dynamic energies as on the notes themselves. These energies are expressed as rhythm, accent, and timbre, exposing a very simple melodic-harmonic material based on little cells of sound and even stepwise scales. This music is perhaps best described by the term "abstract expressionism," the almost exact equivalent in sound of that well-known artistic movement.

All of the remaining pieces are modern elaborations of traditional modes. Of these the most striking is probably the Blackwood, partly due to its instrumentation for flute and harpsichord. All three are pleasant, well-written works that benefit from the excellent performances. The recorded sound is good. E.S.

**MONTSERRAT CABALLÉ:** *French Opera Arias.* Gounod: *Faust: Il était un roi de Thulé*. . . Ah! je ris (Jewel Song). Mireille: *Voici la vaste plaine; Roméo et Juliette: Je veux vivre dans ce rêve.* Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots: O beau pays.* Charpentier: *Louise: Depuis le jour.* Bizet: *Carmen: Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante.* Massenet: *Thais: O mon miroir fidèle, rassure moi?* Montserrat Caballé (soprano); New Philharmonia Orchestra, Reynald Giovanietti cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 073 \$6.98.

Performance: Good, with reservations  
Recording: Good

Montserrat Caballé appears to be on her way to becoming a minor recording industry all by herself: her recordings are now being simultaneously offered by three competitive labels! Her debut for DGG, however, is something of a disappointment, coming from an artist of her stature. She is much too attractive a vocalist not to be appealing much of the time, but none of these seven selections comes up to one's highest expectations.

There are pleasures, of course. The aria here from Act IV of *Mireille* is something of a rarity, and it is movingly sung. In the "mirror aria" from *Thais*, she is not the most passionate exponent imaginable, but she makes its points through exquisite vocalism, and there are some beautifully floated piano phrases in "O beau pays" and "Depuis le jour." (The former is an abbreviated "concert" condensation, moving from the opening *cavatina* to the *cabaletta*, "A

*ce mot seul*," eliminating the reflective episode in between.) There is nothing wrong with the vocalization in the extended scene from *Faust*, either, but it is slow-paced and lacks rapture. Juliette's Waltz Song and Micaela's air are rather superficially sung, with phrases that are not fully rounded and a suggestion of less than complete involvement.

The sound is good, but the accompaniments are routine. G.J.

**SUZY DELAIR:** *Sings Offenbach.* *La Périchole: Air de la lettre; Que les hommes sont bêtes; Je t'adore brigand.* *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein: Couplets du sabre; Ah! que j'aime les militaires.* *La belle Hélène: Invocation à Vénus.* *La vie Parisienne: La lettre à Metella; Le Rondo de Metella;* three other songs. Suzy Delair (soprano); orchestras, Wal-Berg and André Girard cond. BARCLAY 920 099 \$5.98.



DOROTHY KIRSTEN  
An impressive anniversary reissue

Performance: Enjoyable  
Recording: Satisfactory

Suzy Delair is a type of singer that today has no counterpart in America (I suppose Mary Martin was once a close approximation). Hers is what we might call a "musical comedy" approach to Offenbach, but this is meant in a classic sense: she sings purely and stays close to the tune, and I am sure that Offenbach would have condoned the rhythmic liberties she takes with his sinuous and captivating melodies. Her delivery of these familiar selections is full of charm and flavor, and the clarity of her enunciation is a delight in itself. Partisans of *La belle époque* will find this an enjoyable disc, though I suspect that the "popularized" orchestrations will sound as anemic to them as they did to me. Also included is the unfamiliar *La Chanson de Fortunio* and the modern favorites *Fascination* and *Amoureuse*—not by Offenbach. G.J.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DOROTHY KIRSTEN:** *In Opera and Song.* Charpentier: *Louise: Depuis le jour.* Puccini: *Madama Butterfly: Un bel di, vedremo.* *Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide.* *La Bohème: Mi chiamano Mimi; Addio di Mimi.* *La Rondine: Chi il bel sogno di Doretta.* Massenet: *Thais: Death of Thais* (with Robert

Merrill, baritone). Manon: *Obéissons quand leur voix appelle.* Coots: *You Go to My Head.* Youmans: *Great Day: More than You Know.* Romberg: *New Moon: Wanting You* (with Robert Merrill). Gershwin: *The Man I Love.* Kern: *Sweet Adeline: Why Was I Born?* Dorothy Kirsten (soprano); orchestras, Jean Morel, John Scott Trotter, and Russ Case cond. RCA VICTROLA VIC 1552 \$2.98.

Performance: Expert and enjoyable  
Recording: Satisfactory

During her quite remarkable all-American career of more than thirty years, Dorothy Kirsten has reached stardom in our major opera theaters: the Metropolitan Opera, the San Francisco Opera, and the Chicago Lyric Opera. Her list of recordings however, does not mirror her eminence in adequate measure. After an auspicious beginning with RCA Victor (which was responsible for the present reissue of 1947-1949 recordings) she cast her lot with Columbia. There she continued to record for a few years, but because of Columbia's disinterest in opera her recording activity had come to an end before the advent of stereo. Consequently, there are no recordings to document Miss Kirsten at the peak of her career, when she would have enjoyed the blessings of sonic excellence. It is laudable that RCA took notice of the artist's twenty-fifth anniversary with the Metropolitan and San Francisco Operas via the present reissue. Columbia also planned a Kirsten commemorative issue but, somehow, they missed the boat.

The secret of Kirsten's enduring success is explained by these early Victrola recordings. Here is a fresh, attractive voice intelligently used, a well-schooled instrument resting on a secure technical foundation, with a clear, limpid tone soaring to an effortless top. The phrasing is graceful and musical, the vocal acting not over-emotional but meaningful. Her renditions of the familiar arias stand up to any comparison; the *Thais* duet and the *Louise* and *La Rondine* arias, in fact, belong with the best examples of these pieces I know. The four attractive samplings of Miss Kirsten's easy mastery of the light repertoire are delivered with great charm and remarkable diction. Morel is the excellent conductor for the operatic selections. There is a slight distortion in the *Thais* duet and in some of the musical-comedy numbers; otherwise the recorded sound is fine. G.J.

**MAGDA OLIVERO:** *Great Scenes from Puccini's "Turandot."* Magda Olivero (soprano); Gina Cigna (soprano); Francesco Merli (tenor); Luciano Neroni (bass); Italian Radio Chorus and Orchestra, Franco Ghione cond. EVEREST/SCALA SC 880 \$2.98.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Adequate

Admirers of Magda Olivero will want to become acquainted (or re-acquainted) with these excerpts from the first complete recording of *Turandot* (1938), in which the then twenty-six-year-old Olivero sang the role of Liù. Side one of the disc offers the beginning of the opera, with Liù's first appearance, and goes to the phrase "hai sorriso," in which Miss Olivero makes a lovely ascent to a high B natural. The music then moves to a somewhat tremulous "Signore, ascolta," followed by Merli's effective "Non piangere, Liù," and on to the end of Act I. Side two opens with the inconclusively presented Riddle Scene (where, obviously unknown to the record producers, there is no Liù; the soprano voice belongs to Gina Cigna,

STEREO REVIEW

a fine Turandot) and concludes with Liù's death scene.

This is an interesting documentation of the greatly gifted if not yet fully mature singer Olivero was in 1938. Her associates—Cigna, Merli, and Neroni—were all major artists of the period, and the recorded sound is still good enough to confirm the overall high quality of that pioneering recording. On the present disc, no singers or conductor are credited, and little or no information is given about anything. Even such poor productions, however, yield something worthwhile now and then, and this seems to be such an occasion. G.J.

**PETER SCHREIER:** *Bel Canto Arias from Italian Operas.* Marcelllo: *Arianna: Latte e miele ecco vegg'io.* Steffani: *Tassilone: A facile vittoria; Piangerete, io ben lo so.* A. Scarlatti: *Il Pirro e Demetrio: Rugiadose, odorose, violette graziose.* Hasse: *Arminio: Tradir sapeste.* Monteverdi: *L'Orfeo: Ecco pur ch'a voi ritorno.* Gasparini: *Importuno Cupido: Primavera che tutt'amorosa.* Leo: *Zanobia in Palmira: Son qual nave in ria procella.* Galuppi: *L'amante di tutte: Se sapeste o giovinotti;* two others by Marcelllo and Telemann. Peter Schreier (tenor); Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Koch cond. TELEFUNKEN SLT 43116B \$5.95.

Performance: Praiseworthy  
Recording: Very good

Unless I am mistaken, except for the Scarlatti aria generally known under the title of *Violente* and the Monteverdi excerpt, these selections from long-forgotten Baroque operas are strangers to records. Surely a collection of them in this context, with orchestrations respectful of the period and a singer who clearly demonstrates the best musical intentions, is a laudable enterprise. Anyone interested in opera's beginnings will find much of interest in such rarely heard representations of the masters of the Venetian and Neapolitan schools, as well as such fascinating hybrids as Johann Adolf Hasse (a thoroughly Italianized German) and Agostino Steffani (a thorough Italian who lived and worked in Germany).

But the pleasures of this recital are not merely scholastic. "*A facile vittoria*" is an inventive virtuoso aria in which the vocal line imitates and alternates with the *obbligato* trumpet flourishes. (This aria is used as an illustration in Donald Jay Grout's volume *A Short History of Opera*.) Other distinctive moments are provided by the considerable dramatic gifts of Hasse, the noble serenity of Monteverdi, the delicacy of Scarlatti, the descriptive imagination of Leo, and the comic invention of Galuppi. The other selections are relatively minor—and, to be absolutely candid about it, a really exalted level of musical inspiration is not to be heard in any of these excerpts.

The trouble may lie, partly, with the singer, for Peter Schreier is an earnest but rather earthbound performer, possessing neither a truly virtuoso technique nor a particularly enchanting tone. His rather grating Germanic delivery of the Italian texts is a further drawback. The orchestral performances are tasteful, and the sound is fine. A lot of worthy effort went into this recital. I wish I could be more enthusiastic about it. G.J.



JUNE 1971

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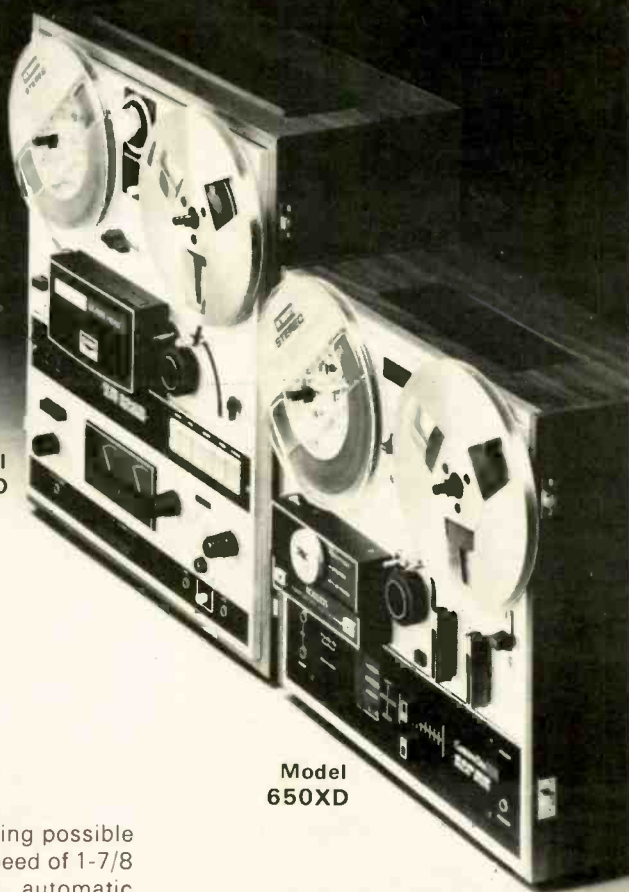
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# ENTERTAINMENT

POPS • JAZZ • FILMS • THEATER • FOLK • SPOKEN WORD

Reviewed by NOEL COPPAGE • DON HECKMAN • PAUL KRESH  
REX REED • PETER REILLY

**CAPTAIN BEEFHEART & THE MAGIC BAND:** *Lick My Decals Off, Baby*. Captain Beefheart & The Magic Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Lick My Decals Off, Baby; Doctor Dark; I Love You, You Big Dummy; Peon; Bellerin' Plain; Woe-is-uh-Me-Bop; Japan in a Dishpan*; and eight others. REPRISE RS 6420 \$4.98, © M 86420 \$6.95, © M 56420 \$6.95.

Performance: Eerie rock  
Recording: Very good

All I can do is warn you. Captain Beefheart is a very special experience. Imagine a recipe that mixes John Cage indeterminacy, avant-garde jazz, Frank Zappa-styled rock, and improvised poetry, and you will have only a small idea of what is going on here. The range of sensations is so enormous that there probably is a little something for most tastes. But there probably also is a little something that will blow most minds, too. So, a word to the wise: proceed with caution. *D.H.*

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**DION:** *You're Not Alone*. Dion Di Mucci (vocals, guitar); various accompaniments. *Close to It All; Sunniland; Windows; The Visitor; Peaceful Place; Let it Be*; and four others. WARNER BROTHERS WB 1872 \$4.98, © M 81872 \$6.98, © M 51872 \$6.98.

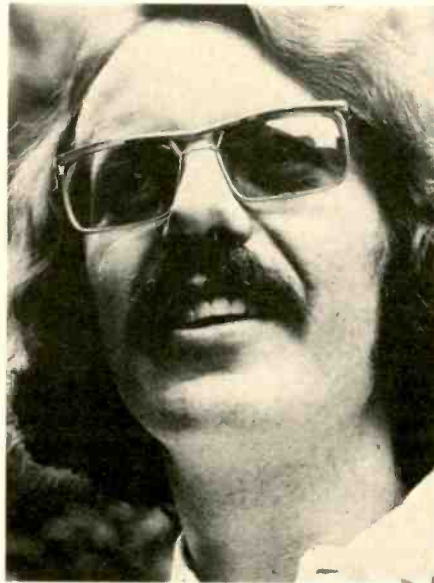
Performance: Very good  
Recording: Very good

As people like Dion supplant the hard-rock groups, the curse of currency may be dissipated. Most of the pop albums during the past several years had a life span of about three weeks. They were played endlessly while they were played, but they soon became dated and were shelved. Dion's new album has such a low-key approach that its appeal, though not obvious at first, may last for years instead of a few days.

I don't think this is a rare piece of art, but it is a nice little piece of craftsmanship, more successful than it is ambitious. Dion was involved in composing seven of the ten songs. He borrowed a few musical ideas from some of his earlier songs, but that doesn't seem to bother me much, probably because I have come to regard most of Dion's songs—that is, his quiet songs—as parts of a larger work, not a planned

work but a loose federation of Dion-isms. He knows his own voice well, and writes for it accordingly; it is a thin, stringy voice, facile within its range, capable of lovingly massaging some sounds and completely stumped by others. Except in *The Stuff I Got*, a change-of-pace jump tune, Dion gave his voice the stuff it could handle. He doesn't do anything vital and new for *Let it Be* (or vice versa), but *Josie, Peaceful Place*, and *The Visitor* more than make up for that. The arrangements are among the best you will encounter all year—subdued but intricate. The album certainly doesn't grab

Warner Bros



DION

*An album that gets into your system*

you by the lapels, but it gets into your system, and stays gentle on your mind. *N. C.*

**CAROL HALL:** *If I Be Your Lady*. Carol Hall (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Why Be Lonely; The Crooked Clock; Good-bye, Jasper; The Ceiling Song; Crazy Marinda; Jenny Rebecca; Ain't Love Easy*; and six others. ELEKTRA EKS 74078 \$4.98.

Performance: Mixed emotions  
Recording: Good

Having been a great admirer of Carol Hall's song *Jenny Rebecca* in both Barbra Streisand's and Mabel Mercer's recorded versions, I eagerly awaited her debut disc as a singer of her own compositions. Regretfully, I have mixed feelings about the result. She is very pretty, and her voice has a haunting and elegiac air, but I feel sadly that the times are against her. Her songs are cool and sophisticated, with wild flashes of imagination, but they are ruined by a

rock beat that is at odds with their stylishness. When Jenny Rebecca, nine days old, sees the world through carousel colors, a lightness lifts the listener. It is a wonderful song. Mabel Mercer and Streisand, who have nothing to lose by singing the way they sing best, sing the song like springtime gone temporarily poignant. Miss Hall sings her own song like some kind of hippie trying to make it big at Fillmore East. The song suffers.

What is exciting about Carol Hall is not her voice or her own not-very-original approach to singing, but her talent as a composer-lyricist. These astonishing songs range from bubble gum to caviar, from comments on the ironies of mundane life to imaginative journeys into the surreal and the bizarre. Like Rod Stewart and Randy Newman, she has the unique ability to transform attitudes into personal statements of her own feelings and interests. There is a marked maturity and depth of feeling in these songs. There are no chips on Miss Hall's slim shoulders, no sour ego threatening to burst into uncontrollable violence, no nose-thumbing at those who don't sing and write the way she does. If the Woodstock Nation is finding its future in poetry laced with jazz and classical music, if rock will depend on super-poets like Carole King, Laura Nyro, and Harry Nilsson for its survival, then Carol Hall will be one of the priestesses.

I still prefer to hear good songs sung by good singers. Miss Hall has a blazing future as a songwriter. I think *Ain't Love Easy*, sung by the right people, could even become a hit. But ditch the tricks, girl, and get some pros on the next recording session. It would be a shame to see such talent forsaken by playing it too easy. *R.R.*

**JOHN HAMMOND:** *Source Point*. John Hammond (vocals and guitar); Charles Otis (drums); Billy Nichols (bass). *I Got Love if You Want It; Hoo-Doo Blues; Mellow Down Easy; Takin' Care of Business; She Moves Me; Let's Go Home*; and five others. COLUMBIA C 30458 \$4.98.

Performance: White blues  
Recording: Very good

John Hammond Jr. is so deadly sincere about his devotion to the full-fidelity reproduction of black blues that I can't help but feel like a bastard for criticizing him. But criticize him I must—and for the obvious reasons.

Yes, he is very good, very good indeed. He understands the subtleties of a Willie Dixon tune like *Mellow Down Easy*, or a Muddy Waters song like *She Moves Me*, better than almost any young white performer who comes to mind. But black blues—the kind that Hammond specializes in—is, unlike jazz, a function-

(Continued on page 103)

### Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel tape
- Ⓛ = four-track cartridge
- Ⓢ = eight-track cartridge
- ⓐ = cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ; all others are stereo.



## MR. BAGLEY'S MUSICAL TIME MACHINE

Three new discs in Ben Bagley's "Revisited" series take us back to the great days of the pop song

By REX REED

WHY IS *No, No, Nanette* the biggest hit on Broadway? Why is *Love Story* the box-office phenomenon of the movie year? Why are all the major magazines doing cover stories on nostalgia? Why are Busby Berkeley, Bette Davis, and Greta Garbo festivals making more money in cinemathèques, museums, and art cinemas throughout the world than *Woodstock* and Peter Fonda? Because (it may come as news to the dirty-toenail set) most of the people in the world who are still sane like to cling to whatever it is that reminds them that mankind *can* be nice, innocent, courteous, sensitive, and capable of having fun. And that's why Ben Bagley continues to release his popular "Revisited" albums when most of the record companies record trash.

Mr. Bagley is a leprechaun-like man who loves ginger-ale, daisies, blueberry muffins, and music that sounds like music instead of neurotic screams for help. He has collected volumes of tunes—popular as well as obscure—by all the great songwriters for Broadway and the movies, and he takes pleasure in sharing his discoveries with music-lovers everywhere who still care enough to listen to the very best. Result: albums of songs by Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart, Vernon Duke, Alan Jay Lerner, Noel Coward, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Jerome Kern. One by one the record companies to whom Mr. Bagley has been under contract have deserted him to make a fast buck with talentless rock freaks. But Mr. Bagley is undaunted. Aided by the tasteful folks at Crewe Records (they produce rock albums, too, but they also know good music when they hear it), Mr. Bagley is continuing to spread good cheer and nostalgia: his latest three recordings are devoted to Rodgers and Hart (a second volume, to supplement the earlier one on the Spruce label), Harold Arlen, and Arthur Schwartz and they are all wonderful.

"Rodgers and Hart Revisited, Volume 2" is a bouquet sung to perfection by some of the finest singers in the business. I suppose my favorite song in it is the nostalgic 1925 gem, *Bye and Bye*, sung by a new, mature, and deeply reflective Dorothy Loudon with all the bruised sophistication of a Piaf. But

there's also saucy jazz by the great Bobby Short and Blossom Dearie, an angel whose tinkling voice is delightful enough to make Ma Bell jealous on the old evergreen *I Like to Recognize the Tune*. Norman Paris' cat's-meow of an arrangement could bring spats back into fashion singlehanded. Reet! Then there's the first Rodgers and Hart tune ever published, *Any Old Place with You*, in which they rhyme "In dreamy Portugal" with "I'm gonna court you, girl" to the accompaniment of a locomotive and what sounds like the entire MGM orchestra and chorus from a Vincente Minnelli musical! Other highlights: Bobby Short and Blossom Dearie performing never-before-heard lyrics written for Jean Harlow on *Blue Moon*, and the rugged, often-traveled highway of Bibi Osterwald's sweet baritone on the old Beatrice Lillie song *A Baby's Best Friend* from a 1928 flop called *She's My Baby*.

ON to "Arthur Schwartz Revisited." One of the most heinous crimes ever perpetrated in the world of show business is the waste and neglect of Gloria De Haven. Originally stamped as a cutie-pie in the old June Allyson-Van Johnson days at MGM, Miss De Haven has since been denied her rightful place in the world of musical comedy. She appears on all three of these albums, proving that she sings and swings better than anyone working in movies or on Broadway in these talent-starved times. The highlights on this Arthur Schwartz collection are both by this underrated lady. Movie buffs will love this album because it seals in wax *Love Isn't Born, It's Made* (the great Ann Sheridan song from Warners' war musical *Thank Your Lucky Stars*), arranged in a breezy Metropole tempo by Norman Paris. And on one of the most beautiful songs I've ever heard, *Goodbye to All That*, Miss De Haven is showcased with three grand pianos in a late-night mood, proving she can croon a torch song with the best of them. Other highlights: Cab Calloway, with a 1932 warning to today's hippies, *Smokin' Reefers*; Phyllis Diller and Mr. Calloway doing a duet on an old Ethel Waters song called *Got a Brand New Suit*; and the delicate dooziness of Blossom Dearie singing Dorothy Fields' charming lyrics to *That's for*

*Children*, from the Red Skelton movie *Excuse My Dust*. Of course you remember.

I've saved the best—"Harold Arlen Revisited"—for last. To readers familiar with my piece for this magazine on Broadway-cast albums (October, 1969), it will come as no surprise to learn that Mr. Arlen is my favorite composer, but this album is special because it contains several never-recorded Arlen billets-doux, including a wild rhumba romp called *Shoein' the Mare* which, if incorporated into a Broadway musical today, would easily make history. Nancy Andrews, Charles Rydell, and a chorus that sounds as if it had been timed by Kay Thompson jump right off the record, and Gloria De Haven is back with an old Dinah Shore song, *Now I Know*, from Mr. Arlen's score for Danny Kaye's *Up in Arms*.

The album's biggest surprise is the unveiling of one of the laziest, sleekest, and most refreshing voices to come along in many a sleepy old moon. It belongs to Estelle Parsons, the brilliant actress who won an Academy Award for *Bonnie and Clyde*. Listen to what she does with *Moanin' in the Mornin'* and tell me the day of the *chanteuse* has gone forever.

An added recommendation: don't miss the liner notes by Mr. Bagley. They have become inside jokes in show business; even people who don't buy his "Revisited" albums have been known to cluster in small groups around record counters reading them aloud to each other. Mr. Bagley is sassy, brassy, literate, and often so dirty I don't know how he gets these albums through the mail. Anyway, don't miss them. If you can't locate them in your local record store, order them from Crewe Records, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023. They will never grow stale, for the same reason that we haven't yet canceled Valentine's Day: they make you feel good to be alive.

**BEN BAGLEY'S RODGERS AND HART REVISITED (VOL. 2).** Blossom Dearie, Gloria De Haven, Dorothy Loudon, Bibi Osterwald, Charles Rydell, Bobby Short (vocals); orchestra, Norman Paris arr. and cond. *Disgustingly Rich; A Ship Without a Sail; Angel Without Wings; A Tree in the Park; Blue Moon; A Lady Must Live; I Like to Recognize the Tune;* and seven others. CREWE CR 1343 \$5.00.

**BEN BAGLEY'S ARTHUR SCHWARTZ REVISITED.** Cab Calloway, Blossom Dearie, Gloria De Haven, Phyllis Diller, Warde Donovan, Charles Rydell (vocals); orchestra, Norman Paris arr. and cond. *Blue Grass; Love Isn't Born, It's Made; Miserable with You; Goodbye to All That; Smokin' Reefers; That's for Children; In the Noonday Sun;* and seven others. CREWE CR 1350 \$5.00.

**BEN BAGLEY'S HAROLD ARLEN REVISITED.** Phyllis Diller, David Burns, Estelle Parsons, Charles Rydell, Blossom Dearie, Gloria De Haven (vocals); orchestra and choral accompaniment, Ralph Burns and Dick Hyman arr. and cond. *God's Country; Spring Fever; Fancy Free; Rabelais; What Can You Say in a Love Song?; This Time the Dream's on Me; Now I Know; Moanin' in the Mornin';* and six others. CREWE CR 1345 \$5.00.

al music. It tells a story, communicates an emotion, disguises an anger, and always serves as a genuine expression—almost a cathartic expression at times—of the culture from which it comes. All that Hammond can really do is reproduce the external musical elements of that music. As I said before, he does so very well, even brilliantly, but the music does not describe his emotions, his stories, and his angers. And style without substance is like the severed head without the body. *D.H.*

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**BERT JANSCH:** *Jack Orion*. Bert Jansch (guitar and banjo); John Renbourn (guitar). *The Waggoner's Lad; Black Water Side; The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face; 900 Miles; The Gardener; Pretty Polly*; and three others. VANGUARD VSD 6544 \$4.98.

Performance: Brilliant English folk music  
Recording: Very good

It looks as though Bert Jansch and John Renbourn are going to succeed in their seemingly dogged determination to commit to vinyl a fully representative collection of English folk material. Here is yet another installment, and only the absence of singer Jacqui McShee and bass and drums makes this record any different from the work of the parent Jansch-Renbourn group, Pentangle. Of the nine tracks included, eight are traditional material, arranged by Jansch; the ninth is a brief instrumental of an Ewan McColl tune, *The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face*. Renbourn appears on four tracks, playing second guitar, and Jansch's guitar (banjo on one track) and voice carry the rest of the album.

England, of course, is filled with tiny coffee houses and folk-music clubs, in which hordes of folk players examine and re-examine their monumental repertoire. Most songs exist in numberless versions, with more verses than any single performer can ever hope to master. But it is a body of material that would hold little interest for the wide American pop audience were it not for the extraordinary musical sensitivities of Jansch and Renbourn. They have somehow found a common ground between the crisp articulations and rolling rhythms of American modern jazz and the modal melodies and strophic meters of English folk song. And they make it sound good. Jansch has an almost legendary reputation among English folk-music aficionados. Hearing the life he instills into pieces like *Nottamun Town, Pretty Polly, and Jack Orion*, it's not hard to understand why. The latter title, by the way, is also included—with twenty-six verses—on the new Pentangle release, "Cruel Sister." *D.H.*

**THE LOVIN' SPOONFUL.** *Once Upon a Time . . .* The Lovin' Spoonful (vocals and instrumentals). *Four Eyes; Money; Lovin' You; Respoken; Lonely (Amy's Theme); Do You Believe in Magic?*; and eight others. KAMA SU-TRA KSBS 2029 \$4.98.

Performance: THE sound, '65 to '67  
Recording: Okay

Most fans and critics love to go on about how the Lovin' Spoonful re-created American rock and started a whole new musical banana that brought respect and prestige to these shores for the first time in ages. That was back in 1965, and the Spoonful sound was a fruity, youthful combination of folk, jug-band, and auto-harp, with innocent lyrics and a punchy

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rock beat. The kids loved the Lovin' Spoonful. They could identify with these kooky, lovable characters who looked like everyone's zany brother practising guitar in the cellar nightly. They were America's sweethearts for three hot years. The mystery of why the Lovin' Spoonful didn't last beyond these thousand days will never be solved, possibly because there is no mystery. Not to me, anyway. The Spoonful just never matured musically. It has never been so evident as it was when I first listened to this album of reissues. Not many of the selections are representative of Spoonful's really-big-hits, yet it is often in the "little" songs that a group's major flaws are blindingly exposed. So it is with "Once Upon a Time." With the exception of *Warm Baby*, *Lonely (Amy's Theme)*, and *Do You Believe in Magic?*, it is so much noise, and often specifically a gargle, which was a specialty of Yanovsky, the lead guitarist. Even if you are a Spoonful nostalgist, you will have to really dig trivia to find this album interesting. R. R.

**MELBA MOORE:** *Look What You're Doing to the Man.* Melba Moore (vocals); orchestra. *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother; Heaven Help Us All; Searchin' for a Dream; If I Had a Million;* and six others. MERCURY SR 61321 \$4.98, © MC8 61321 \$6.98, © MCR4 61321 \$6.98.

Performance: Intense  
Recording: Overproduced

Once there was a lovely young black girl who made a sensation as the ingenue-lead in a successful Broadway show. Quickly she began to record and make club appearances. In the show she had acted and sung to perfection the role of a charming waif. Her records, however, tried to present her as a sophisticated belter, and her club act became a pretentious string of expensive costume changes and top-heavy special arrangements that effectively drained all of the life from her and from her performances.

It took Diahann Carroll over fifteen years to achieve the stardom that seemed to be just around the corner for her after her debut in *House of Flowers*. And then it was to be as a light comedienne, on the TV series *Julia*, where she plays an unreal black Doris Day. It might have been a case of unwise management, pushing too hard too fast, a personal conviction that a manufactured image was more valid than the one audiences had initially responded to, or a combination of all three. No doubt, though, that it delayed the success, and eventually muted the talent, of a gifted performer.

The same thing seems to be happening to Melba Moore, the delightful discovery from *Purlie*. Her new album is chic (semi-nude cover photo by Avedon), mannered (overpowering arrangements and hyperintense singing), and pretentious (sycophantic liner quotes from everyone but Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who must have been out of town, about what a great new star Melba is). Exercises in self-promoted superstardom were common in the recent past, when they were applied to the albums of such plastic stylists as Tammy Grimes, Liza Minnelli, and Lana Cantrell. But they all needed to be blown up to life size anyway. And it is a method natural to a true superstar such as Streisand, who can follow through impressively on the records, and to whom the super-gesture is actually a real impulse. Melba Moore is a performer still in the process of developing her natural gifts: a strong, musical voice, an unforced vitality, and an offhand, innocent sexuality. All show to advantage in *He Ain't Heavy, He's*

*My Brother*, and perhaps most strikingly in that wistfully urgent song from *The Me Nobody Knows, If I Had a Million*. The remaining eight tracks range from professional to overkilled.

I know the feeling (the fear) of so many performers—when your break comes, make the most of it, because it may never come again. For the moderately talented, and for the performer-as-businessman who looks forward to early retirement, it's probably sound advice. But Melba Moore gives too many glimpses of being the real thing to let herself get caught up in the meat-grinder of phony overpromotion and the distortions that high-pressure management can often impose on a promising personality. She might remember that the tortoise *did* get there first, scarcely out of breath, and—most important—with his shell intact. P. R.

**VAN MORRISON:** *His Band and the Street Choir.* Van Morrison (vocals, guitar, harmonica, tenor sax); instrumental and vocal backing

Mercury



MELBA MOORE  
*Natural gifts in danger of overpromotion*

by Band and Street Choir. *Domino; Crazy Face; Give Me a Kiss; I've Been Working; Call Me Up in Dreamland; I'll be Your Lover, Too; Blue Money; Virgo Clowns;* and four others. WARNER BROS. WS 1884 \$4.98, © B 1884 \$6.95, © M 81884 \$6.95, © M 51884 \$6.95.

Performance: A bit loose  
Recording: Very good

For a fellow who earned his second-hand Army field jacket stripes by being a hard rocker, Van Morrison certainly seems peaceable these days. Here the liner photos show him and his gang in all sorts of happy poses—Van's girl, Janet Planet, says in the brief liner notes that the association with all these gentle freaks has opened Van up, broken down the barriers, etc. The music cooks along gently most of the time. That's all just fine, showing that he's changing with the times, but something is slightly fouled up somewhere. I think it's the songs.

Morrison writes songs knowing he is going to sing them. It is difficult to sing a song that has practically no melody, but Morrison has mastered that ability. However, such songs must have a certain drive (listen to Mick Jagger's *Jumpin' Jack Flash*) if they are to work. The songs Morrison wrote for this album just sort of lay out there, and pretty soon they seem

to run together in the listener's mind. Morrison's vocals are excellent, and the arrangements generally are pleasant if somewhat attenuated, but most of the songs don't make it. *Street Choir* does, and *Crazy Face* does, but a man of Morrison's potential should hit a better percentage than that. N. C.

**NICO:** *Desertshore.* Nico (vocals); orchestra. *Janitor of Lunacy; The Falconer; Abschied; Le Petit Chevalier; Mütterlein;* and three others. REPRISE 6424 \$4.98.

Performance: Unico  
Recording: Flashy

This is another non-record by the most beautiful non-singer of them all. Nico also writes her own material, which may be a plus or a minus, since I can't imagine anyone else performing it. Nico's vocal range begins down where Boris Godounov's leaves off and descends to about the way a bass would sound on a 78-rpm record played at 33½. Out of all the rumbling comes only one band—*Abschied*, a Brecht-Weill carbon copy—that has any vitality at all. Otherwise Nico seems content to declaim, in her *basso profundo*, such lines as "You are beautiful and alone" (from one of her biggies, *Afraid*) with an air of all too scrutable melancholy. The production, arrangements, and orchestral accompaniment by John Cale are all extremely sensitive and professional. Nico's face is celestially beautiful. But her voice is so earthbound that she often sounds as if she were singing from several feet under it. P. R.

**LAURA NYRO:** *Christmas and the Beads of Sweat.* Laura Nyro (vocals and piano); orchestra. *Christmas in My Soul; Blackpatch; Been on a Train; Brown Earth; Up on the Roof;* and four others. COLUMBIA KC 30259 \$5.98, © CR 30259 \$6.98, © CA 30259 \$6.98, © CT 30259 \$6.98.

Performance: Strong  
Recording: Excellent

God knows life would be a lot easier for me if I could learn to love Laura Nyro. I've been sneered at by the pop cognoscenti and thrown out by the "in" group (this last wounds *particularly*) for my conviction that she is just a clever performer masquerading as an artist. I have never seen her perform in person, and this may have something to do with my failure to get her message. But not seeing them hasn't stopped me from appreciating a lot of other performers through the years.

One thing that I will grant her is enormous growth. I remember her first album, when she gave a perilous imitation of Streisand, and her songs were precociously bitter little vignettes of ghetto life. Her latest album reveals a commanding personality, with her own style and an obviously strong hold on her material and her listeners. She is a completely polished and professional performer. Her theatrical *persona*, a kind of mixture of Cassandra and Earth Mother, seems to work for her in her admirers' eyes, though I find it pompous.

But there is no denying that Nyro does have presence. To me it is a willfully contrived presence that eventually reveals itself as just a wispy lady-poet sensibility brought to some "burning issues." She attacks the absence of justice and peace in America, in *Christmas in My Soul*, and worries about Panthers, the Chicago Seven, and Vietnam, and she concludes that the dignity of America must be restored "For all the high court world to see on Christmas." Deep, isn't it?

Or take *Map to the Treasure*. It is a sad, sweet song about a woman enticing a man to make love to her. Nyro dresses it up with all sorts of poetic images about pastels and perfumes from Siam, but the total effect is narcissistic rather than inviting. It all seems done for effect, and not out of any real involvement with those who people her songs. To point this up, I might mention that she gives a compelling performance of *Up on the Roof*, one of the earliest drug songs. It is the only song on the album not by her, and it came out of the song-writing stable of Screen Gems-Columbia Music (who gave us the Monkees). The song itself is affecting in its mirroring of the ghetto kid escaping to the roof, away from all the pressures, to be by himself. No aura of "art" hovers over it. When Nyro has finished with it, however, one has the feeling that it has been tarted up to contain more "meaning."

It seems to me that Laura Nyro's chief concern is her effect on her audiences, and that like a "star"—in contrast to a really good actress—she will do everything but jump over the footlights to wring the desired response from you. All Billie Holiday ever had to do was just stand there. *P.R.*

**BUCK OWENS:** *I Wouldn't Live in New York City*. Buck Owens and His Buckaroos (vocals, instrumental accompaniment, sound effects). *I Wouldn't Live in New York City; Reno Lament; Down in New Orleans; The Wind Blows Every Day in Chicago; The Kansas City Song; Londontown; Houston-Town; Santo Domingo; No Milk and Honey in Baltimore; Big in Vegas*. CAPITOL ST 628 \$4.98, ® M 628 \$6.95, © 8 XT 628 \$6.98, © 4 XT 628 \$6.98.

Performance: Truculent tour  
Recording: Gimmicky

Buck Owens, who has his own recording studio in Bakersfield, California, came to New York in the winter of 1964 and was so exasperated by his failure to get a cab at the airport and later by all the tips he had to pass out in a Manhattan hotel that he decided to take his revenge on the town by standing out in the middle of West 46th Street at dawn singing *I Wouldn't Live in New York City If They Gave Me the Whole Dang Town*—until a police car pulled up to investigate. Luckily, Mr. Owens had the foresight to have his engineers cutting a tape that morning, so on this record you can hear the whole thing "live," including traffic noises, rumbling subway trains, and the siren on the approaching squad car. If you stay with Mr. Owens, he also takes you on a singing tour of Reno, complete with whizzing slot machines; to New Orleans, where riverboat whistles ornament a number about "the purtiest girls in all the world"; to Chicago, where the sound effect is a local gust of wind; to London for Westminster chimes; to Houston, a city closer to Mr. Owens' heart, where "space" dialogue between astronauts and ground control is the gimmick; to Santo Domingo, to Baltimore, and finally, to Las Vegas, Nevada, where Mr. Owens seems to feel much at home and maybe ought to settle down. Between sound effects come the songs, which are, to say the least, opinionated; in them, the singer comes over like a disgruntled Glenn Campbell. Personally, when it comes to tours, I'll take Cook's. *P.K.*

**QUICKSILVER MESSENGER SERVICE:** *What About Me*. Quicksilver Messenger Service (vocals and instrumentals). *Local Col-*

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or; *Baby Baby*; *Won't Kill Me*; *Subway*; *Spindrifter*; and five others. CAPITOL SMAS 630 \$4.98, © 8XW 630 \$6.98, © 4XW 630 \$6.98.

Performance: Bossa olda  
Recording: Slick

The wandering of so many groups into the recent musical past in quest of material, now that rock has clattered into the sunset, is beginning to produce some highly schizoid albums. Quicksilver Messenger Service, for instance, started out as the last word in mind-altering rock: layer upon layer of sound, nerve-wracking volume, and hostile, predatory performances. Only one band on this album recalls those days. It's called *Local Color*, and it is good enough but already dated-sounding. *Spindrifter* is interesting in its use of what sounds like an old revival-meeting piano that thumps away in a romantic arrangement. And having touched the old acid-rock and the new God-rock, the Service devotes the remainder of the album to a determination to revive the *bossa nova*. Aside from the thrill that it will probably provide for Eydie Gormé, the attempt seems doomed to failure. *All in My Mind*, for instance, instead of calling up sweet memories of Astrud Gilberto or Carmen McRae, sounds more like a performance in one of those haunted cafés around Cape Kennedy, where the entertainers play mostly to themselves, now that the space program is winding down, and try to invoke the flush days by singing the old songs.

The *bossa nova*, furthermore, was an offshoot of jazz, and sticky-fingered rock isn't able to provide the expertise needed for the music. Retread *bossa nova* just may be in the future, but not, I am sure, through efforts like this one. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**CARLY SIMON:** Carly Simon (vocals); orchestra. *Alone*; *The Best Thing*; *Just a Sinner*; *Another Door*; *Reunions*; *The Love's Still Growing*; and four others. ELEKTRA EKS 74082 \$4.98, © 84082 \$6.98, © 54082 \$6.98.

Performance: Very promising  
Recording: Good

Aside from a disconcerting resemblance to Mick Jagger, Carly Simon seems to have a lot going for her. First, her voice: it has a thumping, rich vibrato with a strong country texture. Then her material, which she writes herself: it is literate (*Another Door*), often funny (*Rolling Down the Hills*), and observant (*The Best Thing*). Finally, her performances. They are intense but controlled, and often call to mind Buffy Sainte-Marie's best work. (Buffy seems fated to be one of those seminal performers whose influence will probably exceed her own popularity.) For instance, in *Dan, My Fling*, written by Jacob Brackman and Fred Gardner, Miss Simon builds a really solid dramatic atmosphere in what could have been just another country-style torch song.

Along with all the pluses of her talent, Miss Simon has received a perceptive and expert production that only occasionally errs on the side of preciousness. *That's the Way I've Always Heard It Should Be*, for instance, gets the three-ring arranging-engineering-(over) performing treatment that somebody seems to feel is necessary for new artists. Most of the rest of this debut album is fine, however, and I think Carly Simon is worth watching. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JOHN SIMON:** *Don't Forget What I Told You*. (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *The Song of the Elves*; *Nobody Knows*; *Tannenbaum*; *Davey's on the Road Again*; *Motorcycle Man*; *Rain Song*; and five others. WARNER BROS. WS 1849 \$4.98.

Performance: For adventurers  
Recording: Good

If you'd like to play a record for a roomful of friends and have them slowly, one by one, turn and ask, "What the hell is that?", John Simon's "Don't Forget What I Told You" is your ticket. Of course, if you insist on playing it through, you may lose most of your guests, but sometimes that's an advantage. Besides, the remaining guests will be the most interesting people you invited. They'll all be adventurers with a penchant for new thrills. Musically, they will be as familiar with Philharmonic Hall as with Fillmore East. They will smile knowingly

Elektra



CARLY SIMON  
Definitely worth watching

when you mention Randy Newman, Laura Nyro, or Tim Buckley. They will ask you to play this record over and ask to see the cover, which, by the way, is beautifully adorned with paintings by Eugene Regan. The art is so lovely, in fact, that there is little room for information. John Simon is credited with the words and music (except on *Davey's on the Road Again*, by Simon and J.R. Robertson), piano, mandola, and horns. Lord knows if the vocals are also by John Simon (the album liner does not make this clear). The voice is creepy and strange, often irritating, but more often tender and hypnotic. The effect is as if Randy Newman and Harry Nilsson were singing perfectly timed duets. On *Davey's on the Road Again*, Merry Clayton, Sherlie Matthews, and Vanetta Fields join in quietly. In fact, on every cut, someone new has joined in. The credits read like an open house for itinerant rock freaks. Alice de Bohr patted out a few feeble drum beats on *The Song of the Elves* while Leon Russell tripped on his guitar. In *Annie Looks Down*, Grady Tate is heard on drums, and on *Railroad Train Runnin' Up My Back*, Delaney Bramlett spansks his tambourine, while Rita Coolidge and Bobby Whitlock sing along. There are at least twenty-three additional credits. I tell you, this recording session

must have been one big party. And for each song there's a new engineer as well. Mr. Simon is either fickle or fastidious about details. Was it worth the effort? All I can say is that the music on this record is as fascinating as finding a stunned bat on your front lawn in broad daylight. You may not be able to live with a stunned bat, but you will talk about the experience for a long time. R.R.

**GRACE SLICK:** *Grace Slick and the Great Society*. Grace Slick (vocals); orchestra. *White Rabbit*; *Born to Be Burned*; *Father Bruce*; *Somebody to Love*; *Nature Boy*; and twelve others. COLUMBIA G 30459 two discs \$4.98.

Performance: Fine  
Recording: Variable

This is a pickup by Columbia of two early Slick albums, "Conspicuous Only in Its Absence" and "How It Was," made before she joined Jefferson Airplane. How you feel about Slick, and how big a fan of hers you are, will determine whether or not you want to own the album. I find that I prefer her work with the Airplane, especially in one of her classics such as *White Rabbit*. Her voice seems to have darkened since these early days, and her control has certainly grown. No doubt about it, though—even in these recordings she comes across as a fine, tough, and galvanic performer.

The album also includes a condensation of Rex Reed's STEREO REVIEW interview with Miss Slick (November 1970) and a short appreciation of her art by James Goodfriend. The two-record set is being made available at a special price. P.R.

**SPIRIT:** *The Twelve Dreams of Dr. Sardonicus*. Spirit (vocals and instrumentals). *Animal Zoo*; *Morning Will Come*; *Mr. Skin*; *When I Touch You*; *Street Worm*; *Love Has Found a Way*; and six others. EPIC E 30267 \$4.98, © EA 30267 \$6.98, © ET 30267 \$6.98.

Performance: Spirit on the skirts  
Recording: Very good

Spirit sure has lost something. They were a tight, well-rehearsed West-Coast rock band that had just enough feeling for jazz to raise their music well above the ordinary. Now they appear to have been led down the garden path of commercialism. The jazz feeling is dissipated, replaced by a vaguely eclectic hard-rock feeling that sacrifices the group's uniqueness. Too bad. What's spirit without a little soul? D.H.

**STAWBS:** *Just a Collection of Antiques and Curios*. Stawbs (vocals and instrumentals). *Fingertips*; *Song of a Sad Little Girl*; *Where Is This Dream of Your Youth*; and three others. A & M SP 4288 \$4.98.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Splendid "live"

Obviously made up of accomplished musicians, Stawbs often gets tangled up in its own virtuosity. What might be termed "ba-Rock" isn't precisely a brand new idea, so either the material or the execution would have to be exceptional to make this album worth your time. But the material is either routinely "aware" (*Martin Luther King's Dream*), or precious (*Antique Suite*). The latter does have some interesting moments, but after a time begins to sound like the score for a low-budget "intellectual" film, one of those things about an Italian nympho-dipso scratching around the countryside to the accompaniment of dulcimers, harp-

STEREO REVIEW

sichords, and celestes. The execution by Stawbs is on a generally high level, but marred by over-complex arrangements. The album, recorded "live" at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, is absolutely superb technically, with wonderful presence, and the audience atmosphere only complements the fine engineering.  
P.R.

**JEREMY STEIG:** *Energy*. Jeremy Steig (various flutes); Jan Hammer (electric piano); Gene Perla (electric bass); Eddie Gomez (electric bass); Don Alias (drums). *Home; Cakes; Swamp Carol; Energy; Down Stretch*; and three others. CAPITOL ST 662 \$5.98.

Performance: Tepid  
Recording: Very good

The problem is that there's not *enough* energy here. Steig has managed to work with a great number of the most gifted and famous jazz musicians in the eight or nine years of his public career, without ever convincing me that he is a first-class jazz player himself. I suspect, in fact, that the art work he creates for the covers of most of his recordings—brief, lean outlines, suggested images, vaguely erotic curves and twists and turns—make a pretty good metaphor for his music. Steig has had a hand in the composition of most of the tunes, but few are memorable, since they serve mostly as tonal settings for the improvisations—white space upon which to make hasty, unfleshed imitations of life. Music should do more. D.H.

**RAY STEVENS:** *Unreal!!!* Ray Stevens (vocals); orchestra. *Sunset Strip; Can We Get to That; Imitation of Life*; and eight others. BAR-NABY Z 30092 \$4.98.

Performance: For television only  
Recording: Very good

Whew! Unreal is the word, all right. If you've seen Stevens' numerous television appearances you'll know what I mean. He manages to mix the less attractive qualities of people like John Hartford and Tom Jones with the equally unappealing aspects of Perry Como, Dean Martin, and the like. That is, Stevens has managed to mix one of the ugliest brews of commercial pap I've ever heard—and one that handily touches the pop singing styles of two or three generations. I hate to be cynical and say that's probably what accounts for his appeal, but how can I say otherwise? The songs Stevens writes are pretty much on a par with his singing—plastic fantastic American garbage-pop. Do yourselves a favor, folks—keep Ray Stevens unreal. Maybe he is a manifestation of your television set's imagination. D.H.

**BARBRA STREISAND:** *Stoney End* (see Best of the Month, page 79)

**LILY TOMLIN:** *This Is a Recording* (see Best of the Month, page 80)

**TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS.** Trials and Tribulations (vocals and instrumentals). *Please Mrs. Henry; Sing; Message; Stones That I Throw; Calgary Lady; Down Home; Simple Song of Freedom; Open the Door, Homer*; and four others. VANGUARD VSD 6565 \$4.98.

Performance: Flawed  
Recording: Excellent

Trials and Tribulations must have been named by someone who had just suffered through the vocal solos they'd recorded. Either Jim Harvey  
STEREO REVIEW

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CIRCLE NO. 12 ON READER SERVICE PAGE

or Sonny Wilf—there's nothing in the credits to identify who is singing what—sings with a whine that would curdle powdered milk, and the other lead vocalist isn't much better. The idea that effective singers are ones who cultivate an eccentricity or otherwise don't sound conventional (i.e., "pretty") may have some validity, but the natural slop-over from that thesis, namely that *anyone* is a singer, no matter how he sounds, doesn't have. There's been a lot of slop-over lately.

When all four lads are singing, and when the song isn't as banal as *Hallelujah* or *Friend of Mine*, the sound improves. Other deficiencies are apparent—lyrics are sometimes sophomoric, occasionally an arrangement doesn't make sense, and the piano is generally misused to the point that it sounds insipid—but the instrumental breaks are often tasteful, with Harvey stitching them together at the organ, and the group has a definite personality. You get the impression this new band is capable of making a good album while you are doubting that it ever will. *N. C.*

**LESLIE WEST:** *Mountain.* Leslie West (guitar and vocals); Felix Pappalardi (bass and keyboards); N. D. Smart II (drums). *Blood of the Sun; Long Red; Better Watch Out; Blind Man; Baby, I'm Down;* and six others. WINDFALL 4500 \$4.98.

**MOUNTAIN:** *Climbing!* Mountain (vocals and instrumentals). *Mississippi Queen; Theme for an Imaginary Western; Never in My Life; Silver Paper;* and five others. WINDFALL 4501 \$4.98.

**MOUNTAIN:** *Nantucket Sleigh Ride.* Mountain (vocals and instrumentals). *Don't Look Around; Taunta (Sammy's Tune); Nantucket Sleigh Ride (For Owen Coffin); You Can't Get Away; Tired Angels (For J.M.H.);* and four others. WINDFALL 5500 \$4.98.

Performance: Heavy Sixties rock at its best

Recording: All very good

At the top of the above list is the first Mountain recording, actually a date for the enormous (in both physical and musical size) guitarist Leslie West. Producer Felix Pappalardi, a superb bassist in his own right, and one of the guiding forces behind the music of the late lamented English group called Cream, decided to play on the date, and dug working with West so much that Mountain—with the addition of Steve Knight on organ and Corky Laing on drums—became a working ensemble.

The Cream style persists throughout most of Mountain's recordings. Pappalardi, like Jack Bruce (of Cream), is a bass player who likes to hear a heavy, melodically contrapuntal bass line; matched with West's gut-wrenching guitar lines, the effect is not unlike hearing the power and intensity of, say, Led Zeppelin expressed in extremely musical (instead of sheer noise-for-its-own-sake) terms.

The second Mountain record, "Climbing!" did pretty well in the market place (it was thirty-second in Billboard's Top Records of 1970), and a single from the same record, *Mississippi Queen*, was the seventy-eighth best-selling single of the year. I was much more intrigued by a mysterious-sounding Jack Bruce-Pete Brown piece called *Theme for an Imaginary Western* and a lovely, raga-like guitar solo by West called *To My Friend*.

"Nantucket Sleighride" also is doing well

on the charts at this writing, but I find its almost continuous onslaught of sound a little overbearing for my tastes. A brief, interlude-like theme called *Taunta (Sammy's Tune)* that introduces the title track provides the kind of contrast that would have helped the album's balance.

Good (and successful) as the players in Mountain are, their music looks back to the all-encompassing, sometimes mindless decibel envelopes of sound that characterized so much of the rock music of the Sixties. Most of our heads are in different places now, and I sometimes wonder if "Mammoth" might not be a more appropriate name for a group whose music is beginning to sound increasingly archaic. *D.H.*

**WHITE LIGHTNIN':** *Fresh Air.* Byard Ray and Obraj Ramsey (vocals and instrumentals). *Cumberland Gap; Up Country Blues; Life's Railway to Heaven; Scotland; Little Margaret; Orange Blossom Special;* and four others. POLYDOR 24 4047 \$4.98.

Performance: Hip, hick, hokum  
Recording: Fair to good

Arthur Gorson, who produced this one, is ahead of his time, give him that. He produced the first White Lightnin' album in 1969, recruiting vocalist-fiddler Byard Ray and his cousin, banjo player Obraj Ramsey, in the Carolina Smokies and backing them with hip, mostly rock, studio musicians. Ray and Ramsey then got parts in *Zachariah*, the movie written by the personnel of the Firesign Theatre, and the hick and the hip are of course getting together everywhere now. Still, this album amounts to little more than hokum.

There's a big splash of names across the jacket—Eric Andersen, Judy Collins, Paul Krassner, Maeretha Stewart, Russ Savakus, and I could go on—and it turns out that those names are there for the sole purpose of selling copies of the album. Eric Andersen's contribution is to play harmonica on one cut, and Judy Collins' is to do some of her worst singing ever, joining Ray on vocals for the same song Andersen appears in. It turns out that Paul Krassner *sings*, in there somewhere, but don't worry: you'll never be able to identify his voice among the others in the nondescript chorus. Neither will you be able to identify the voices of Miss Stewart and Albertine Robinson. They're just names on the jacket.

Left alone, Ray and Ramsey would play fair, but not good, modified Bluegrass. Ray is a fine fiddler and a terrible singer; Ramsey is a competent banjo player. They get some useful backing from John Herald, the country guitarist. The rock backing leaves me cold—although this sort of thing no doubt *would* work if everyone concerned didn't act so much like a snake-oil salesman. *N.C.*

**THE YOUNGBLOODS:** *Rock Festival.* The Youngbloods (vocals and instrumentals). *Faster All the Time; Prelude; Josiane; Misty Roses; Ice Bag;* and six others. RACCOON 1878 \$4.98, @ B 1878 \$6.95.

Performance: Good  
Recording: Good

I once wrote a review of the Youngbloods in which I suggested that they could use some Geritol. Later I received an obscene letter, unsigned and postmarked Brookline, which disputed, to say the least, my opinion. Older and wiser, I no longer think the Youngbloods need Geritol. But how about music lessons? *P.R.*

STEREO REVIEW



## JAZZ



### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** *Benny Goodman Today*. Benny Goodman (clarinet); orchestra. *Let's Dance*; *Sweet Georgia Brown*; *If I Had You*; *Baubles, Bangles and Beads*; *Sing, Sing, Sing*; *Goodbye*; *Don't Be That Way*; *Willow Weep for Me*; *Body and Soul*; *String of Pearls*; *One O'Clock Jump*; and eight others. LONDON SPB 21 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: Well preserved  
Recording: Sumptuous

Sometimes down at the end of Memory Lane you will find a freezer in which a bygone year reposes, still alive (or as alive as it ever was), and all you have to do is thaw it out and do it all over again. This is one of those times. This isn't a reissue of Goodman originals—it was, in fact, recorded "live" in Stockholm—but it is a careful replica of the highlights of swing with better sonic reproduction.

I usually regard the phrase "big-band jazz" as a contradiction in terms. The way this sixteen-piece orchestra does Fats Waller's *Stealing Apples* is one of the reasons why. One can drive a Cadillac fast around a sports-car track, but it isn't a very satisfying experience for the passengers. Goodman, of course, is responsible for having combined elements of jazz and the big-band concept at a time when practically everyone thought the two phenomena were at opposite extremes. One had to have a big band to survive in those days, but Goodman proved it didn't have to play mush, and so he did a lot of good. He scraped the syrup off the top of the big-band sound and threw it away, and swing—in addition to living an interesting life of its own—cooled the climate so that jazz could someday return. Ironically, the return of true jazz machinery was one of the factors that blew the big bands off the road.

What we have here is not so much a stubborn refusal to admit one is licked but a grandfatherly demonstration of how it was in the old days—and in this case Granddad can still cut the mustard. Goodman is surprisingly steady, and apparently there's not so much as a microscopic change in the way his personality affects the clarinet. Here he still seems ready for anything technically, but is emotionally restrained—and for me, at least, the restraint itself carries a certain impact because I believe it is honest.

Anyone who has somehow managed to maintain a passion for swing or big bands all these years should find this a compelling album, lavishly produced and carefully packaged. Goodman's work—even in the selection of tunes—is so close to the original, and the quality of some unidentified London engineers' work is so high, that the album is valuable as an archive. When you produce an archive and a sound product for a current, albeit tiny, market, you've done your bit. N. C.

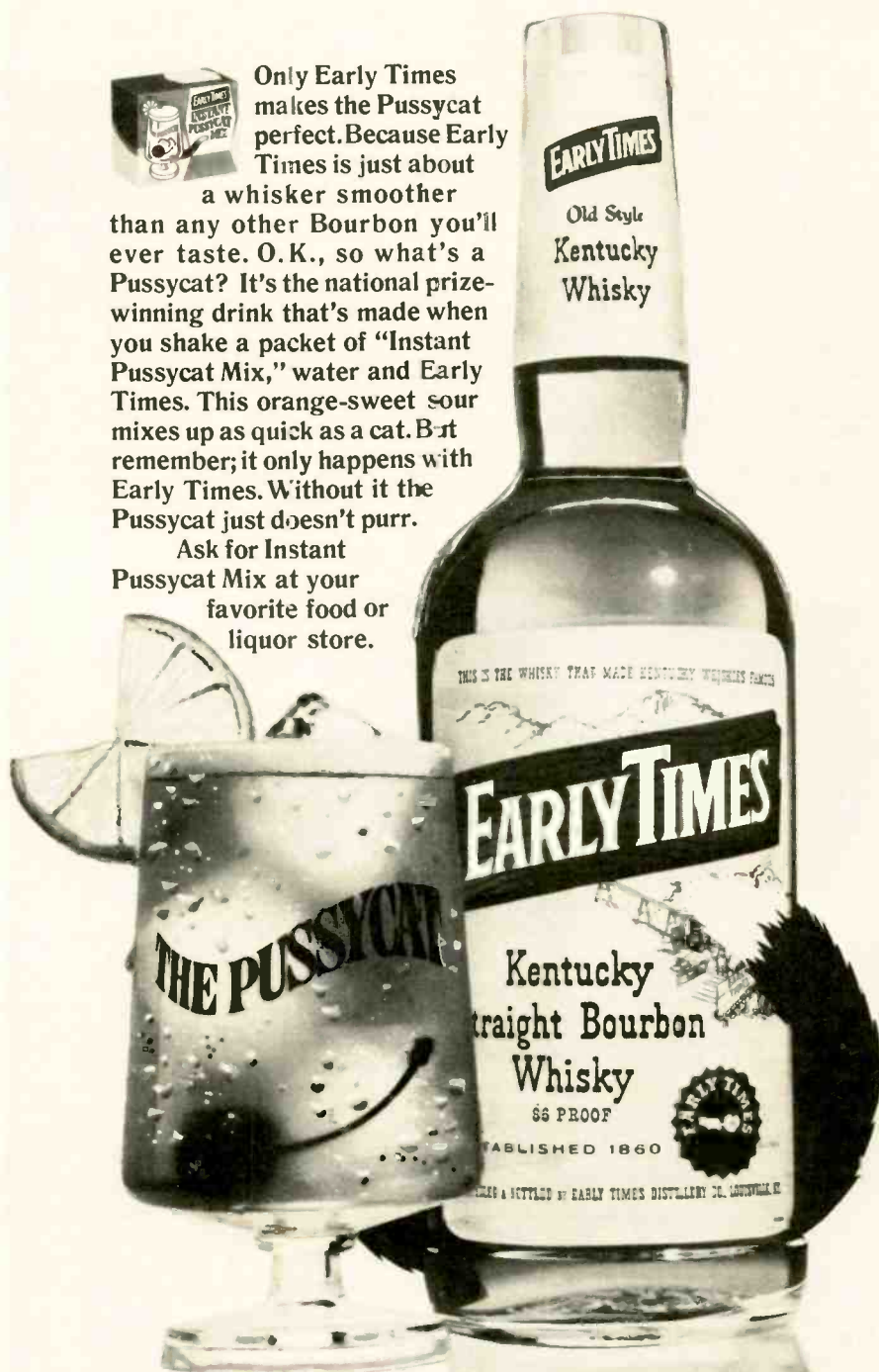
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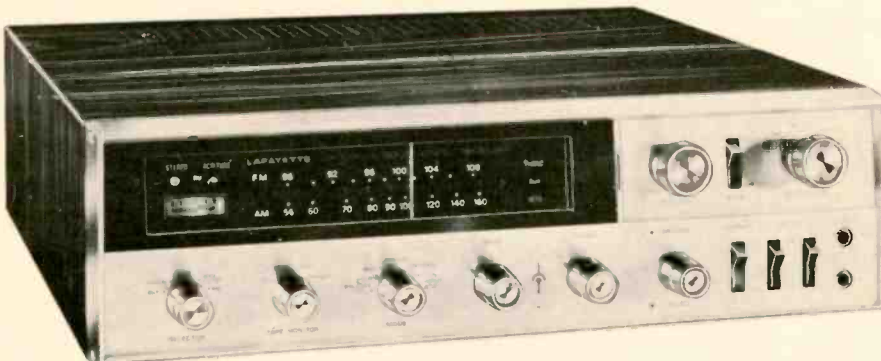
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# STEREO TAPE

Reviewed by NOEL COPPAGE • DAVID HALL • IGOR KIPNIS • PAUL KRESH

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 7, in A Major, Op. 92.* Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer cond. ANGEL ® L 35945 \$7.95, © 4 X S 35945 \$7.98.

Performance: Bedrock solid  
Recording: Good  
Playing Time: 41'53"

Klemperer's performance of the Beethoven Seventh, available in both open-reel and cassette format, dates from 1962, and the recorded sound is substantial, spacious, but—due to room reverberation—not absolutely clean. Klemperer's approach to the music is at a decided remove from the volatile treatment of a Szell, Toscanini, or Karajan. "Earthy" might be a good descriptive word, for his reading calls to mind Brueghel's Flemish peasants rather than the visions evoked by Wagner's description of the work as the "apotheosis of the dance." A particularly striking feature of Klemperer's interpretation is his emphasis on a virtual *sostenuto-legato* phrasing of the first movement's main theme, as opposed to the sharp articulation of the dotted figure favored by most other conductors. *D.H.*

**BIZET:** *Carmen Suites Nos. 1 & 2* (see GRIEG)

**GERSHWIN:** *Porgy and Bess (selections).* Original-cast recording. Todd Duncan, Anne Brown, Avon Long, Edward Matthews, Helen Dowdy, William Woolfolk, others (vocalists); Eva Jessye Choir; orchestra, Alexander Smallens cond. DECCA ©739024 \$6.95.

Performance: Vintage Gershwin  
Recording: Cleaned up but a bit over-scrubbed  
Playing Time: 41'45"

The politics of music can be baffling and multi-fying. When Frederick Delius' *Koanga* was produced in the nation's capital last year, critics seemed to make much of the fact that this 1897 opera about life on a slave plantation did not conform to the latest in enlightened attitudes on race relations. That the libretto was unusu-

ally enlightened for its day was not enough for them. The same is true of *Porgy and Bess*, certainly DuBose Heyward, when he wrote his 1925 novel about the Negroes of Catfish Row, was trying to convey their humanity rather than patronize them, and the Gershwin brothers sought to reflect this compassion, not to condescend. If Ira's lyrics are sometimes glib and the dialect of the book occasionally comes off like caricature, it is unlikely that it was meant that way. The book and the music are



GEORGE GERSHWIN  
Pencil drawing by Aline Fruhauf

remarkable in evoking the atmosphere of the place and the characters of its time. After all these years, the tapestry of the orchestration, the melodic appeal of the songs, the moving quality of the big scenes, and the endless inventiveness of the score would seem enough to vindicate *Porgy and Bess*.

Perhaps someday Columbia will release its splendid full-length recording under Lehman Engel on cassettes. Meanwhile, these highlights from the "original-cast" recording of the 1930's hold up well. The chorus and orchestra under Alexander Smallens sound dim by today's standards, even after tinkering by the engineers, and the phony stereo is just a nuisance, but Todd Duncan's pure, strong Porgy and Anne Brown's affecting Bess remain thrilling, and Avon Long's devilish, chuckling Sportin' Life has never been surpassed. Helen Dowdy's *Strawberry Woman's Call* and the chorus' *It Takes a Long Pull to Get There* are also definitive. In fact, by cleaning up these records and dubbing them in the order they are heard in the opera, Decca succeeds in bringing to life

the spirit of a memorable performance. *Porgy and Bess* may be merely quaint as a picture of black America, but it is wonderfully alive as an opera (that cowardly phrase "folk opera" only begs the question) and altogether enjoyable on its own human terms. *P.K.*

**GRIEG:** *Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 and 2.* Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Richard Kraus cond. **BIZET:** *Carmen Suites Nos. 1 & 2.* Hague Residente Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo cond. **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Coq d'Or Suite.* Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Paris, Igor Markevitch cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © 3580 004 \$10.95.

Performance: Light and lively  
Recording: Very good  
Playing Time: 71'59"

The first pre-recorded cassette I ever bought was a run-through of the *Peer Gynt Suites* played by the Bamberg Symphony. I picked it up for \$2.98 at a Lafayette store in New York (it was put out on their own label) and it sounded less than great. This "two-LP" DGG cassette, containing material not available on records, has the same orchestra playing the same suites, but with what a difference! It's as though the players, who were used to falling asleep during *Morning Moods* and staying that way for the rest of the performance under another conductor, were roused to a sense of their duties by Maestro Richard Kraus and stayed wide awake this time while Ibsen's hero pursued his symbolical tour of the world. They offer vigorous versions of *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, the *Arabian Dance*, the *Return of Peer Gynt*, and the rest of it. Ase has never died so swiftly or painlessly, nor has Solveig sung her song more sweetly.

What constitutes a *Carmen Suite* I don't know, since the earlier versions I have on discs by Toscanini, Beecham, and so forth are all different, but here we have the Prelude to Act One, three Entr'actes, and two excerpts from the Suite No. Two—the Chorus of Street Boys and the Gypsy Song, known to us aficionados of *Carmen Jones* as *Beat Cut Dat Rhythm on de Drum*. It's all rousingly done under van Otterloo. As for the suite from the *Coq d'Or* under Markevitch, it has turned up earlier on a DDG cassette coupled with the suite from Khachaturian's *Gayne*, and a second hearing confirms its merits as a lively helping of the cream off the top of Rimsky's score for his panoramic opera, with the emphasis on strict rhythms and bright color. The package comes in a slightly larger box than a "one-LP" cassette and is accompanied by helpful notes. *P.K.*

(Continued on next page)

#### Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel tape
- Ⓛ = four-track cartridge
- Ⓢ = eight-track cartridge
- ⓐ = cassette

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats (if available) follow it.

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ: all others are stereo.

**MOSCHELES:** *Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 58.* **RUBINSTEIN:** *Piano Concerto No. 4, in D Minor, Op. 70.* Michael Ponti (piano); Philharmonia Hungarica, Othmar Maga cond. VOX © 678029 \$6.98.

Performance: Brilliant piano, mediocre accompaniment

Recording: Astonishing for cassette  
Playing Time: 54' 41"

Both of these concertos (available also on two separate Candide discs) represent the best of the so-called "Romantic revival." Each in its own day was immensely popular—the Moscheles dates from 1821, the Rubinstein from 1864—and both are excellent works of their kind. They demand considerable virtuosity on the part of the soloist, and this they indeed receive here; but they also require elegance and subtlety of dynamics and rhythm, and this they do not. Ponti is extremely brilliant; his playing is clean, and even fairly warm in tone. He does not, however, bring to either work that charm that makes the scores come convincingly to life. Perhaps, too, I was put off by the balance between him and the orchestra; the piano is very close-up, the accompaniment much too far away. What one does hear of the orchestra, however, is far from pleasing: in matters of intonation and ensemble the playing is just competent at best.

In the case of this cassette, though, the performance takes second place in interest to the quality of recorded sound. This is one of the first Dolbyized cassettes (the tape material used is of ordinary good quality, however, it is not chromium dioxide), and its lack of tape hiss is startling. The piano sound is amazingly rich, though perhaps a little too full in the bass, and there is a conspicuous lack of flutter to the instrument; too, there is none of the glassiness that has marred so many cassette recordings of the piano. I did find a slight treble boost helpful, and even this did not appreciably raise the level of tape hiss (as it certainly does in a non-Dolbyized cassette recording). As more and more companies start to take advantage of such improvements as Dolby, the future of cassettes looks brighter. I.K.

Chinese province who is named Fe-ni-han, his attendant at court Ke-ki-ka-ko, a "young mandarin lady" at court named Fe-an-nich-ton, and a certain Ko-ko-ri-ko (French for "cock-a-doodle-do"), who is captain of the guard and leader of a conspiracy to overthrow the ruler. Following a series of those neat equations of which operetta librettists have ever been fond, the conspiracy to overthrow Fe-ni-han is foiled and all four Chinese characters turn out to be French, which is the French idea of a happy ending. A libretto is indispensable to the fun, and you can get one by writing to the Musical Heritage Society for a copy—it's in both French and English. The music is Offenbach at his scintillating best, which is scintillating indeed. Here he is twitting all the staples of the serious musical stage—the nostalgic duet which always starts "Do you remember . . .," the Italian duet with its passionate references to stabbings and stranglings, the agitated trios, the spectacular finales. The sound, for a cas-



RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN  
*A nostalgic cassette of band music*

sette, is perfectly stunning. It's available at record stores, but if you order any two cassettes listed in their catalog at \$6.95 each, Musical Heritage will send you a third one free. P.K.

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Coq d'Or Suite* (see GRIEG)

**STRAUSS, R.:** *Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30.* Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner cond. RCA © RK 1168 \$6.95.

Performance: Fine  
Recording: No match for disc  
Playing Time: 33' 33"

Both the 1954 and 1962 readings of Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Fritz Reiner have remained classics of their kind, matched recently, and in a more exuberantly extrovert fashion, only by Zubin Mehta's performance for the London label with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Reiner's later performance, the one on this cassette, is a bit freer in phrasing and more refined in nuance than the 1954 version, and is also recorded with a wide dynamic range and sense of space, as heard on disc (RCA LSC 2609). Though the sense of space is preserved on this cassette, the dynamic range seems somewhat compressed by comparison. D.H.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**AMBOY DUKES:** *Marriage on the Rocks/Rock Bottom.* Amboy Dukes (vocals and instrumentals). *Marriage: Man, Woman, Music; Breast-Fed 'Gator (Bait); Non-Conformist Wilderbeast Man; Today's Lesson; Children of the Woods; Brain Games of Yesteryear; The Inexhaustible Quest for Cosmic Cabbage; Get Yer Guns.* POLYDOR ® (3/4) X4012 \$5.95.

Performance: Mostly good  
Recording: Excellent  
Playing Time: 45' 49"

This is solid, loud, wailing rock that will move the rear wall of your listening room backwards approximately eight inches every time you play it at proper volume. Even if your taste is moving toward gentler music, as seems to be the fashion, you won't mind pausing long enough to appreciate the finer moments of this recording. The Dukes never seemed very interested in vocals, so these are weak, but they also seem to have little interest in imitating jazz musicians—except in fun—and no interest in brass at all, so give them credit for that. Their music, mostly by Ted Nugent, is harsh but not raw. It has simple melodic structures that need the Dukes' improvisations to work. Though generally it works pretty well here, there are times when it becomes a bit of a bore. The Dukes do have humor, and that helps immensely: they do neat parodies of the Beach Boys, the Beatles, the Bee Gees, gospel rock, jazz rock, and several other things in the space of two or three minutes during *The Inexhaustible Quest for Cosmic Cabbage*. Old-fashioned inconvenient open-reel tapes like this one had excellent sound, too, when recorded properly, and this one was. N.C.

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**THE GOLDMAN BAND:** *Golden March Favorites. Stars and Stripes Forever; National Emblem March; Dixie; Washington Post; High School Cadets; Colonel Bogey March; Semper Fidelis; King Cotton; The Thunderer; El Capitan; On the Mall; The Marines' Hymn.* The Goldman Band, Richard Franko Goldman and Edwin Franko Goldman cond. DECCA © 73 4453 \$6.95.

Performance: Wholesome  
Recording: Good  
Playing Time: 30' 25"

Once upon a time, when parks in New York were places for recreation and a walk across Sheep's Meadow was more likely to end with a box of Cracker Jack than with a mugging, the place to be on a summer evening was the Mall, listening to—or at least overhearing—the Goldman Band give a concert. It was a comfortable, nostalgic kind of experience which, even while it was happening, seemed already to be taking place in the distant past. The band, under Edwin Franko Goldman and later under his son Richard Franko Goldman, would play such inspiring marches as *Stars and Stripes Forever*, *El Capitan*, and *Semper Fidelis*, alternating with sourish arrangements for brass of popular operatic arias and the ever-popular *Trumpet Voluntary*. At the end of the evening, they'd play *On the Mall*, written especially for the Central Park Mall concerts, and everybody would shamble off for home, peaceful and more or less satisfied. If you'd like to relive that experience, or know what that music was like and why it was so easy to love (or to ignore), this is the cassette for you. You'll have

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**OFFENBACH:** *Ba-ta-clan (excerpts).* Huguette Boulangéot (soprano); Raymond Amade (tenor); Rémy Corazza (tenor); René Terrasson (bass); Jean Desailly (speaker). Philippe Caillard Chorale and Jean-François Pailard Orchestra, Marcel Couraud cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY © MHC 2002 \$6.95 (plus 60c handling charge, available from the Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: Delicious  
Recording: Excellent  
Playing Time: 39' 33"

*Ba-ta-clan*, a "musical chinoiserie" in one act with a libretto by Ludovic Halévy, was the twelfth work Offenbach turned out in the year 1855 for his own theater, the Bouffes-Parisiens. He had opened the place to get away from the Opéra-comique, where he felt his talents were being wasted; they wanted him to write serious stuff instead of the light-hearted music that flowed so readily from his pen. The new theater was a huge success—all Paris followed the Empress of France herself to the latest Offenbach-of-the-month.

The story of *Ba-ta-clan* is an incredibly harebrained bit of nonsense about the ruler of a

to provide your own summer breezes riffing the leaves of electrically lighted trees, your own bench, and your own vanilla ice-cream cone to drip on your blue flannel blazer or chiffon skirt, but the music you'll have, *semper fidelis*, if not more so, with every oom-pah in tact as in the good old days. P.K.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ELTON JOHN:** *Tumbleweed Connection*. Elton John (vocals and piano); various musicians. *Ballad of a Well-Known Gun; Come Down in Time; Country Comfort; Son of Your Father; My Father's Gun; Where to Now, St. Peter?; Amoreena Love Song; Talking Old Soldiers; Burn Down the Mission*. UNI © 2-73096 \$6.98, © 8-73096 \$6.98.

Performance: Extraordinary  
Recording: Very good  
Playing Time: 47' 17"

Few things are obvious in these unsettled times; that Elton John is one of the most important new figures in music is among those that are. John is not one of those rare originals, like, say, Neil Young. Rather, he is the product of many influences—rock, obviously, and blues and jazz—and yet his style is personal enough. His strength is in how well he controls his voice. Possibly he has perfect pitch; at any rate, he has a feel for inflection that few, if any, male vocalists since Ray Charles have matched. Because of that, such songs as *Where To Now, St. Peter?*, my favorite among these, aren't likely to be sung well by anyone else. John has concocted some fine melodies for "Tumbleweed," and Bernie Taupin has again produced some interesting—and puzzling—lyrics. The lyrics picture old-timey situations (including considerable violence) and viewpoints; the entire album seems to be about the past. One song, *Amoreena Love Song*, is clearly mediocre, but you couldn't say that about any of the others. They're sensitive, subtle, and enigmatic. The arrangements are just a bit overdone, with a little plastic in them, but they are at least tasteful. John is a major talent, no question about it, and this recording is one of those to be judged by the toughest standards.

N.C.

**BILL MONROE:** *Kentucky Blue Grass*. Bill Monroe (vocals, mandolin); Bluegrass band. *I Live in the Past; Cripple Creek; Last Old Dollar; The Long, Black Veil; Log Cabin in the Lane; Fire on the Mountain; Kentucky Mandolin; I Want to Go with You*; and three others. DECCA © 5213 \$6.95, © 65213 \$6.95.

Performance: A little slick  
Recording: Good  
Playing Time: 29' 22"

I assume this is a reissue—most Bill Monroe recordings have been for several years—but it may be new stuff in part, since Monroe's voice sounds pretty old and creaky on some of these numbers. At any rate, the material is not readily available anywhere else.

Bill Monroe is from Rosine, Kentucky (it's about ten miles southeast of Dundee, and three or four miles west of Horse Branch; the last time I saw it, Rosine was about sixteen hoe-handles long and about a team of fat mules wide). And because he named his band the Bluegrass Boys, he sort of wound up the inventor of Bluegrass. He was interested in playing country music, but resisted using amplifiers while practically every other country band was plugging into the nearest socket—unscrewing

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the naked bulb at the ceiling of the stage in the high school gym to get juice. Bill's acoustic sound soon became so distinctive that folks naturally wanted to give it a name, and they named it for the band. Bill Monroe also became the greatest mandolin player in the history of the world, and that spectacle always set his band apart from other Bluegrass bands, and still does.

But this recording is far from his best. I think some of what bothers me is that the banjo is too clean-cut, but worse than that, the fiddle is much too cool. Since there's no information on the cassette package, I don't know who the fiddler(s) is (are), but none of this fiddling sounds like that of the great Chubby Wise, who was with Bill for the best years and was the model Bluegrass fiddler, at once sophisticated and fiery. His lead is mainly what makes the band's old recordings of *Orange Blossom Special* and *Mule Skinner Blues* such classics. But the fiddling here is mostly of the "western

Uni



ELTON JOHN  
A rare original

swing" mode that became popular in the Hollywood area about twenty years ago. Monroe gets a couple of good mandolin breakdowns, and there are some typical Bluegrass ballads featuring typical, out-of-tune vocals. *Never Again* sounds older than the other cuts and is the selection in which the band is best, to my ears. The recording is a little off-hand, but it offers some Monroe versions that are "new" or at least hard to find elsewhere, and that's worth quite a bit around Rosine. N.C.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SANTANA:** *Abraxas*. Santana (vocals and instrumentals). *Singing Winds, Crying Beasts; Black Magic Woman/Gypsy Queen; Oye como va; Incident at Neshabur; Se a cabo; Mother's Daughter; Samba pa ti; Hope You're Feeling Better; El Nicoya*. COLUMBIA © CT 30130 \$6.98.

Performance: Classy  
Recording: Excellent  
Playing Time: 37' 40"

Carlos Santana and his band play a hard-edged amalgam of rock and Latin music. As with anything stylized, its point can be missed. Heard casually, it leaves the impression that rhythm is everything, but that's not quite the case. Santa-

na is an excellent guitarist, producing a sound almost as clean as Michael Bloomfield's and moodier than just about anybody's. Gregg Rolie's organ work seems to hold the band together—and it is together, one of the tightest rock bands in the country. Given that kind of backdrop, the drums and more exotic rhythm instruments can go freewheeling along, and they do. Santana obviously doesn't care avidly about vocals, using them only to separate the jams, but the vocals are actually pretty good.

Santana's moody guitar works best in *Black Magic Woman*—listen to it carefully sometime. Rolie's organ is best spotlighted in *Hope You're Feeling Better*. The whole band seems to work best with *Oye como va*, which is less rock and more Latin. This was the first time I had listened intently to Santana's music (for some reason, I tend to half-listen to music with Latin rhythms), but it won't be the last. N.C.

**SKY:** *Don't Hold Back*. Sky (vocals and instrumentals). *Take Off and Fly; Make It in Time; Goodie Two Shoes; There in the Greenbriar; Homin' Ground; One Love*; and four others. RCA © PK 1650 \$6.95.

Performance: Imitative  
Recording: Very good  
Playing Time: 36' 35"

This recording has its moments, but too many of them sound like someone else's moments—Traffic's usually. *There in the Greenbriar* sounds too much like Traffic's *John Barleycorn*, and *Take Off and Fly* sounds too much like several Traffic jams. *Goodie Two Shoes* sounds like the work of several rock groups, including the Rolling Stones. If Sky has an identity of its own, I couldn't find it. The instruments are well played, the vocals so-so, and the songs generally pleasant, but originality is missing in each instance. Promotion could convince a fair number of people that they must have this recording, I suppose, and the memo machines are probably running to that end right now. But I think there comes a time when each of us must ask himself, "How many Grand Funk Railroadings do I really need in my life?" N.C.

**STRAWBERRY ALARM CLOCK:** *Best of Strawberry Alarm Clock*. Strawberry Alarm Clock (vocals and instrumentals). *Incense and Peppermints; Tomorrow; Sit with the Guru; Good Morning Starshine; Barefoot in Baltimore; Desiree; Sea Shell; Birds in My Tree*; and four others. UNI © 2/73074 \$6.98.

Performance: Almost criminal  
Recording: Very good  
Playing Time: 32' 22"

To paraphrase an immortal review, in making this recording the Strawberry Alarm Clock played rock. Rock lost.

If you took a given group of "musicians" picked up on some street corner and taught them to sing approximately as well as the Ohio Express (shouldn't be too difficult) and then overlaid the vocals with some nine-year-old's idea of an acid rock instrumental treatment, you, too, could be a Strawberry Alarm Clock producer. But why bother? You've got enough enemies already, right? Me, too, so I'll say as little more about this as possible. The Clock's crowning commercial achievement, *Incense and Peppermints*, was catchy but stupid; the rest of this slush isn't even catchy, unless you can somehow be caught by hearing *Good Morning Starshine* and *Barefoot in Baltimore* sung out of tune. N.C.

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# TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



## THE CLUB CIRCUIT

**M**OST OF US keep our tapes within a limited circle of family and friends. Thousands of people today, however, are using this medium to expand the number of their acquaintances (as well as their recording collections) through the vehicle of tape clubs. Last year I mentioned one such organization, the Indiana Recording Club, which offers a wide range of typical club activities: monthly meetings and an informative newsletter (*Tape Squeal*) to bring members together; round-robin tape mailings where each person adds his own comments to what others have said before him and sends it on; large libraries upon which to draw for music and old-time radio shows; members' own tape creations, etc.; and, of course, the opportunity to correspond by tape with people in all places and walks of life. Membership Secretary of the IRC is Mrs. Marjorie Wolff, 2007 Green Rock Lane, Indianapolis, Ind. 46203. A number of other clubs, each with its own flavor, have since contacted me.

If your interest is primarily in tapesponding, the largest and oldest organization is The Voicespondence Club, whose 2,000 members represent all states and some forty foreign countries. The club also extends special reading services to the blind and prints a quarterly magazine, *The Voicespondent*. For further information, write Mr. Paul E. Reeser, Jr., Secretary, P.O. Box 207, Shillington, Pa. 19607.

Intentionally smaller than many clubs, but still international-minded, is the Global Tape Recording Exchange, whose overseas members come from England, Germany, Ireland, Norway, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia. Director Thomas H. Havens (P.O. Box 336, Wayne, N.J. 07470) reports that in addition to maintaining many intra-club activities, the organization has been frequently cited by the American Legion and Disabled American Veterans for their program of sending tapes to servicemen abroad.

For the audiophile whose interest lies in sharing tapes and tips about live music recording (or in learning more about it), probably no club can compare with the Amateur Tape Exchange Association. President Ernie Rawlings (5411 Bocage St., Cartierville, Montreal 9, Canada) keeps an Ampex duplicating system with seven slave recorders busy to circulate some 500 copies of the club's more than 1,000 master tapes. In addition to a monthly publication *Decibel*, the club has a second magazine, *Sforzando*, for its special division dedicated specifically to wind and electric organs.

Although it is not restricted to tape recording, the New York Audio Society will interest readers in that area who really want to learn about quality sound reproduction. There you can meet and question the experts as well as hear demonstrations of the most up-to-date techniques. In addition to regular meetings and socials, the Society sponsors visits to factories and has had guest speakers including the editors and contributing editors of this magazine and the designers of much of the top audio and recording equipment available today. About a third of the members are avid recordists. For information, contact: Barry L. Winthrop, 215 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

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## A working musician talks about the new VM professionals.

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Incidentally, the turntable and speakers in our new Professional Series are equally remarkable. If you would like all the facts and figures write: Professional Series, Dept. 74, P.O. Box 1247, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022.

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The VM Professional 1521: Semiconductor complement: 49 transistors, 30 diodes, 3 ICs, 2 MOSFETs.

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Tuner: Sensitivity: 1.9 uv for 30 db quieting. Signal to noise ratio: -75 db. Capture ratio: 1.8 db. Selectivity: -75 db. SM 100% MOD distortion: less than 0.5%. Stereo separation: 40 db at 1 Hz. Image rejection: -90 db. IF rejection: -100 db. Spurious response rejection: -100 db.

Cabinet: Comes complete with cabinet of oiled walnut veneer hardwood at no extra cost. (Model 1520, same as above except 25 watts RMS/channel power.)

CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# 4-CHANNEL SOUND

Electro-Voice  
takes the first practical step:

**EV STEREO-4™**  
compatible four channel

{ Being more a progress report than an advertisement. }

## The Promise

Thousands of people have heard 4-channel stereo reproduction at hi-fi shows and special demonstrations in the last few years. Others have read about this fascinating and rewarding technique that promises more faithful reproduction of musical performances. Early experiments have also shown 4-channel to be an effective tool in creating new sonic environments for both serious and popular musical forms. The concept has met with almost universal critical acclaim, and strong general approval.

## The Problem

But alas only a handful of enthusiasts can actually enjoy this advance today. Because only a few 4-channel tapes have been produced for sale. The problem is simple, but basic: 4-channel means just that—four separate signals. And to reproduce it properly demands four of everything, right down the line.

Using four amplifier channels and adding four speakers is easy. Even creating a 4-channel tape recorder is practical (although expensive). But the stumbling block has been finding a way to put four completely independent signals in a record groove, or broadcast them over a standard stereo FM station.

And if you can't buy a 4-channel disc, or hear it on FM, the market is limited to a precious few 4-channel tape owners. But their numbers are so small that record companies just can't afford to release four

channel material. So they continue to produce 2-channel stereo that you *can* play (and that they can sell in volume).

## The Way Out

Now Electro-Voice has moved to break the impasse. With a system that can offer the significant advantages of discrete 4-channel, yet is compatible with present record playing equipment and present FM broadcasting. It is called STEREO-4.

STEREO-4 is a system that encodes four channels into a stereo signal that *can* be transmitted over FM or recorded on a disc. In the home you add a STEREO-4 decoder, plus another stereo amplifier and a pair of rear speakers. The result is reproduction that closely rivals the original 4-channel sound. Four different signals from your speakers, with a feeling of depth and ambience you have never before heard from any record.

Admittedly, STEREO-4 is not quite the equal of 4 discrete signals. But while there is some loss of stereo separation, there is no reduction in frequency response or overall fidelity. We might note that this reduced separation actually seems to aid the psycho-acoustic effect for many listeners in normal listening situations. And on the plus side, STEREO-4 offers an advantage that even discrete 4-channel cannot provide.

## The Remarkable Bonus

Playback of almost all of your present 2-channel stereo library is greatly enhanced when fed through the STEREO-4 decoder. It's the result of multi-microphone recording techniques that include a remarkable amount of 4-channel information on ordinary stereo discs and tapes. Adding STEREO-4 releases this hidden information for you to enjoy.

## The Details

A STEREO-4 Model EVX-4 Decoder costs just \$59.95. And with it, plus 4 speakers and dual stereo amplifiers,

you're equipped for almost any kind of sound available. Encoded 4-channel, enhanced stereo, regular stereo, *and* discrete 4-channel (assuming suitable source equipment). Even mono. So you have the one system that is completely compatible with the past, present, and foreseeable future.

## The Present

And what about encoded 4-channel discs and broadcasts? Well, recording companies have already started mastering STEREO-4 records, and more are joining in. And STEREO-4 is now being broadcast in many major cities around the country.

## The Future

Like you, we hope for the day when discrete 4-channel sound will be commonplace on records and FM, and your STEREO-4 decoder will be relegated to enhancing your present library. But that day will have to wait until some very knotty design problems are solved. And probably after a host of new FCC regulations define an utterly new system. Indeed, there is serious question whether these problems can be solved at all.

In the meantime, the STEREO-4 system is getting 4-channel recordings into the marketplace in increasing numbers, in a form that people can enjoy. Hear STEREO-4 at your E-V soundroom soon. And ask your local FM station for a schedule of STEREO-4 broadcasts. Or write us for complete information. It's not too soon to start planning for tomorrow.

ELECTRO-VOICE, INC., Dept. 614F,  
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In Europe: Electro-Voice, S.A., Lyss Strasse 55,  
2560 Nidau, Switzerland



EVX-4 Stereo-4 Decoder

CIRCLE NO. 19 ON READER SERVICE CARD

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